

SEVILLE
MERCY CONFERENCE CENTRE



*Seville At Earlville
Is One Of The Best
Kept Secrets In Cairns*



Seville Mercy Conference Centre

Upholding the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy

More than two decades ago in the Cairns region, the Sisters of Mercy decided to turn a piece of land into a serviceable conference centre for the community. At the time, the educational community around the area was in need of a specialized venue. More specifically, the catholic schools of the area needed a place where they could

conduct staff training and other similar initiatives. After some planning and preparation, the Seville Mercy Conference Centre was finally built.

Today, the centre is still part of the Sisters of Mercy and it operates within similar ideals. The management maintains in regular contact with the Sis-



ters and the location also hosts a separate building which houses two of the Sisters. Overall, the conference centre functions a self-sustaining business that operates under the philosophy of the Ministry, in service to the wider community. After all, the Sisters of Mercy have been contributing in the educational services of the commu-

AT A GLANCE

WHO: Seville Mercy Conference Centre

WHAT: A conference centre owned by Sisters of Mercy

WHERE: 35 Bauhinia Ave, Earlville QLD 4870, Australia

WEBSITE: somcairns.com.au

nity of Far North Queensland for 120 years.

A personal touch for a wide range of professionals

The Seville Mercy Conference Centre is set in a serene location and is surrounded by well-kept gardens which are part of the natural bushland. It is less than 15 minutes away from the airport and 10 minutes from the CBD. According to Rod Cole-Clarke, the centre's manager, Seville Mercy maintains a family atmosphere with a team-focused approach to their staff. There are seven staff members in total which has allowed the centre to establish a personalized approach to business. Rod was adamant in the fact that every member of the staff has a great skillset and that they all complement each other. Being diversified also means that everyone can fulfill a multitude of different roles.

“We try to make everybody's stay





here as good as we can make it. If we make a mistake, we just apologize and try to fix it immediately and that generally defuses people as we take ownership. We have regular meetings with the staff to inform them of any changes. For instance, everyone knows that we have ultra-high speed internet coming or that a new coffee machine is here. We keep them informed both in what they need to know on a daily basis and also in the bigger picture of where the centre is going so that they can come along with us. I believe in the staff working with me”, says Rod.

A modern centre for any event

The centre itself is fully equipped to handle all kinds of different events

though its initial focus on education has preserved throughout the years. Seville Mercy receives guests that host staff training events from many different sectors including education, disability services, and mental health services. They also receive a broad range of professionals who take advantage of the centre’s facilities such as psychologists and psychiatrists, environmental groups, and school teachers. Business and personal training sessions are also quite common such as corporate retreats and meditation classes. Finally, the centre also holds various corporate events which are usually presented as exhibitions of extended durations.

There are two large conference rooms, each of which can seat up to





120 delegates. Furthermore, there is a smaller meeting room which can accommodate up to 30 guests. A recently renovated executive boardroom with several seating options is also available. The only difference in the equipment is that the executive boardroom has a 60-inch flat screen TV instead of a projector due to its relatively small size. Other than that, all rooms are fully equipped with sound systems, whiteboards, amplifiers, and every other piece of equipment required for a successful presentation.

According to Rod, technology plays a pivotal role in the organisation and he is always on the lookout for the latest updates. Right now, the centre is in the process of installing a high speed internet connection and additional tech equipment. All these small but important touches are part of the wider model adopted by the centre which Rod calls 'extravagant hospitality'. Each client is treated like a guest in a family house, something that also shows through the team's interactions with them. No concern or query is unimportant and every staff member does their best to accommodate the needs of each guest and make their stay as good as possible.



Delivering excellent customer care

To offer outstanding customer satisfaction, offering a personalized service is crucial. The guests are consistently impressed by this systemically



friendly approach adopted by the centre and they show it with their repeat business. Word of mouth is extremely important for Seville Mercy and they have received a lot of clients that way throughout the years. It is important to not only maintain a great appearance but also to offer a consistently reliable service that the guests can in turn appreciate.

Though the centre also offers 26

rooms for accommodation, their main income is derived from conferences. As such, they have to play up to their strengths; a family-like atmosphere, a certain degree of intimacy, and the small business connection which comes from their local spirit. It is a decisively different service than the one offered by the big centres downtown and the guests who choose Seville Mercy appreciate that. This philosophy goes all the way through the sup-



ply chain down to the strong network of contractors which the centre has established in order to fit all of their needs.

Like Rod says, the centre has grown tremendously over the years and there is no indication of it slowing down any time soon. Occupancy rates have steadily increased ever since Rod came on board and he wants to see that trend continue in the future. “When we are

busy, it means that we are serving the community”, says Rod, while they are also fulfilling their role as set out by the Sisters of Mercy. And as for expanding in the future, the 8 acres that the centre is sitting on will offer plenty of opportunities. The growing clientele may one day require them to add more space but Rod and his team are unfazed by such challenges.

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