

Double feature

Courage, creativity and careful planning were the keys to success in this Melbourne home, a harmonious fusion of old and new.

STORY BETTINA DEDA / STYLING JACQUI MOORE / PHOTOGRAPHY ARMELLE HABIB



FAMILY ROOM / Homeowner Kathleen Walters with her son Sam and daughter Amy. Sofa and coffee tables, Huset. Rug, Halcyon Lake Rugs and Carpets. Amanda Dziedzic glassware domes, Fenton & Fenton. Grey vase, Meizai. Olive vase, House of Orange. **DETAIL** / Window seats are dotted throughout the house – perfect places for reading or quiet contemplation. Sage x Clare cushions, Greenhouse Interiors. Mug and plate, The Shelley Pantone Store. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.**

H&G HOUSES



Looking for a new home in 2010, Kathleen and Daniel Walters fell in love with the period features and established garden of a 1930s property in beachside Melbourne. It was rather dated, but nothing a facelift couldn't sort out. Or so they thought.

Closer inspection revealed that two previous renovations – a rear extension in the 1970s and a first-floor addition in the '80s – had been poorly conceived, resulting in a home that was just not very liveable. “The house was a labyrinth of small, poky rooms and lacked natural light,” says Daniel. “The bathroom adjoined a galley kitchen, and the wedge-shaped rear extension had living, informal dining and laundry together in one open-plan area. It was all a bit of a jumble and very noisy,” he says. “There was no sense of synthesis or harmony,” adds Kathleen. “It lacked any intimacy and was difficult to heat and cool.”

The couple realised that they needed to embrace the challenges of a more extensive renovation. Kathleen and Daniel, who live here with their children Sam, now nine, and Amy, seven, approached architect Robert Schulberg of Schulberg Demkiw Architects with a brief to rework the layout, with an emphasis on versatile spaces that could change along with the family dynamic. They also wanted more natural light and to create a strong connection between indoor and outdoor areas.

Today, the ‘formal’ rooms – guestroom, living and dining rooms and a den – are contained in the front of the house. The much-maligned galley kitchen was demolished to allow a clear sight line from the entrance through to the garden, and a striking new feature staircase with double-height void floods the core of the house with light. “We wanted to ▶

KITCHEN / The generous kitchen is perfectly positioned in the corner of the open-plan area, within sight of the children's living room, family room and pool and garden beyond. Counter stools, Huset. Vase, The Shelley Pantone Store. Colour-backed glass splashback in Dulux Flooded Gum. Miele appliances. Caesarstone benchtops in Snow. French-oak flooring, Wildwood Aged Timber Flooring.

DINING / Pops of red add a cheery note to the dining zone and adjacent children's living room. Rug bought in London. Dining chairs, Swan Street Sales. Cluster pendant light, About Space. Amanda Dziedzic Glassware vase, Fenton & Fenton. Yellow side table, Freedom. Artwork by David Larwill.

Smart buy: Recycled-timber dining table, from \$2600, Neel Dey Furniture. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.**

This is the life

Part of the challenge of this renovation was achieving a balance between open-plan living and privacy. “It was important to get the mix of communal and private areas right, as well as prepare for our children's needs in the future,” says Kathleen. With multiple living areas, there is plenty of room to enjoy together, entertain friends separately or to retreat to when a little personal space is required.



Happy hues

Spaces that Amy and Sam share – the children’s living room, the upstairs bathroom and the study – are decorated with block colours, a design decision that should take them through to their teens. A stimulating palette of red, orange and yellow was selected for the living room downstairs to help promote creative play. Upstairs, a restful shade of pistachio green in the bathroom is perfect for winding down before bed.

THE PALETTE

Dulux Peplum Quarter
interior, throughout

Bristol Green Terrace
bathroom vanity

Resene Roadster
shelf backing,
children’s living



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

‘Now our home facilitates our lifestyle in exactly the way we imagined.’ Daniel Walters

AMY’S ROOM / “Themes such as fairies or tractors date too quickly, so we chose cheerful but timeless motifs for the children’s rooms,” says Kathleen. Sanderson Poppies wallpaper and fabric, available from The Elephant Room. Bedside table, Adairs.

Smart buy: Snowpuppe Moth XL pendant light, \$230, Huset.

SAM’S ROOM / Casadeco MYR 2081 61 21 wallpaper and MYR 2084 61 08 fabric (on blinds), Marco. Lamp, Adairs. Bedlinen, Bed Bath N’ Table. Kip&Co Pom Pom throw, The Family Love Tree.

MAIN BEDROOM / “We pored over so many beautiful wallpaper sample books that we were determined to create a couple of feature walls,” says Kathleen. Romo Mikado wallpaper (discontinued). Bedside lamps and Shaggy cushion, Fenton & Fenton. European pillowcases and Navy quilt cover, Cultiver. Lilac bedlinen, Bedouin Societe. Throw and tufted cushion, Greenhouse Interiors. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.**



◀ open up the heart of the house and give it new life,” says Robert. The rear of the ground floor was reshaped to accommodate a spacious open-plan kitchen/dining/family area and children’s living room, both with direct access to a new deck and the garden. Upstairs are the family’s bedrooms (the main with ensuite), a bathroom, TV room and a study.

When it came to the interiors, Kathleen and Daniel envisaged something bright and colourful, a home that was both fun and a relaxing place to hang out. “We definitely wanted to step outside our comfort zone in terms of colour,” says Kathleen. “We thought about the way public play areas make use of bold colour and set out to create a similar feel. It took an inordinate number of swatches from Bunnings to get there, but we decided on a red/orange/yellow palette for the living areas because it imbues them with a sense of energy, playfulness and cheer. The white walls and shelving keep things crisp and elegant.” The use of natural materials was also important, in particular the external timber cladding and drystone walling, which features both inside and out.

Renovation complete, the family couldn’t be happier. “We undertook the renovation because we wanted to create a relaxed, more functional living environment for our family,” says Daniel. “Now our home facilitates our lifestyle in exactly the way we imagined.” ▶

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‘This is a house designed for a young family but also one that will evolve over time.’

Robert Schulberg, architect

BATHROOM / The beautiful pistachio green of the feature wall tiles is echoed in the vanity. Wall and floor tiles, all Perini Tiles. Basins and mixer taps, Reece. Vanity by Moorabbin Cabinets. Caesarstone benchtop in Snow.

STUDY / A sliding door transforms the study into two separate rooms. “We wanted the children to have more privacy as they get older and their needs change,” says Kathleen. Andrew Martin Oxford wallpaper, Unique Fabrics. Desk chair, Swan Street Sales. Laminex joinery. Queens Twist carpet in Merbau, Godfrey Hirst Carpets (throughout).

Designer buy: Beanbag chairs, \$385/each, Lujo.

DECK / “Preserving the plane tree was non-negotiable,” says Kathleen. “It took some patience and ingenuity on the parts of our architect and builder, and a few visits from an arborist, but it was well worth the effort.” Deck chair, Safari Living. Burnt-ash decking, Woodform Architectural.

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THE LAYOUT

