

home



Bright fantastic

Federation house finally faces the future 12

5 CLOSET COUTURE

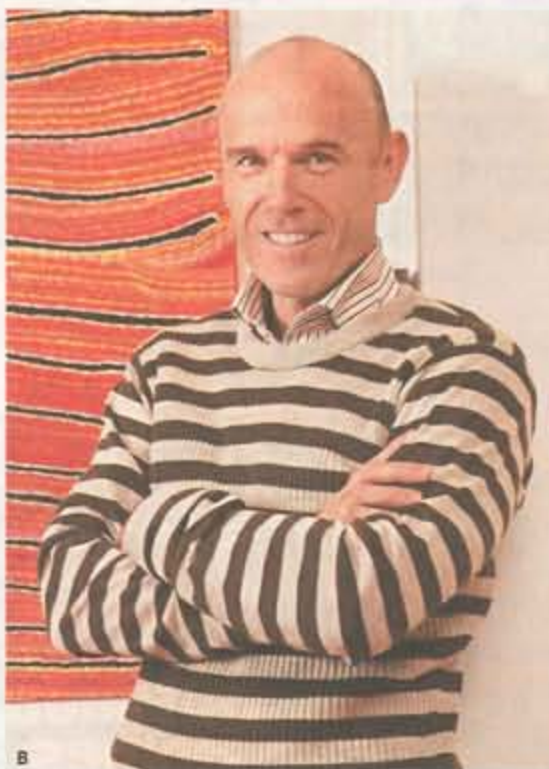
Tailoring wardrobes to new levels of sophistication

8 PERSONALITY PLUS

Good looks do count in a flexible family design

22 SWEET RETREAT

Laura Csortan reveals her favourite destination



MODERN CLASSIC

With attention paid to its 1905 romantic beginnings, this Bondi Junction property

Sometimes delays can prove to be a blessing. The owners of this home in Bondi Junction initially hoped to renovate their ugly duckling soon after they moved in. Having come from a cramped Paddington terrace to provide space for their two young children, they liked the period features of the house and the potential of its northeast-facing yard.

However, starting a new business meant there was little cash to spare and they had to make do with the comfortable but tired four-bedroom home as it was.

Moving along

Fast forward 15 years and they finally have the house they had hoped for. And with their youngest child completing the Higher School Certificate this year, the needs of the family have changed dramatically.

After a recommendation from a friend, they called in architect Michael Bell who

understood what the house needed. Experienced in renovating period homes and the detailing they require, Michael realised he could meet the needs of a modern family without sacrificing the traditional architecture.

Although they were satisfied with the number of bedrooms, the family was looking for a better living space than the three poky rooms facing the paved garden at the rear.

"The owners initially asked for a separate area for the kids, which is quite common for families when they have teenagers," says Michael.

However, with formal dining and living rooms already part of the layout at the front of the house, he thought the back would work better as an open-plan living and dining space.

"We said 'why not make the space really big so there is room for everyone?'," he says.

"In the end you are better off making a successful large space than a range of small spaces."

Although the changes to the rear living area



WORTH THE WAIT

has been lovingly restored to accommodate 21st century life in the fast lane

came together relatively quickly, Michael worked with the owners for some time nutting out the best locations for the main bedroom suite, a backyard pool plus accommodation for two cars.

Old beauty

Built about 1905, the house had suffered various indignities over the years, such as fibro cladding, and was in need of a facelift.

Part of a heritage conservation area, Michael also addressed restoration issues for the front facade of the house as well as some of the interiors, which featured pressed metal ceilings.

"You could not muck around with the front - the only option was to restore it," says Michael.

"As it turned out, it did not cost that much to restore because most of it was hidden.

"We found bits and pieces behind the old fibro."

Once the final plans had been made, they presented them to the neighbours who gave their

approval prior to a Development Application being submitted to council.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the plans were approved without complaint.

The next step was hiring a builder and the owners looked no further than their next-door neighbours, who warmly recommended Jetcharm Constructions.

Having watched and listened to renovation work undertaken on the neighbours' house, they were impressed with the quality of the work and the manner in which it was done.

Although he had no experience working with the builder before, Michael says it turned out to be a worthwhile partnership and he has contracted the company for other jobs since.

The 10-month build was a fairly straightforward process, with the family moving to nearby Randwick when work got underway.

Michael says he recommends to all his clients →

A Several large french doors along the back of the house lead into the garden **B** Architect Michael Bell **C** Restoration on the facade proved easier than anticipated **D** The backyard pool has a spa and jet streams for lap swimming **E** Vaulted ceilings are featured in the main bedroom **F** The generously sized ensuite has a large vanity

FACT FILE

THE ARCHITECT

Michael Bell

THE BRIEF

To restore a gracious Federation home ideal for modern family living

THE BUILDER

Jetcharm Constructions

GET THE LOOK

TIME KEEPER

This home has a slightly romantic feel to it with a touch of French charm. Even the kitchen clock is reminiscent of another era. For a similar timepiece, try the Windsor clock from Freedom. With a 60cm diameter, it is ideal for large areas where it can be viewed with ease. It is priced at \$69.95.



● **MORE INFORMATION**
Freedom, freedom.com.au

FRENCH CONNECTION

Architect Michael Bell took care with this renovation to maintain the classic style of this home without falling into pastiche. Rather than choosing popular bi-fold doors, he opted for sets of french doors with completely clear glass. Canterbury Windows and Doors can supply standard or custom-built doors in a range of timbers suitable for painting or staining. They even have a range of options for door-stopping devices.



● **MORE INFORMATION**
Canterbury Windows and Doors,
1800 104 444, canterburywindows.com.au

SQUARE ON

It took some time to find the right location for the main bedroom in this Bondi Junction home. Positioning it upstairs at the rear allowed enough space for a generous ensuite with stylish fittings. For a vanity basin similar to the one in this home, try the Liano semi-recessed vanity from Caroma. A good-looking and practical design, it has matching tapware available. It is priced at \$545.



● **MORE INFORMATION**
Caroma, caroma.com.au



A The original three small rooms at the back of the house were opened up to accommodate a large kitchen, dining and living area
B Pretty period detailing was revealed beneath old work during restoration on the facade



GROUND FLOOR 1 Entry 2 Loungeroom 3 Laundry 4 Kitchen 5 Garage 6 Dining/Living 7 Formal dining room
FIRST FLOOR 8 Bedroom 9 Bathroom 10 Main bedroom 11 Ensuite 12 Bedroom 13 Bedroom

that they move out during the building process. "Some try to stay, but this prevents the builder from having the run of the house. If clients move in too early, it can slow the process down," he says.

Quality materials

Part of the new design included a two-car garage with access from the rear lane. Although they initially discussed a less expensive corrugated steel roof, Michael eventually suggested a slate roof to match the existing house. While it is an expensive choice, he says it is worth the cost over the long term. "We saw the slate roof on the house and thought the garage should have the same as well. Sometimes people use expensive materials in a bad way but if you follow a tradition, the material will be there for a lot longer so long as you design it well," he says.

This philosophy has guided much of the architectural decisions in the house from the large french doors leading on to the garden to the restored pressed metal ceilings in the dining room and upstairs bedroom.

The beauty of this approach also means that

the ageing process in the house is welcomed rather than guarded against.

"What I love about traditional styles in architecture is that even if the stone cracks, it doesn't matter. If you choose materials carefully and detail them in a way that they work well when they age, it looks right. Whereas if something is too slick and it ages, it doesn't look right," says Michael.

The renovation has breathed new life into this classic home that suits the growing family down to the ground.

And although he never planned it, the somewhat romantic house works well under pressure.

"The success of it is measured in that the owners often have 200 people here. I have been here at that time and it is quite comfortable. That is something we did not really expect," says Michael. ■

ROBYN WILLIS

● **MORE INFORMATION**
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Michael Bell Architects 9212 0422,
michaelbellarchitects.com