



FACT FILE

THE BRIEF

To restore the original character of an Edwardian-era semi and tie it in with a new light-filled, contemporary second storey

THE OWNERS

Gary Keating and Mark Baines

THE ARCHITECT

Gray Smith, Gray Smith Architecture+Interiors

THE BUILDER

Mark Norton, Norton and Sons



A The front of the house **B** Architect Gray Smith **C** Bi-fold windows open up to allow plenty of breeze throughout the home **D** The new upstairs has a bathroom and an extra bedroom that overlooks the pool



Bright and breezy

High ceilings with newly created open spaces turn a classic semi into a modern marvel

The object of renovating the single-storey, late-Edwardian-era semi was more than just to create extra space, it was also to transform it into a home that took advantage of the light, the breeze and the leafy surrounds.

Before the renovation, the two-bedroom Randwick house was either dank and dark or hot and steamy, a pretty unpleasant combination, so Melbourne-based architect Gray Smith opened up the spaces by designing an open-plan kitchen and living area and incorporating high ceilings and large expanses of glass that could be opened up to let in the breeze.

"It was old and dark and there were not enough living spaces [for the owners Gary Keating and Mark Baines]," Gray says.

"There were some beautiful features from the original house, the moulded ceiling etcetera, that they wanted to keep in the front part of the house. All the doors [at the front] are new and the proportion of them fits in with the older part of the house."

"It was all about opening it up and creating spaces as large as possible and lots of light, so we kept the high ceilings all the way through and the stair that just sort of floats and doesn't take up a lot of space."

It was important to Gary and Mark that the house, which now has an extra bedroom and bathroom upstairs, catches the breeze, so they would not need airconditioning.

"The [east-facing] back part of the house would get a lot of heat, so it was either dank and dark or too hot," Gray says.

"The clients were concerned about things such as cross ventilation and not having to use airconditioning so we put a lot of insulation into the walls and the ceilings. We used ceiling fans for summer and to circulate warm air back down in winter."

Floating stairs

Gray says his favourite feature of the house is the stairs, which were constructed onsite by the builders from Norton and Sons.

"Because we do renovations nothing is standard. We find it easier to get steel delivered in long lengths and then we get it fabricated on site. So I actually fabricated the whole thing – made it, welded it," builder Mark Norton says.

Mark says the feature walls behind the



E Bamboo flooring was used throughout **F** Owners Mark Baines and Gary Keating in their open-plan living area **G** and **H** Feature walls using timber batons of different thickness are in the bedroom and bathroom (as well as the living area)



Photos: Justin Lloyd



stairs and in the main bedroom, which have timber battens of different thickness laid horizontally to create a Lego-like effect, were a laborious process.

"It looks higgledy-piggledy but it has actually been set out with a colour-coded plan from the architect – so a lot more went into laying it out than sort of chucking it at the wall," he says.

"It's not random at all, because you would end up with a lot of surfaces meeting and then you lose the effect."

Before the renovation Gary and Mark had their hearts set on bamboo flooring, which is now a beautiful feature of the main living space.

"Mark's brother had bamboo flooring years ago, which we thought was beautiful. We always thought if we ever renovate we want bamboo floors," Gary says.

However they were not as sure about other features of the house, such as the soft green, yellow and blue colour palette, which Gray suggested after they decided to incorporate colour.

"The old house had different bold colours, which looked good," Gary says.

"But in the new house we decided to have white walls that we could hang art on

like a gallery. As time went on, we thought we needed a bit of colour."

Gary says they completed the renovation in June last year. It was built in two stages – the back part first, which took nine months and then three months off, and the front part, which took three months. He estimates it cost about \$600,000, including furniture and appliances.

Despite the long process, Gary says he and Mark are very happy with the result. So much so, he cannot pick his favourite part of the renovated house.

"I love the big room down the back. But then of course it's hard to pick one point, because upstairs the bedroom overlooking the pool is beautiful and the big walk-in wardrobe. And having a really lovely bathroom with sun coming in on you is nice," Gary says.

"Then when we renovated the front of the house and opened it up – I just love it." ■

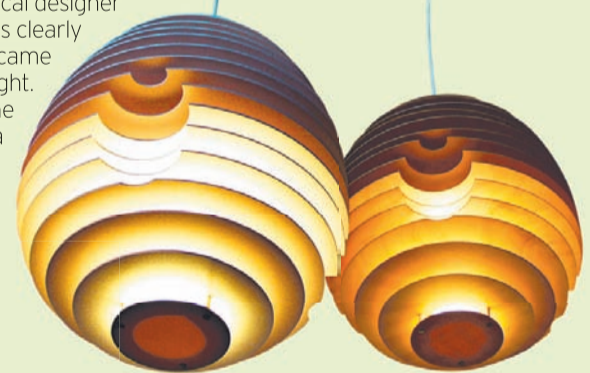
Alice Wasley

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Gray Smith Architecture
+Interiors 03 9686 0794
Norton and Sons 0404 892 522

GET THE LOOK

WHAT'S THE BUZZ ... Local designer Ben Gumley of Mod Pod Designs was clearly channelling Austin Powers when he came up with the Oh Beehive pendant light. The owners have subtly picked up the '70s theme by teaming it with a shag pile rug. The light comes in white and natural plywood for \$690.

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Eco Outdoor 1300 131 413,
 ecooutdoor.com.au



MIX AND MATCH ...

To avoid clashing with the green feature wall the owners have selected neutral furnishings in black, white, grey and coffee tones. A timeless piece such as the Arne Jacobsen Egg Chair in black is the perfect addition to the living room, its rounded form contrasting with the clean lines of the contemporary addition.

A replica Arne Jacobsen Egg Chair Deluxe in black fabric is \$795 from Matt Blatt.

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Matt Blatt 1300 628 825, mattblatt.com.au

