

DREAM IT. DESIGN IT. DO IT.

round the twist

With curves in all the right places and a few out-of-the-box ideas, this heritage home now has an innovative, contemporary look

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Who lives here: Steph and Bill Fry, who run their own development company, WAF Constructions; and their children, Ben, 17; Issy, 15; and Ed, 12; plus Bruce the labrador.

Style of home: A heritage-listed Californian bungalow on its last legs has been transformed into a contemporary three-storey family home with knockout curves and touchable textures.

 After a year of planning and gaining approvals, construction took one year.

LIVING AREA

The dramatic glass wall floods this space with natural light. At night, the 'GyroFocus' fireplace from Oblica provides warmth. A slimline 'Objekto 'Paulistano' armchair from Hub Furniture is offset by the Customweave rug, Jardan ottoman and 'Neo' sofa from King Living, while greenery softens the concrete and glass.

KITCHEN

The kitchen has been wrapped in striking feathered concrete, while the carrara marble slab from Corsi & Nicolai Australia takes centre stage, paired with 'Raft' stools from Great Dane. "We wanted to create a different shape, as it's a real family meeting place," says Mikayla. A work area, complete with pantry and fridge, is screened from the communal area. Ross Gardam pendant lights tie in with Polytec joinery in Sepia Oak Ravine.



The engineers always have a slight heart attack when Bill builds our houses," says Steph Fry of her husband. "He loves to live on the edge. I'm the opposite, I like to play it safe." It's clear the pair make a good team.

The home they share with their three children in Melbourne's Hawthorn is beautifully balanced: old with new, warm touches of stone and aged timbers with sleek concrete and glass, and discreet detailing with big-impact design ideas.

It's a renovation, but only just. The original Californian bungalow was in such a state of disrepair that perhaps only a builder-turned-developer, such as Bill, could have seen past the heritage constraints to identify the potential. Steve Domoney of Steve Domoney Architecture drew up a design that allowed the couple to restore the front of the cottage to meet heritage requirements while creating a new home at the back that capitalised on the double block with double-street entrance. An underground level, spherical third storey and central circular courtyard fuse the old with new.

While Steph and Bill had worked together on countless builds and developments, this one had to be extra special to take them through the kids' teen years. "It's our last family home," says Steph. Interior designer Mikayla Rose of Heartly was enlisted to tweak the layout to suit and ensure the bold building ideas – such as the Perspex wall in the teenage retreat that frames the underbelly of the pool – are countered with a fit-out that fosters family time.

DREAM IT.

Keen to stay in their favourite patch of Melbourne, Steph and Bill ended up buying across the street from their previous home, which Bill had also built. This final family home – and they've had quite a few – was a chance to pull together their favourite materials and techniques gleaned from a long career in the industry, while also catering to a new life stage. "We wanted the teenagers and university children to be able to have their own space. We didn't want to be on top of each other like we were in our last home," says Steph.

"As a consequence, we have the downstairs basement, which is like a teenager's retreat with a billiard table, TV and sofa where the teenagers can hang out," says Steph. The underground view of the pool is a striking source of light. Above ground, the living, kitchen and outdoor spaces are beautifully blended. "There are distinctive areas in the house where you can retreat to, but everything is still quite connected," says interior designer Mikayla.

ARTWORK: (OPPOSITE) PAINTING BY ANDREW O'BRIEN, ANDREWOBRIENARTIST.COM; KITCHEN: SPLASHBACK IN PURE WHITE, CAESARSTONE.COM.AU; 'VIVID SLIMLINE' TAPWARE, PHOENIX TAPWARE.COM.AU; 'KUBUS SINKS, FRANKIE.COM; LIVING AREA: EMI POD STOOLS, ANACASTUDIO.COM.AU; FOSCARINI 'TWIGGY' FLOOR LAMP, SPACE FURNITURE.COM.AU; INAX 'REPEAT WAVE' TILES, \$154/SQM, ARTEDOMUS.COM

LIVING AREA

The top of the glass between the living space and pool slides away – no need for a pool fence! "It's terrific when the kids are in the pool and we're inside," says Steph. The TV also does a disappearing act, retracting into the ceiling when not in use. "The TV drops down at the push of a button."



Steph & Bill's wishlist

- + "We wanted some open areas to hang out, but also to have privacy," says Steph.
- + "On Bill's brief, not mine, was a massive underground garage for his cars, motorbikes and hundreds of tools."
- + "I wanted my own office for running our business and busy household."
- + "Natural materials and products, with lots of concrete and timber."

THE MOODBOARD



“The feather-finish concrete is incredibly smooth to touch. It feels delicate, but of course it's robust and strong”

MIKAYLA ROSE, INTERIOR DESIGNER

“We wanted the master bedroom to be a very comforting space, in contrast to the new area”

MIKAYLA ROSE, INTERIOR DESIGNER



MASTER BEDROOM

Contemporary curtains, soft carpets and rich timber set a luxe tone in this space. The original sash window was restored to highlight this room's place in the original building. The dark & tradition 'Spinning' pendant light from Great Dane and Bemboka quilt offer a calming look.



ENSUITE

A luxe freestanding Formoso 'Clearwater' tub from Reece is set off by Artedomus Inax 'Repeat Wave' tiles, offering a cool, fresh step away from the industrial concrete tones. The Phoenix Tapware 'Vivid Slimline' mixer in matt black, paired with an Anaca Studio stool, is a striking choice.



WALK-IN WARDROBE

Cabinetry in Polytec laminate offers plenty of storage. 'Langhorne' carpet from Victoria Carpets continues from the bedroom to create a sense of flow.

ARTWORK: LIMITED EDITION PRINT BY DAVID BAND; DAVIDBAND.COM.AU; BEDROOM: CUSHIONS, ABODE LIVING, ABODELIVING.COM, BED, KING LIVING, KINGLIVING.COM.AU; WALK-IN ROBE: 'EMI POD' STOOL, ANACA STUDIO, ANACASTUDIO.COM.AU

DESIGN IT.

Guiding much of the design and building process was a deep appreciation for materials. A stone wall now stretches up from the basement to the third storey as the visual spine of the home. On the ground floor, the stone sweeps into a curvaceous hall, hugging a circular courtyard showcased by disappearing glass doors. The curve is echoed outside with aged vertical timber sleepers reclaimed from Melbourne's iconic St Kilda pier.

"The rest of the materials in the house contrast with those rustic and character-filled elements," says Mikayla. She's worked hard to maintain balance, hanging timber plinths on walls of feathered concrete and throwing touches of timber around the kitchen for good measure. Cut-outs and storage work to personalise and add warmth but also link the areas: in the formal living room, the wall stops short to allow a bookshelf to wrap all the way into the parallel study; a complete cut-out in the casual living room is shared with Steph's study behind; and storage plinths marry the living and dining areas. A subtle repetition of circles, from an oversized ottoman to pendant lights and hooks also unite the home. "Design elements are softened throughout with these shapes," says Mikayla.

DO IT.

Being your own client has its perks. "When Bill and I went to source the stone for the island bench we found a 2m x 2.2m piece of marble, and so we built it around that stone," says Steph. "We did a lot of it as we went along – we'd find something and build around that."

The island bench caters for three stools on each side and is the natural meeting point between pool, living room and courtyard. Oversized oak pendant lights by Ross Gardam anchor the island bench and confirm its importance as family hub. "The kitchen is probably my favourite kitchen ever," says Mikayla. "The layout just naturally segregates the communal and working parts of the kitchen."

To maintain the sleek lines, Bill recessed strip lighting into the structural concrete beam as it was poured. In the living room, aesthetics are also preserved by clever thinking – the TV disappears into the ceiling when not in use.

While there is freedom to push the envelope, being your own client can also be tough. "We were in-between developments and Bill worked seven days a week for a year to get us in there," says Steph. "We all love it. It feels right for our family." **10**

Learn more about Mikayla Rose's work at heartly.com.au.

Get in touch with Steve Domoney at domoneyarchitecture.com.



lessons learnt
 “We’ve built many homes but never used an interior designer before. It really made a massive difference to the warmth and feel of the house”

STEPH FRY, HOMEOWNER

BASEMENT

The underground teenagers’ retreat offers a remarkable view of the pool, framed by Perspex, as well as filtered natural light. A Fatboy bean bag from Hub Furniture is a comfy spot to relax.



LAUNDRY

Industrial green lockers offer plenty of storage in a busy family laundry, while a streamlined bench keeps the hardworking washer and dryer zone within easy reach.

the best bits

- + “The Ross Gardam oak pendant lights. I think they make that kitchen. I just love them. I look at them all the time,” says Steph.
- + “We love the ‘GyroFocus’ Oblica suspended fireplace. We’re very lucky, as Bill will fill the tip truck full of firewood from a building site and the men will bring it over. We light that fire every night. It’s so beautiful,” says Steph.
- + “I really love the concrete detailing throughout,” says Mikayla. “It’s not at all cold. Everything melds together to create a really welcoming environment.”
- + “The teenage retreat with underwater views through Perspex is amazing - it’s the coolest kids’ hangout area you could imagine,” says Mikayla.

VOLLEY OUTDOOR CHAIRS, TAIT. MADEBYTAIT.COM.AU



EXTERIOR

The circular shapes continue in the outside areas, where poolside lounging meets easy entertaining in the form of a built-in barbecue. Reclaimed yellow box timber panels frame the space.