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# The Lakehouse Mark II

Story Marilyn Collins Photography Natalie Grant-Harvey, Impact Images

The next generation of the Peat family is following family tradition and retaining ownership of a stunning waterfront block, situated in the highly desired sheltered Sugar Bay at Brightwaters on the Morisset Peninsular, which holds many happy memories of carefree family holidays.

"I first started spending weekends and holidays here at Brightwaters from the time I was four and my father spent over four decades here in the house," said present owner, Debra Peat.

The original, red-brick family home had a lot of sentimental value because Ray Peat, a plumber, actually built it. "Dad first had a block across the bay where we used to camp after driving up the old Pacific Highway for the weekend," recalled Debra. "Later he sold the block to buy this one, which is tree studded with a north-east aspect.

"I moved from Sydney six years ago to care for Dad (now 88 years) until he permanently moved to a nearby nursing home. I visit him every day, so was able to keep him posted

on the renovation process and show images of the work progress on my iPad," Debra said.

The decision to approach the project as an alteration and addition instead of a knockdown/rebuild was based on both this emotional attachment, and also the quality of the original build.

Melanie Symington of Seaside Homes was contracted to design a floor plan based on Debra's conception and the entire process flowed seamlessly, as only two minor alterations had to be made to the first concept. There was a mutual connection with the like-minded owner and home designer from their first meeting. Melanie said she knew this project would be a pleasurable one to undertake and the women now have a special lifelong connection.

"When I was overseas for one month, Melanie willingly took over supervision of the building team for me," said Debra. The work commenced in May, 2013 and was completed in November and the pool was ready for use a few days before Christmas, 2013. >



The design captures superb  
views of the yachts at anchor  
— a view that is continually  
changing with the moods  
of the lake.



A local builder, Jeff Sinclair of Jedbilt Homes, was contracted to build the home.

"The original house was positioned to the middle of the site with a quite steep pathway down to the ground-floor stairs that lead to the entry to the house on the first floor," said Melanie. "One of the main focuses for the extension was to create a new entry wing that would connect to the house on the existing first-floor level.

"The first floor of the house is where living and entertaining take place, as

the new wing incorporates the foyer, central hallway, two guest bedrooms, and a main bathroom. Off the hallway is a neat study nook with a window overlooking the side garden and an undercover open-sided, timber-floored winter deck."

This is one of the owner's favourite sitting places, as it catches the winter sun. According to Debra, this space is used a lot at the moment, now that she has her daybed well positioned to capture the afternoon sun.

The main bedroom was kept in its original position on the first floor but was significantly extended to incorporate a spacious, shelved dressing room with sliding doors.

The en suite with frosted-door WC and deep, hidden shower behind the vanity has uninterrupted views from the deep soaking bath to the lake when the white shutters are opened.

The remaining area of the first floor was opened up to create an open-plan living, dining and kitchen space leading onto a waterfront terrace.

An expansive glass picture window with side louvres captures a superb view of the yachts at anchor – a view that is continually changing with the moods of the lake.

One of the original timber beams was recycled to become the new fireplace mantel installed with a gas fire surrounded by stacked tiles from Jacoba Tiles, in keeping with the desire to connect with the history of the home.

"When Dad built the home he had an Italian master craftsman plaster who created decorative cornices below the ceiling, a feature I wanted to continue in memory of the original house," said Debra. >



The lower level of the residence, once the garage, was renovated to become a self-contained guest apartment with bedroom, bathroom, laundry, WC, living room and a kitchen, which is well located when using the outdoor areas and swimming pools.

The exterior of the home is clad with James Hardie Linea Board. "The colour selection for the cladding was a challenge because we wanted something subtle but also a bit different," said Melanie. "Debra and I were really happy with the final selection of a grey mixed with just a hint of mauve."

An in-ground swimming pool surrounded by glass fencing and travertine tiles set in beautifully landscaped gardens provided the finishing touches to this stunning renovation.

It is no wonder that a resident white heron dubbed "Al" has called this place home. He frequents most of the time, proudly gazing at himself in the reflection of the glass or water and often looking beyond as if to admire the finished home.

Colin Marchant of Costata Landscape Design based at Empire Bay was referred by Melanie Symington to Debra, after having discussions about creative ways to retain gardens on sloping blocks and viewing several completed projects.

Colin said, "After meeting Debra onsite, we submitted a fee proposal outlining the costs and processes involved in compiling a design for her property. The process was an inclusive one involving site analysis, preliminary sketches and samples with feedback from the client before presentation of the final plan, plant schedule and sample disc covering all aspects of the finished garden. A cost breakdown was provided covering all aspects of the project."

Costata Landscape Design supplied all plant material and managed a close-knit team of contractors covering all facets of landscape construction and ensuring that the person who designed the garden manages the project throughout.

"In effect, we take the client from concept to completion," says Colin. >



The Brightwaters project required a substantial plant schedule complemented by construction elements using natural materials such as stone and timber. Detailed site and soil preparation set the levels, and slopes were managed with partial sandstone retaining walls which still allowed the various garden levels to flow into one another rather than sectioning levels off through restrictive terracing. Debra had certain plants she wanted incorporated into the gardens, such as gardenias and a frangipani. Wherever you look there are striking shrubs and plants such as a delicate flowering violet, which trails over a sandstone wall at the rear of downstairs, making a statement.

Automatic drip irrigation and low-flow pop-up lawn sprinklers took the garden through the establishment period and now maintain optimum health and growth.


"Right from the first visit, it was clear that such a beautifully conceived house on such a fantastic site was crying out for a garden to do them both justice. Now as the garden grows, all three elements – house, site and landscape – are blending into one and that is what you aspire to in any project," said Colin.

It is evident on arriving at the address and pressing the intercom button on the security gate that you are entering another world.

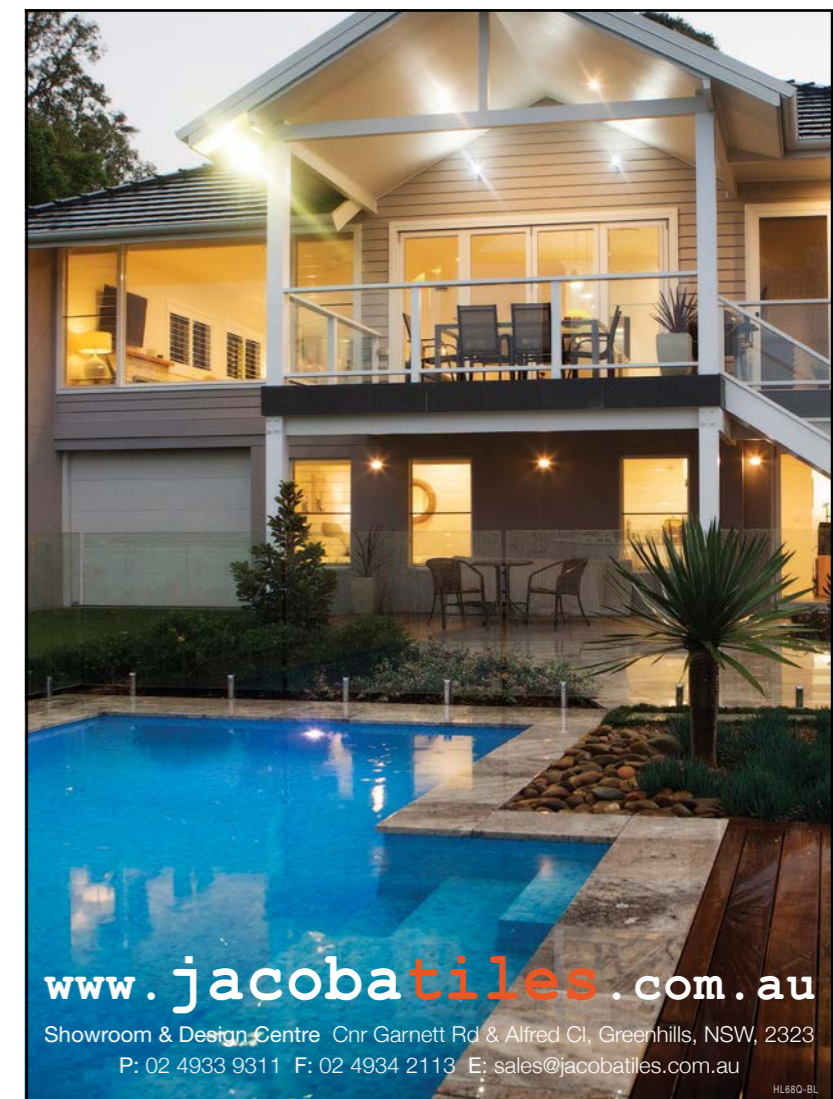
A quick glance through the wide, double timber-and-glass main doors with a stunning pewter light fitting hanging in the foyer gives you a glimpse of spectacular bay views beyond.

The attention to every aspect of the home's design has contributed to the overall outcome – from wide eaves, skylights above the side terrace, the timber staircase leading from the upper level down to the swimming pool, the inclusion of the study nook along the hallway and a possible reconversion of a four-door linen press into a possible internal laundry, should the owner ever want to live on the upper level in the years to come.

Such a combination of intricate ideas makes a renovation a success.

The myriad of small but significant designer touches both inside and outside ensure Debra, her family and friends can enjoy the kind of lifestyle many would love to own. 

<i>Home Designer:</i>	<i>Melanie Symington, Seaside Homes</i>
<i>Landscaping:</i>	<i>Costata Landscape Design</i>
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