Retro revival

An addition to a 1930s house is inspired by the past, writes Cindy Lord

truly modern approach to home

It's a retro revival with a new wave of architects drawing on the modernist 1950s for inspiration.

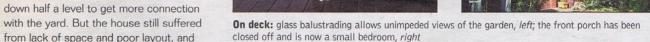
Take the renovation of Paul and Andrea architect Chris Bligh.

than in the '50s. There's a more relaxed feel, with the combining of timber with materials such as glass and steel."

West End for this unrenovated family

Built in the 1930s, the house had been decided if we were going to buy an old





Andrea says they were initially hesitant about the idea of glass balustrading thinking it was "too groovy" for them. But now the glass barrier is a key aspect

of the design.

"You can get away with it because of its strong form," says Chris. "And because it comes out beyond the house, the glass balustrading doesn't conflict."

A second deck space, enclosed by a built-in bench, is more of a "nest" space, a place to sit around the table in summer.

Chris says by giving each space a different feel, the house appears bigger.

> Andrea Bidwel with her daughter, Sophie, 4:

walkway

and huge sliding glass

living room with light; timber floors

on effect through the

With the creation of the new living spaces at the rear, it was decided to shift the house's main entry. The Bidwells had not been happy that visitors had to traipse through the centre of the house to get to the living areas.

Chris' solution was to shut off the old front porch and create a gate house and arbour to redirect people down the side of the house to the "public spaces" - the new living room and kitchen - at the back.

"It's very important to get the circulation right in a house - not just to make it efficient, but livable," he says.



Architect: Bligh Graham, 3369 0244 Budget: \$80,000

features

- Mesh and galvanised steel arbour
- Toughened glass balustrading
- ► Shugg windows, aluminium sliding doors
- White batten screens over windows
- Rough-sawn plywood walls
- Dutside lights recessed in concrete path Recycled wooden sliding doors

The front porch has been turned from a circulation space to a small bedroom, and the old lounge room has become a children's playroom.

The integration of the house into the garden was finally completed by the mounding of earth up to the back stairs.

"Paul has always wanted a hill, so the kids could roll down it," says Andrea.

"I was sceptical (at first), but now that it's finished it's amazing."



garden-loving owners set the extension

from lack of space and poor layout, and

their frustration levels continued to grow.

"There were times when we felt like

dumping the whole house in the river and

This time they asked Chris to add on a

new living room and remodel the deck.

Again they wanted a strong connection

Chris' immediate response was to

project the house into the gently sloping

yard to make best use of the established

trees and leafy outlook. A glass

balustrade allowed unimpeded views.

Financially, this was not a realistic

option, but renovating again was.

starting again," Andrea says.

to the garden.

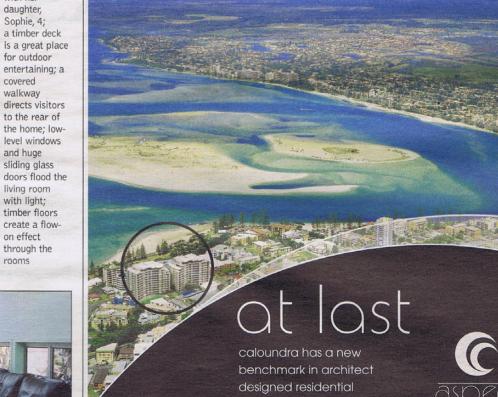












apartments, sub-penthouses

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Connection: a glass balustrade encloses a deck on the cube-like extension; rough-sawn plywood and a timber screen add texture home Saturday, August 2, 2003

Pictures: Mark Cranitch