



Jacqui Jones



Mind the old when creating the new

PRESENTED with a 1970s, mission brown-heavy home, interior designer Stewart Horton set a mission of his own: to modernise, beautify and functionalise.

With trusting clients Amanda and Craig on board from the get-go, Stewart, owner of Newcastle-based Horton & Co Design, pared back much of the Manning Valley house to its beautiful bones.

A new kitchen and bathroom, paint, flooring and furnishings overhauled the interior to create a light, airy, contemporary space well-utilised by the resident family of five.

"It had such great bones, a big volume of space and it's one of the few houses on the river there," Stewart says.

"It's a big rural block as well."

Updating the colour scheme was a simple change that had maximum effect.

"The rumpus room, which is white at the moment, some of it was painted mission brown, it was very dowdy, very dark.

"First things first, was getting rid of that mission brown and painting everything white - it instantly made it feel more contemporary, fresher, lighter."

The kitchen, last updated in the 1990s in country style with timber cabinetry, had a major overhaul.

"The kitchen was quite small compared to the size of the house," Stewart says.

"We extended out a few metres ... to gain a little bit of space under the existing terrace.

"From there we basically gutted old walls in the kitchen and opened it up to become a much bigger, eat-in, family-style kitchen."

Acting on Amanda and Craig's desire for a rural-style kitchen, Stewart went for a traditional silhouette with a contemporary edge.

"The house, given it was a 1970s brick house, it was tricky negotiating to make sure we didn't make it too twee.

"Not turn it into a country kitchen in a modern house.

• Roller Blinds • Dual Rollers • Verticals • Panel Glides • Roman Blinds • Venetians • Roller Shutters •

Security Windows • Colourbond Awnings

Lakeview
BLINDS • AWNINGS • SHUTTERS

**BEAT
THE HEAT**
AND BUY NOW
AT COOL PRICES

For more information or an obligation FREE quote phone

Shutters • Roller Blinds
Panel Glides • Awnings

Keep your money in the Hunter and BUY LOCALLY
Buy factory direct and save - 12 month Interest FREE*

Up to **40% OFF** RRP* on all our products
*conditions apply

Proudly serving the Hunter, Newcastle,
Port Stephens and The Central Coast



AW187527

WARNERS BAY: 4954 7190 • 305 Hillsborough Road
BERESFIELD: 4964 2230 • 4/19 Ballock Drive
CENTRAL COAST: 4393 2242 • PORT STEPHENS: 4984 7700 • www.lakeviewblinds.com.au

INVISI-GARD
CONCEALED SHUTTER SYSTEM

• Lock Arm and Straightdrop Awnings • Ziptrak Awnings • Carbolite Awnings • Honeycombs • PVC and Basswood Shutters •

Aluminium Shutters • Security Doors

"It was finding that balance between something that had balance between rural, that industrial undertone and doing it in a modern way."

Stewart is proud of the result.

"The kitchen's beautiful," he says.

"It's everyone's dream kitchen."

"It's already a big kitchen and you've got this big double walk-in butler's pantry next to it and it's very easy to use."

"They're a family of five."

"The kids can be in the butler's pantry in the morning making toast and not be in [Amanda's] way when preparing lunches."

Replacing a small window that looked out to the river with a big pane of glass was of benefit too.

"It's really opened up to the view now," Stewart says.

Being mindful of the old and new, the inside and out, was a theme of the entire renovation.

Stewart kept a simple palette of black, white and grey tones throughout the house.

Brush box timber floors, finished in a dark walnut stain, help make the colour scheme warmer and softer, he says.

With five bedrooms, a lounge room with a fireplace, a formal dining room, a kitchen with a casual dining area, and a billiard and rumpus room up a split level, there was plenty of space to work with.

"It was pretty much everything you can see there [in the house] is new," Stewart says.

"The furniture's new, the kitchen is new, the bathroom is new."

"It was just a really tired 1970s house."

Stewart says he didn't want to go in and "make it all French Provincial."

"It was just finding that nice balance between making it homely and warm, which is what the client really wanted, and fresh and contemporary, and hiding some of those dated elements," he says.

The remodel was finished about a year ago, and Stewart says Amanda and Craig have expressed how much they love the result.

"They said it just makes such a difference to how they use it," Stewart says.

"The country house - you want the heart of the house to be the kitchen and that's essentially what they've got now."

"The rumpus room upstairs, they never ever used it."

"Now it's one of the most popular places for the family to go."

Pictures by: Jane Kelly

■ Do you know a home the Weekender could feature? Email weekender@theherald.com.au.



Time to renovate the BATHROOM?

Come and be inspired at our centre

17 Murray Dwyer Circuit,
Mayfield West,
Steel River Estate
(off Industrial Drive)
P: 02 4014 2000
W: housinglocal.com.au

FREE ENTRY
Open 7 days

home
inspirations

Bathrooms - Kitchens - Building Products

(WV1819385)