

# Decked out

*An outdoor room saves the owners from the discomfort of a hot tin roof*

Design trends come and go and decorating tastes change through the decades, but there's one part of the Queensland house that endures fluctuating favour: the veranda.

In 1889, prominent architect George Henry Male Addison (who designed Brisbane's Exhibition Building – now The Old Museum – and the Albert Street Uniting Church) predicted the veranda would play a part in the future of the Queensland house. Today, it seems a home isn't complete without a veranda, deck or patio. But Kelly and Michael, owners of this Alderley house, discovered that not all verandas, or decks, are created equal.

"A few years ago, we punched a hole through the back of the house and added a deck, but we never used it," Kelly says. "It had a low, tin roof, so it was hot and dark. It didn't link with the

rest of the house and so we never gravitated towards it."

Kelly and Michael were renting the house from Kelly's father when the deck was added and by the time they'd bought it from him, ideas for change were fermenting.

"We had plans drawn up for raising the house and building in underneath, but we were never really comfortable with that idea," Kelly says.

That's not surprising, says Shawn Godwin, the architect behind the changes to the house as it is today.

"The fear with picking up the house and building underneath is that everything moves," he says. "VJs crack, as do mirrors and tiles, and that would have ruined the work that had already been done in a previous renovation, which was really well done," Shawn says.

"There would have been leaking and waterproofing issues. Then there's the way the



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house addresses the street. It's already quite high, and the higher you go, the more you start to feel it's a bit gangly."

Adding rooms underneath would have created spaces, but they would have been dark and constantly battling water ingress, adds Shawn. The house sits at the midway point of sloping street and overland flow is a major issue.

Shawn's changes did include work underneath the house, but it focuses on car accommodation and utility storage.

"With a house like this, where everything's pretty much on view from the street, it's better to have things like water tanks, pool pumps and air-conditioning units stored out of sight instead of down the side of the house," he says.

Kelly agrees and adds that by having those noisy mechanical units underneath the house, she doesn't have to worry about the sound disturbing the neighbours.

Additions have been made to the sides of the house, but there's nothing unsightly about them. On one side, there's a new formal entry from where a staircase takes you to the top level. Countering that extension on the other side of the house is another of almost equal size that becomes a corridor leading to the main bedroom at the back of the block.

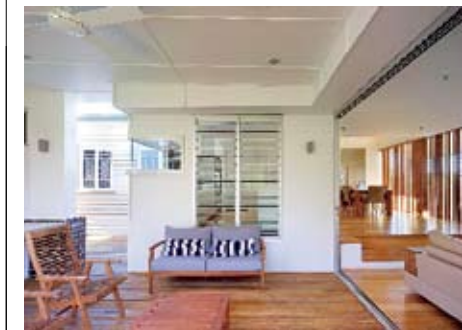
From a bird's-eye view, there are two arms extending from the original house, wrapping down the sides to embrace the new "deck" at the centre. But it's not a deck as we know it, and Shawn is grateful his clients were willing to think beyond the traditional notion of what a deck-veranda should look like.



Kelly and Michael's "outdoor room" has timber flooring but there are no balustrades. It uses space that was previously a wasteland and while there's no lawn out the back, the front and side gardens make up for that.

Shawn says he sees many people squander tens of thousands of dollars on the traditional deck. "As in Kelly and Michael's case, putting a deck on out the back isn't the wrong idea," he says. "It's a typical response to wanting outdoor space but sometimes it just isn't ideal."

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