

Flower power



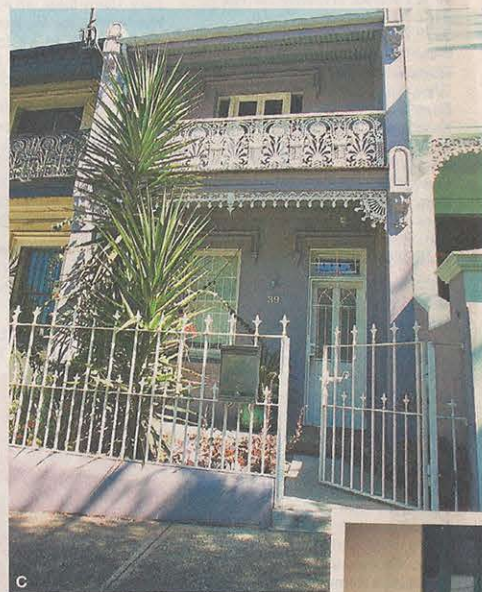
RENOVATE

Home renovation these days is so often about showing off to your nearest and dearest, often at the expense of functionality and practicality. So it is a relief to come across Stu White and Jodie McGregor's terrace in the suburb of Enmore, where the demands of family life and a thriving business top the list of priorities.

Well known among inner-west flower lovers for their Annandale florist shop, Jodie McGregor Flowers, the couple was looking to update their tired terrace in one of the areas best streets to make it stylish and practical.

They needed something that made the most of the compact site while accommodating for their business, which often sees at least one

Having survived major renovations, things are finally coming up roses for these inner-west florists, writes **Robyn Willis**. Photos **Katrina Tepper**.



A Stu and Jodie with daughters Pirra (left) and Remi **B** Instead of a balcony, the main bedroom has a wide window with storage underneath **C** The rejuvenated facade **D** The old facade **E** New stairs are tucked in behind the downstairs bathroom and laundry **F** The old house was a series of dark, poky rooms **G** The old courtyard was more urban disaster than urban jungle **H** Bi-fold doors make the transition between indoors and out **I** An all-white colour scheme is spiced up with floral arrangements



member of the family rising before dawn to head off to the flower markets.

"We wanted a contemporary home that was functional but had very clean lines," says Stu. "It was all very simple, classic and versatile – quite modern and stylish but not going out of style."

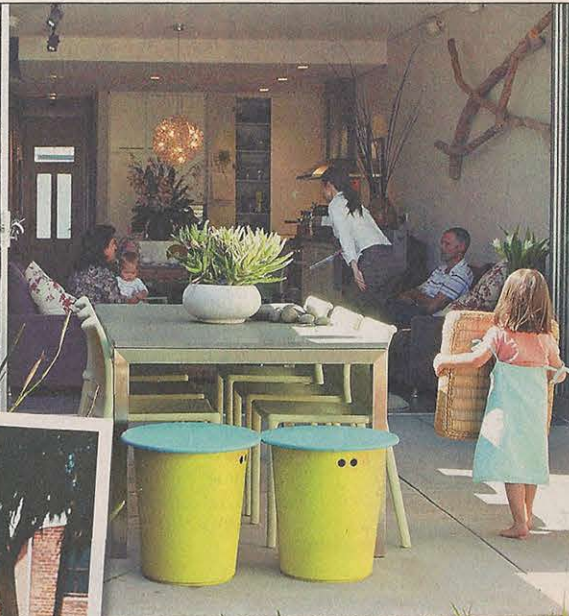
Before making way for the builders three years ago, the ground floor was a series of small rooms broken up by a central staircase.

There was limited access to the backyard, and the kitchen and bathroom on the ground floor were in desperate need of updating.

"We could see potential here," says Stu. "It was liveable but we could also see there was a whole lot to do. You would never be happy with it as it was and you would still spend a lot to tweak it."

"We wanted something that would be easy to maintain but very simple."

Jodie agreed it needed some work. "It had a nice feel about it, it was just really old," she says. "You could not do one thing with it without doing



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the next – it was a domino effect. If we wanted to do something with the bathroom then we'd have to address the rising damp. “Stu is an all-or-nothing person. I got a builder in to look at the kitchen and bathroom and he got an architect.”

Making a compromise

As it happened, the architect they called in was Vanessa Wegner, an old friend of the couple, looking to spread her wings after opening her own practice.

Stu says they have never regretted hiring someone close to them to do their plans. “She put everything into it,” he says. “She is a fantastic architect and a fantastic person. She really got it exactly the way we wanted it. She was really passionate, even about getting the right fittings.”

Lodging the development application with Marrickville Council was largely a surprisingly straightforward process, though they did require at least one change.

“In the main upstairs bedroom we wanted to have a small veranda on the back but they knocked that back,” says Jodie. “It was disappointing because all our neighbours have one but this was a new policy.”

However, council approved Vanessa’s solution to opt instead for a window running the width of the room, which not only provides excellent cross ventilation in summer but has its own casual seating and valuable storage space underneath.

“We were really lucky because it worked out quite well,” says Jodie.

Apart from the guests bedroom, which faces on to the street, the entire house was gutted. →26

