

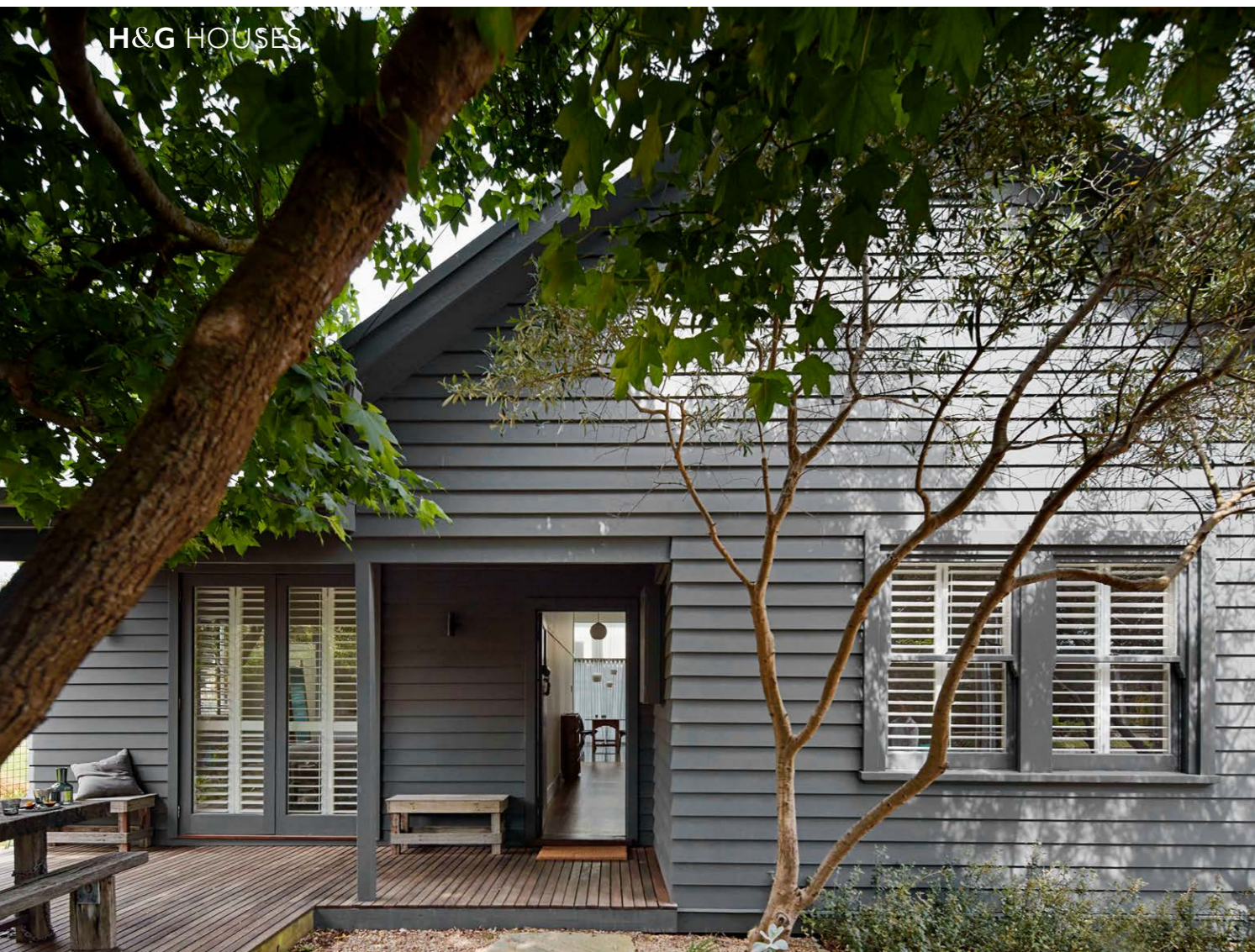
EXTERIOR While the original front of the home and the rear extension belong to far-apart eras, the subtle and purposely recessive palette, in Dulux Western Myall, helps create a smooth transition between the two. The outdoor furniture is part of the owner's existing collection. Landscape design by Florian Wild, installed by Bott Landscapes.



Refreshing
MEMORIES

With the help of an architect friend, this cherished Mornington Peninsula weekend has been revitalised for a new generation's enjoyment.

STORY *Chris Pearson* | STYLING *Natalie James* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Shannon McGrath*



Caroline Elliott, the owner of this weekender on the Mornington Peninsula, relives happy childhood memories the minute she turns her key in the door - which is as often as she can manage it. And now, thanks to an inspired renovation by architect Justin Noxon, her partner Craig Hynes and their daughters India, 12, and Lottie, 10, can create their own treasured memories here too.

Lending it a special resonance, Caroline and her brothers (whom she later bought out) inherited the property from her beloved mother back in 2014. Then it remained the humble pitched-roof weatherboard of her early years, typical of this fishing village that overlooks an often-wild Bass Strait.

Caroline and childhood friend Justin renewed their connection while attending Little Nippers with their respective children in the summer of 2018. "We hadn't seen each other since our 20s," he says. And he was intrigued when he saw the cottage. "It was an early 20th-century dwelling, not heritage architecture and a bit of a jumble, but it had a certain something," says Justin.

A 1990s renovation, which had included an extension, had left it dark, with no connection to the garden and no sense of indoor-outdoor living. "It just wasn't suited to our family," says Caroline. "As well as more light, I wanted storage and areas for the girls to have independent space as they get older."

Adds Justin: "The brief was to create an open and relaxed holiday house that respected its origins, with new living areas, a fourth bedroom and a connection to the garden, all stitched onto the existing section." While some suggested razing what was there, Caroline was having none of it. "I wanted to retain some of the original house, because it was part of my mother, who I was very close to," she says. "I felt it should have a cottage feel at the front and have something modern at the back."

Justin sliced off the extension while retaining the original double-fronted section. What was the living room is now the main bedroom, with a guestroom on the opposite side of a central corridor. Beyond, the house shakes off the shackles of its beach-shack past, opening to a soaring double-storey void soaked with sunlight and intimately connected to the garden. ▶

DINING A soaring void above the dining area ensures the downstairs is soaked with natural light throughout the day. The custom bentwood dining chairs and dining table are pieces inherited from the owner's mother. Flos 'Aim Multi-Rose' pendants, Euroluce. Curtains in Kyoto linen, In Vogue Blinds. **FACADE** The humble facade gives little hint of the pleasures that lie beyond - until the front door is opened and the eye is drawn right through the house.

THE PALETTE

Dulux
Western Myall
(exterior)

Dulux
Natural White
(interior,
throughout)

Blackbutt



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

"I FELT IT SHOULD HAVE A COTTAGE FEEL AT THE FRONT AND HAVE SOMETHING MODERN AT THE BACK." *Caroline Elliott, owner*



KITCHEN Joinery by Homestead Cabinets & Furniture. Wall-side benchtop in Corian Glacier White; island bench is blackbutt. Flos 'Aim Multi-Rose' pendants, Euroluce. **LIVING** *Below and opposite* Gervasoni 'Ghost' sofa and 'Gray 49' coffee table, both Anibou. Window seat and scatter cushions custom-made by Penny Cooke Design. Timber stool, Fenton & Fenton. Nest rug, Armadillo. 18th-century oak chair inherited from the owner's mother. The wall art is a family piece.

The void honours the rituals of holiday living. "We put a large dining table smack-bang in the centre," says Justin. "It celebrates family and friends - literally and figuratively the heart of the home." The sculptural blackbutt island is designed for both communal food preparation and as a de facto second dining table.

The children's bedrooms are located above the kitchen/dining area, on opposite sides of the void but playfully connected via internal shutters. "They have their own space, but can connect with each other and can see what's going on below," he says.

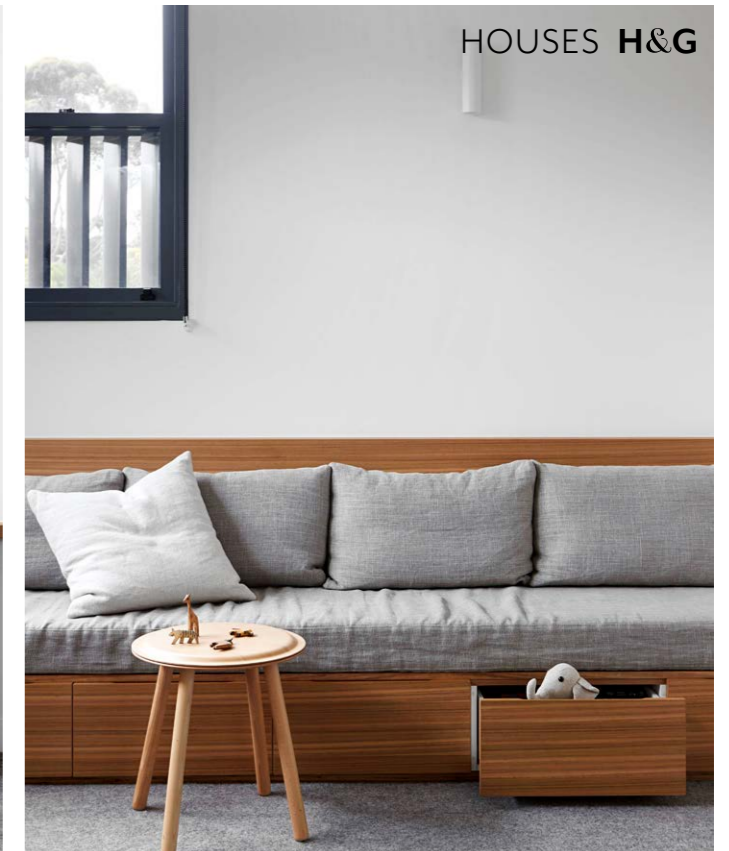
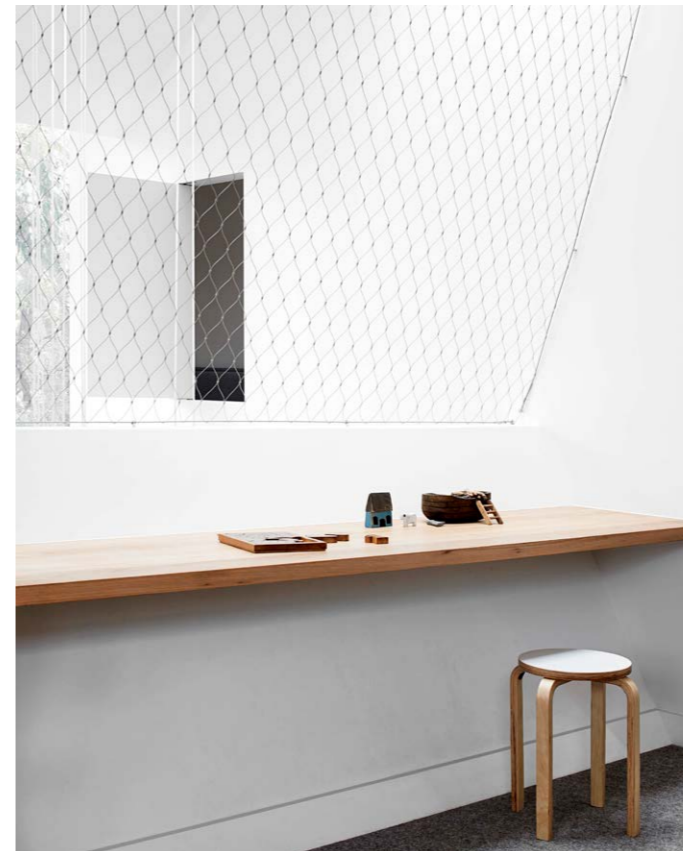
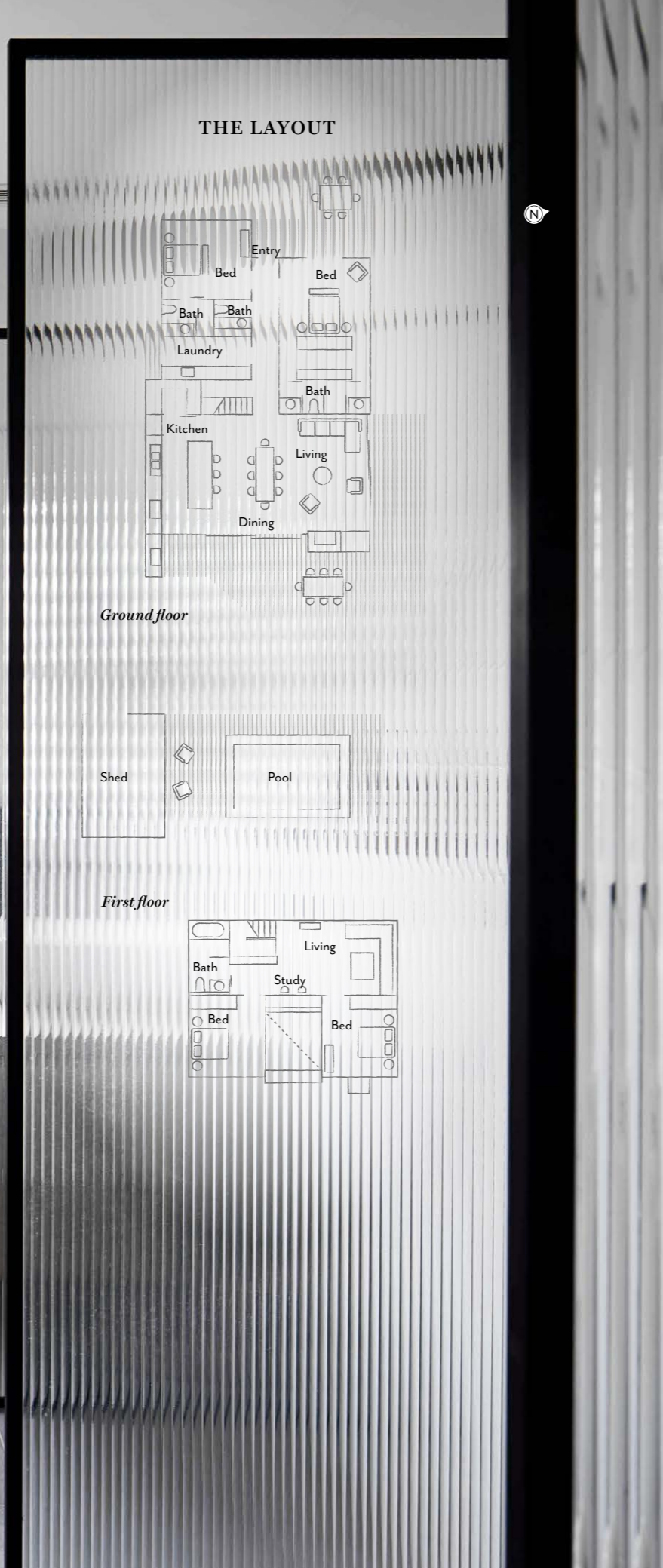
Meanwhile, "sensitive to context", an existing mature willow myrtle tree at the rear and liquidambar at the front were both retained, with the canopy of the former framed by a massive window in the void.

Angles in the new section, such as the asymmetrical chimney and the main volume with its pitched ceilings - turned 90 degrees to face north - offer a nod to the pitched roof in the front. ▶



THIS IS THE LIFE

This is a home for all seasons. "It's so warm in winter with the fire and in summer, we gravitate to the pool," says Caroline. "We spend most of our time in the large living area." The family, both the adults and children, are also keen entertainers. "It's an open house. The outdoor shower is great for washing off after the beach, so no one is traipsing sand through the house." When the younger visitors have gone, the north-facing deck is a lovely spot for a gin and tonic or a good book.



STUDY *Above left* Blackbutt bench by Homestead Cabinets & Furniture. FlexMesh stainless-steel wire mesh infill, AAA Metal Suppliers. **UPSTAIRS LIVING** *Above right* A built-in banquette in India and Lottie's play space doubles as storage. Blackbutt joinery by Homestead Cabinets & Furniture. Cushions by Penny Cooke Design. Stool, Ikea. **MAIN BEDROOM** Bedlinen, L&M Home. Stool, Fenton & Fenton. X-Light downlight, Richmond Lighting. Skagerak Georg floor mirror, Top3 by Design. Original Tasmanian oak flooring. **POWDER ROOM** *Below* Catalano Green 48 bench-mount basin, Rogerseller. Astra Walker Icon tapware in Iron Bronze, E&S. Custom vanity. **MAIN ENSUITE** *Opposite* An open shower in the light-filled ensuite ensures space is maximised. Kit Kat mosaic wall tiles and Urban floor tile, all Academy Tiles+Surfaces. Surface-mount Nordlux UFO Oyster White wall light, Richmond Lighting. Fluted glass shower screen, MS Glass. Louvres supplied and installed by Melbourne Plantation Shutters. ▶



Meanwhile, hardwood decking wraps around the rear, extending the living areas. This is encased in a pergola, forming the wired framework for espaliered Virginia creeper, which will create a “green veil and an outdoor room”. Again blurring the lines of indoors and out, the natural interiors palette includes the polished slab, existing Victorian ash floorboards at the front and blackbutt timber detailing, with walls in crisp Dulux Natural White for freshness.

Caroline and Justin shopped for new furniture together. “We didn’t want to clutter the house up with a lot of furniture. I wanted a calming feel, without too much stuff to trip over or to tidy up,” she says. “Key pieces were my mum’s, such as the dining table and chairs. We tied them in with the modern aesthetic for simple and easy living.”

Justin loves the way the house respects and integrates the original cottage, with the new seamlessly growing out of the old. “It has the richness and warmth of the home Caroline loved so much, but is also contemporary in a way that doesn’t overpower. It’s not a big showpiece, but has a humility, embodying the spirit of the area.”

Caroline is similarly rapt. “The light is absolutely amazing. And, with the void and the picture window, it has an amazing sense of space,” she says. “We have our own zones, but can come together when we want to.” And it resonates for another reason: “My mum’s friends, who spent lots of time here in the past, say they can still see Mum in it. That is lovely.”

Noxon, South Melbourne, Victoria; (03) 9650 8988 or noxon.com.au.

EXTERIOR Decking, in blackbutt from Everist Timber, wraps around the rear to extend the living areas. The whole deck is encased in a pergola with wires stretching across the top. These wires form the framework for a newly planted Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) which, once mature, will add a green veil to the home and create the feel of an outdoor room.



1

THE SOURCE

Reference the natural energy of a coastal location with tones inspired by stormy seas and dynamic cloudy skies.

2



3



4



5



7



6



8



Produced by Saffron Sylvester.

1 Stump Tree stool, \$479, Harpers Project. 2 Thonet GmbH 218 chair in Black, \$1665, Anibou. 3 Chorus artwork by Carissa Karamarko, POA, Saint Cloche. 4 Georg floor mirror by Chris Liljenberg Halstroem for Skagerak \$832, Top3 by Design. 5 Aalto vase in Rain, \$299, Iittala. 6 Joe 2-seater sofa, \$2250, MCM House. 7 J'ai Soif carafe and tumbler, \$89, Maison Balzac. 8 Linen quilt cover set in White, \$365/queen size, Cultiver. For Where to Buy, see page 190. H&G