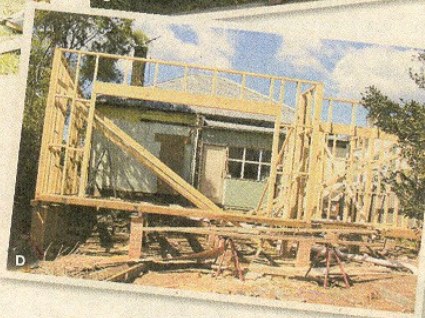
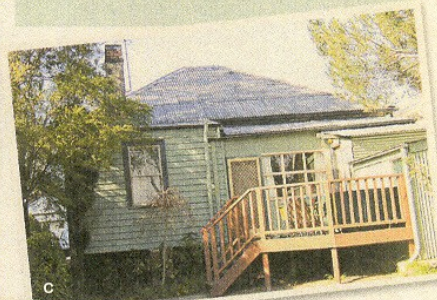


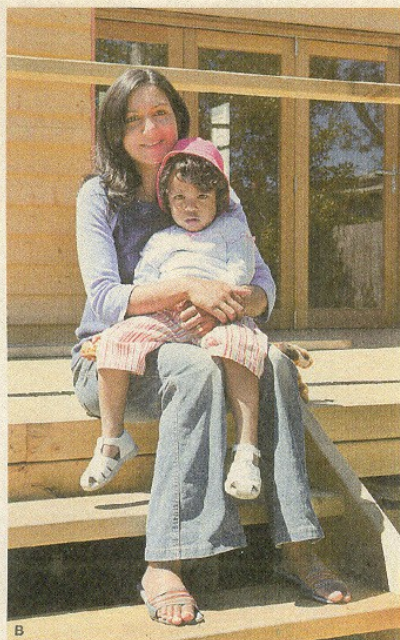
**WHAT WE'RE DOING**

- Extending and altering an old timber cottage
- Building a rear addition
- Adding a bedroom
- Reconfiguring and relocating the kitchen and laundry
- Building new family, dining and deck areas overlooking the back yard



Wood works

A Ryde couple are extending their 100-year-old timber cottage while retaining its charm, writes **Lily Zdilar**. Photos John Fotiadis.



Built in 1905, this timber cottage will lose none of its original character when it celebrates its centenary with a new addition and alteration.

Mihiri and Rajiv liked their timber cottage just as it was and, initially, had no long-term plan to stay.

However, once daughter Maya, now two, arrived, they decided that it was time to live in a "nice house".

"We'd spent 10 months looking around the inner west until we found this house," says Mihiri.

"We're not renovators and have never done this before. We simply thought we'd move on when we needed to."

However, they soon discounted the option of moving on.

"The market was going crazy at the time. The houses we wanted we thought were over-priced and we didn't see any value for money," says Rajiv.

"We thought, 'Why compromise? We'll just build a house to the standard that we want'. Basically, it was more affordable and we like our street and neighbours," adds Mihiri.

Renovating, therefore, became their most cost-effective solution.

Four bedrooms

The cottage originally had two bedrooms, a kitchen, combined living and dining area, one bathroom and a rear lean-to extension with an external laundry.

Today, it's well on the way to becoming a contemporary home but, unlike many renovations, the house is retaining its original charming look while being modernised.

The new addition will result in a four-bedroom home (the main including an ensuite), a large open-plan family/living/dining area and a spacious entertaining deck at the rear.

The exterior of the addition is being completed in Baltic pine to match the authentic profile of the house.

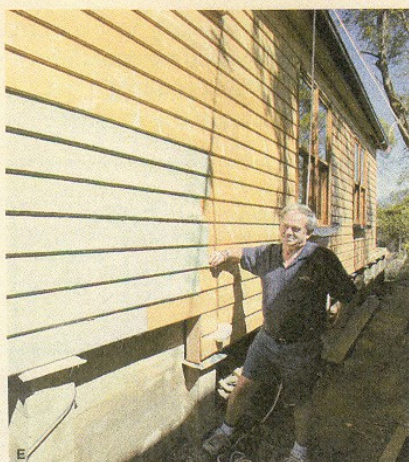
With many unsympathetic alterations dotting the landscape, master builder Gunter Schmid says you rarely see weatherboard additions anymore.

"I haven't done one for more than 10 years," says Gunter, who's matched the new and old timber profiles identically.

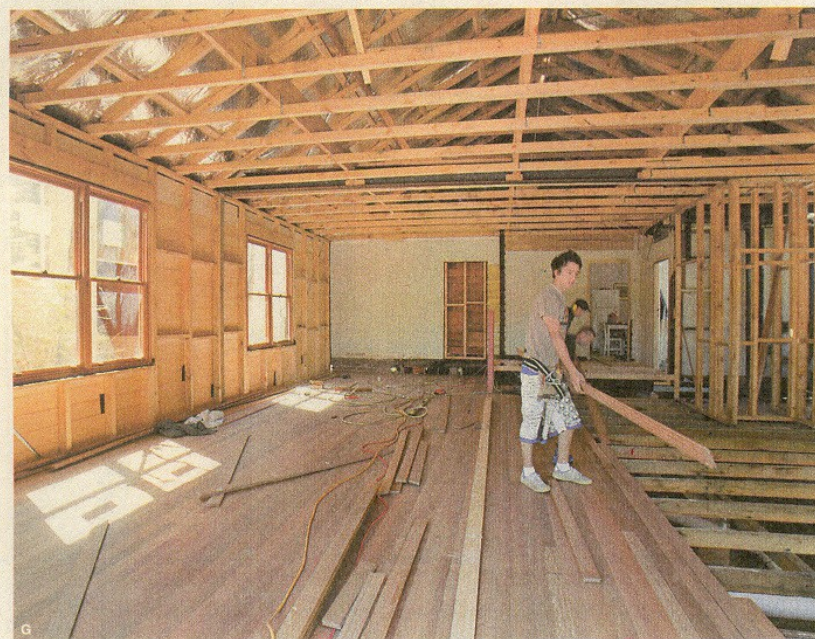
"Even the timber yard where I purchased this closed in the last week," he says.

"I'd have been disgusted with myself if we'd changed the look of the house," says Mihiri, adding that, after growing up in Brisbane, she's always had a fondness for timber houses.

"The cottage look really appealed to us – sort of a Balmain cottage look, but in Ryde. It's quite unique."



A The addition is being completed in baltic pine to match the authentic profile of the house **B** Mihiri with daughter Maya **C** How the back of the cottage used to look **D** The frame for the extension in place **E** Builder Gunter Schmid shows where the original timber ends and the extension begins **F** When complete, the revamped home will have four bedrooms **G** The front of the house retains its original 1905 character **H** Architect Lalit Mital offered two design options – a second storey and the rear addition that was eventually chosen



Two options

Architect Lalit Mital presented two design proposals – a second storey and the rear addition that was eventually chosen.

"The upper floor would have been more expensive," says Lalit.

"The alternative option [priced at around \$190,000, including the kitchen] almost doubles the size of the original house.

"The main thing was to have four bedrooms, master ensuite and to take advantage of the north-easterly aspect in the new living areas."

The additional roof structure would have added a substantial amount of extra water, via the downpipes, into the sloping rear yard, so the builder suggested directing the outflow directly into the streetfront stormwater, while still complying with local Ryde Council regulations.

The new Colorbond roof will complement the grey-and-cream trim, while the interior will feature an ironbark timber floor and a new french provincial country kitchen.

Outside, the Colorbond pergola will include a polycarbonate insert for added light, and a childproof gate and fencing.

Mihiri, Rajiv and Maya have been living nearby with family during construction, which is due to be completed in a few weeks – just short of its 12-week deadline.

Although not at home, they visit the site every day and have taken the precaution of installing an alarm to keep the house secure. ■■■



Retaining authenticity

The couple were so keen to keep the home's character, they specified that the same or similar materials be used throughout to avoid the obvious "new" look that renovations often have.

Unfortunately, the addition has swallowed about half the yard – and landscaping that featured on garden-makeover show *Backyard Blitz* about four years ago, though the couple has salvaged most of the plants and will redo the landscaping.

While the couple didn't want to detract from the uniqueness of the house, they also wanted

the renovation to add value. "We know we won't be here forever and that things such as ensuites, decks and open-plan living would appeal to buyers if we ever decide to sell," says Mihiri.

Gunter says any potential white-ant problems have been dealt with by introducing preventative measures such as ant caps, which act as a deterrent.

These have become a standard with home-insurance policies, which also require yearly termite inspections.

MORE INFORMATION

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