

Herald Sun

home

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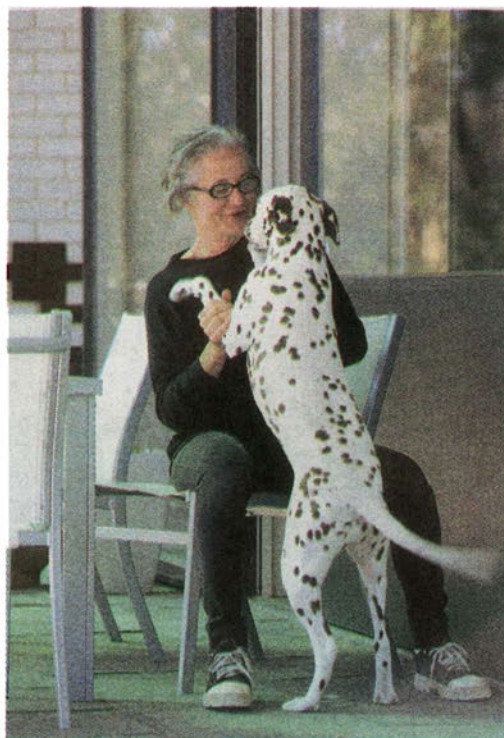
Why white works

Adele Palmer's natural approach

Way to live

Inside a surprising farmhouse





In black and white

When your passions are horses and fresh air, it seems sensible to combine the two into a running double

Words **Tony Fawcett** Photography **Mark Taylor**

Well doggone

Cynthia Goudie and dalmatian Roses find time to play (above left)

Intriguing

The open-plan living area features a farm gate showing works of art (above centre)

Exercise

The lap pool has helped to nurse Cynthia Goudie back to health (above right)

Reading room

The shower room and living area are separated by a bookcase (right)

Unusual

A timber screen belonging to Cynthia was integrated into the design (far right, top)

Horsing around

Cynthia and horse Snorkelling can be seen from the kitchen (far right, centre)

Dining in

The elongated layout in the kitchen sums up the home's mood (far right, below)

They call it the peek-a-boo farmhouse and by any standards it's full of surprises. Here with a cat called Itch and a dalmatian called Roses live a former Boston couple, Cynthia and Ian Goudie, in a house with differences.

A few of those differences include:

- a kitchen with picture window views into stables
- a shower room with views through the shelves of a bookcase to the house's main living area, and vice versa (for modesty, large books can be placed in the shelves at strategic places)
- a chimney of white and random black bricks created to match the owners' dalmatian dog
- a lap pool of heated dam water that looks as if it overflows into a nearby dam

When we visit, award-winning co-architect Luke Middleton is on hand to point out the farmhouse's intriguing qualities.

He paints it as "all about secret views and glimpses of other realities, like a Salvador Dali painting, a surreal juxtaposition of elements".

You can only believe him.

This farmhouse-cum-horse stud is out of the ordinary.

From a distance, it looks like a long farm shed. But approach closer and its layers seemingly peel back to reveal independent segments.

Here is one giant shed of a structure under which all aspects of living are carried out, whether horse or human.

Humans have one wing of the dwelling and the horses reside in "The West Wing".

There is also a "guest pavillion" next to the stables, and a "foal-watch room", where it's possible to lie in bed while gazing through safety glass on a young horse's progress.

A superbly set up racing room includes pay-TV for race odds and a traditional farm gate in the open-space living area can be turned in any direction to display current favourite works of art.

A Japanese-style slatted bathroom with a semi-enclosed tub and rough-hewn basins of raw stone are just other intriguing touches.

There are few coverings on windows

and those that exist are see-through so as not to hide the expansive views.

In the midst of all this is Cynthia Goudie (husband Ian, CEO of a biotechnic company, is working this day).

Sitting with dalmatian Roses by the dalmatian-inspired black and white open fireplace and chimney, she seems just as fascinating as her house.

A trained nurse from Boston and a former city girl who regularly writes on Australian life for a Boston newspaper, she found herself ensconced in the Victorian countryside when, following a rush of blood, she became the co-owner of a broodmare.

Because the Goudies were then living in Sydney's Mosman, there was little room for a horse, nor the others that followed.

So Kyneton country beckoned.

But the couple demanded different. They wanted Australian outback flavour. Not for them an ordinary farmhouse.

There were the horses to be housed. And they loved entertaining. Then there were the works of "famous and not so famous" artists Cynthia had been collecting for nearly 15 years.

The Goudies needed space, and

options. Cynthia had earlier been in a serious accident and required regular swimming therapy (hence the lap pool).

Young architectural firm Brearley Middleton had a reputation for creating the unusual so it was given the challenge.

The company's masterstroke was placing everything under the one roof. This dramatically saved on costs.

Luke Middleton, now of design company EME, is also proud of how the stretched layout plays up the horizontal aspect of the Australian countryside before it.

He describes the farmhouse not as a palace in the landscape, "more a stripe across the landscape".

It is, he says, ideal for the Goudies' love of the country and lust for life.

When the couple moved in, the dwelling was still being built.

In a series of legendary parties and visits from city guests, a chandelier was hung from the roof of the horse loose-box, renamed "the ballroom", and it was used both as party venue and guest accommodation.

But while the Goudies love entertaining, they equally like being alone in their distinctive part of the Australian bush.

