

REVIVING AN OUTBACK CLASSIC

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK AND TIM WORDS BY NANNETTE HOLLIDAY

When Tony and Pam Davis purchased Narwietooma Station, almost 200 kilometres west of Alice Springs, they turned to Brad Claydon, owner of Invision NT to revive the classic homestead into their new home.



Tony and Pam Davis.

‘We’ve known Brad for more than ten years, and he’s worked with us on several of our properties. He’s creative, great to work with, listens and understands our needs,’ said Pam Davis. ‘Narwietooma was a huge undertaking. Throughout the makeover, his resourcefulness, perfectionism and attention to detail made the arduous task fun, but also ensured complete satisfaction.’

Narwietooma Station has been in the Connellan family since the land was originally purchased in 1938. Edward Connellan, who established Connellan Airways in 1943, moved his family into a Sydney Williams hut in 1955 and built the homestead in the mid-sixties using much of the stock camp team including Clifford Possum and Paddy Warai to assist.

When Tony Davis purchased Narwietooma in December 2015 it was more than a good business decision; it filled the gap between all the surrounding properties of Glen Helen, Derwent, Hamilton Downs and Amburla that he already owned. Tony is a third generation Territorian and having grown up on nearby

Hamilton Downs Station, it was like coming home for him.

Albert Namatjira made this country famous. His paintings of white-trunked ghost gums set against the red and purple mountain ranges and sandy creek beds captured the rugged natural beauty of the unique MacDonnell Range landscape. Mr Davis has a photo of himself as a child painting with Albert at the old Hamilton Downs homestead where he often visited. Bordering the West MacDonnell Ranges, the property and homestead offer outstanding views. ‘Tony loves the ranges. The original homestead is positioned perfectly, but nothing had changed inside since the sixties,’ added Pam. ‘Virtually everything but the exterior walls were removed. It probably would’ve been cheaper to build a new home, but what we’ve now created with Brad gives it true character.’ ‘The windows and many doors were replaced with large plain glass to take full advantage of the surrounding views and ranges,’ said Brad. ‘The ever-changing colours of the region can be seen from almost every room.’

The windows and many doors were replaced with large plain glass to take full advantage of the surrounding views and ranges,’ said Brad. ‘The ever-changing colours of the region can be seen from almost every room.



The flooring is polished concrete, made using sand from the local creek containing all sorts of rocks and pebbles in varying shapes, colours and sizes. Brad spent six weeks grinding and polishing to get the very best result.



Old railway sleepers and antique cattle branding tools create the barbecue area, roofing iron shields the new outdoor 'bathroom' area, steel railway tracks are the support beams where walls were knocked out, and the island kitchen bench is a polished concrete slab on a railway track



Brad created a rustic entertaining area out of recycled materials complete with built in BBQ



Large recycled railway beams were used to frame the room creating both a design and practical feature.



After removing the floor coverings, it revealed rough concrete, which Brad spent six weeks grinding and polishing. 'The result is amazing and varied because the concrete was made using sand from the local creek containing all sorts of rocks and pebbles in varying shapes, colours and sizes,' said Pam. 'Even the green painted concrete enclosed verandah areas have come up brilliantly. It's a working cattle station, not a tourist property or show home. I didn't want anything fancy. It had to be easy to clean and maintain. Brad even utilised abandoned material from around the property. Old railway sleepers and antique cattle branding tools create the barbecue area, roofing iron shields the new outdoor 'bathroom' area, steel railway tracks are the support beams where walls were knocked out, and the island kitchen bench is a polished concrete slab on a railway track. This was poured on-site and used local garnets given by a friend. Our excursions were trips to the dump collecting lots of rusty metal that Brad used ensuring the finished look of the home belonged with the red dirt of the country.' Sold as a six bedroom, four bathroom home, the homestead now has five large bedrooms, three bathrooms, an inside cool-room and butcher room, a variety of external accesses and an outside shower area and barbecue. 'We purposely don't have the latest hi-tech gadgetry,' said Pam. 'Technology only complicates things in the bush. To assist in power fluctuations, we have solar power backed up by a generator. While I have a dishwasher and large stove, both are freestanding, and if there are ever any issues, they can be easily removed. 'Brad's good at knowing what's available in recycled materials and quality new products. As well as being creative, he's practical and meticulous about his work, but also fun to work with. He really cares, is dependable and sincere. I'd give him a ten out of ten. I thoroughly enjoyed this renovation with Brad, so that speaks for itself.' Invision NT constructs new dwellings, does alterations, creates additions and provides the joinery as part of their building works. 'The joinery can be simple and budget-friendly, or high-end quality one-off finishes,' said Brad. 'We work with our clients to produce their required result within their budget.' For further information contact Invision NT 15 Travers Street Darwin NT. T: 8948 2964 E: admin@invisionnt.com.au www.invisionnt.com.au



The 'donkey' heater for the outdoor shower.



Old yellow cattle rails were used to hide the air condition units on the back porch.