



Re-working history

In a long history of architectural styles, the latest phase in Australia is restoring 1920s Federation homes

Heritage orders are placed on buildings to ensure we remember old traditions and keep our history alive. Australia's Federation homes, built in the 1920s and '30s are now part of this heritage.

But as our requirements change, homeowners are forced to find the middle ground between preserving history and creating a modern living environment.

The house pictured here is a classic example of the work undertaken on many Federation homes. A herit-

age listing prevents altering the front of the house out of period character, so extra space was added to the rear.

The addition is two storeys high on the sloping section, but only half has two levels. One side contains the kitchen and laundry with a study above. The living area on the other side has a 4.8m-high ceiling, says architect Rob Wever.

"The owners wanted a large but informal living area that didn't take up too much of the back yard," he says. "What we've created is a great

hall effect, which was not unusual in grander homes of the same era. It provides plenty of extra room and fits naturally onto the site without changing the pitch of the roof."

Builder Elvis Mardini says the existing house was restored in period style and the same fine details carried over into the addition. Brushbox timber floors feature throughout, as do the detailed ceiling mouldings and dado treatments. The second tier of windows are in period style too, but also give a hotel lobby effect without

detracting from the home's character.

"As Australia moves through phases in history, architects like to come up with a new style to commemorate that time," says the architect.

"The Federation homes came about at the turn of the century, and during the last 10 years it's become popular to restore and renovate these homes – which is great as it means there will always be something here to remind us of our past," he says.

A landing at the back of the existing house gives a glimpse into the

extension through internal louvred windows. A short flight of stairs, leads down to the living area and helps define the dining area, nestled underneath the window.

The laundry is closed off from public view, but the kitchen is open to the living area. On the lower level of the two storey extension the kitchen has a sloped ceiling, continuing the roofline from the study above.

There is plenty of standing room at the bench and around cooking appliances, but cabinetry and the



Facing page: The Heritage listing on this home prevented any alterations to its front elevation. Instead, an addition to the rear and complete internal restoration have allowed for a modern lifestyle. The new-look house, renovated by Elvis Mardini, was runner up in the New South Wales HIA awards.

Above: The rear addition is brick, in keeping with the rest of the home. It allows for outdoor living, with French doors leading to a tiled and covered patio.