

Inside the home of 'Bluestone Magazine'



So very Warrnambool: the classic, double-fronted late 50s brick veneer with plenty of glazing and a sunny patio. Image: Clinton Krause.

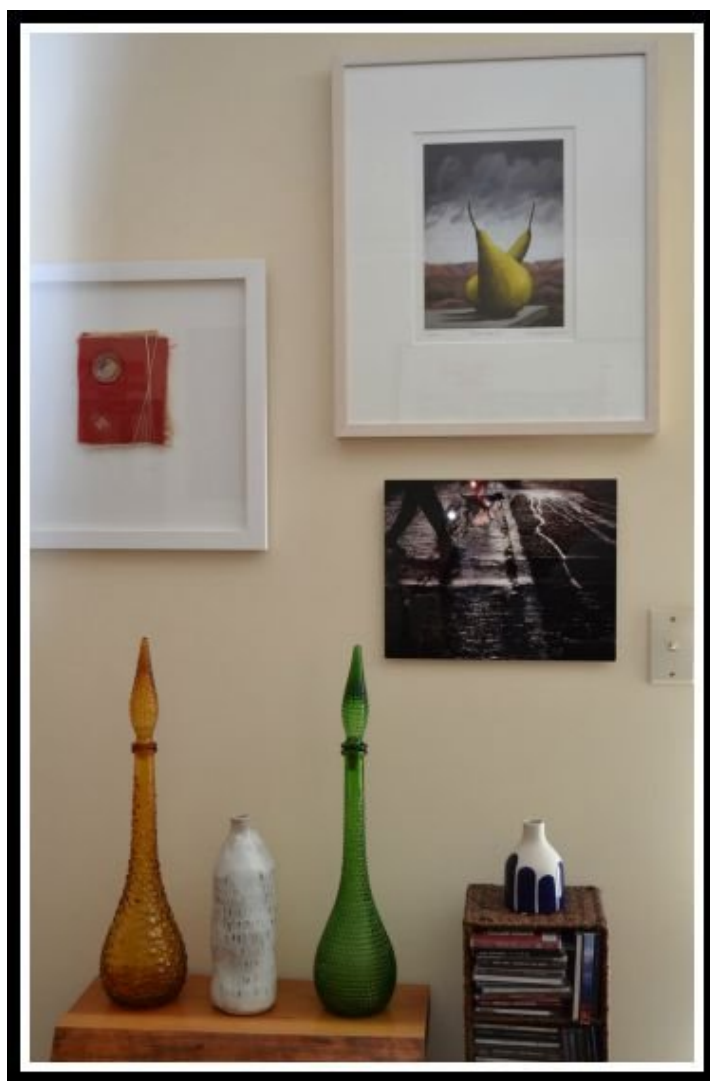
Bluestone columnist and architect CLINTON KRAUSE previously worked in Daylesford before relocating his business to Warrnambool. Clinton explores the architectural styles that gives our region so much character. [Visit his website here.](#)

I thought for my column this month I would keep it a little in-house and stroll a few doors down the street from my home to the home of editors and founders of *Bluestone Magazine* – Carol Altmann and Louise North.

Since buying the home in late 2013, there has been little change to the property's original street facade – a gracious and well-proportioned double fronted late 1950's brick veneer with oodles of north facing glazing.

But a steady stream of tradesmen over the last year hints at the ongoing improvements that Carol and Louise have embarked upon.

A new home for [Topsy Glass](#) studio (Louise's *other* identity) has emerged from within the original garage, and paving to the elevated terrace and a capacious covered entertainment area are just a few of the home improvements that have raised the bar for other neighbours in the street.



Art and quirky collectables feature throughout the home, including these retro genie bottles and works by Sue Ferrari, Peter Clayfield and Jan Allen. Image: Clinton Krause.

Sitting in their light-filled and airy loungeroom for our interview, I am struck by the predominant ambience of casual and inviting comfort that the interior décor exudes.

Surprisingly, both women laugh at my suggestion that the spaces have been styled with a solicitous artistic eye. But I am sure that visitors and *Bluestone* readers would support my observation.

Indeed, it is the conception and ongoing dedication to *Bluestone* that has spawned a direct and rapid connection for the couple to the arts and cultural community of the south-west and, as I look around the home, I recognise the work of many of the artists, sculptors and craftspeople that have featured in previous editions.

“Occupational hazard!” quips Louise and as we tour the home, she points out various pieces that have been seconded during their interviews with artists.



The original General Motors Holden 'Frigidaire' free-standing oven which has so many miles under the hood, but is still cookin' (but not with gas). Image: Clinton Krause.

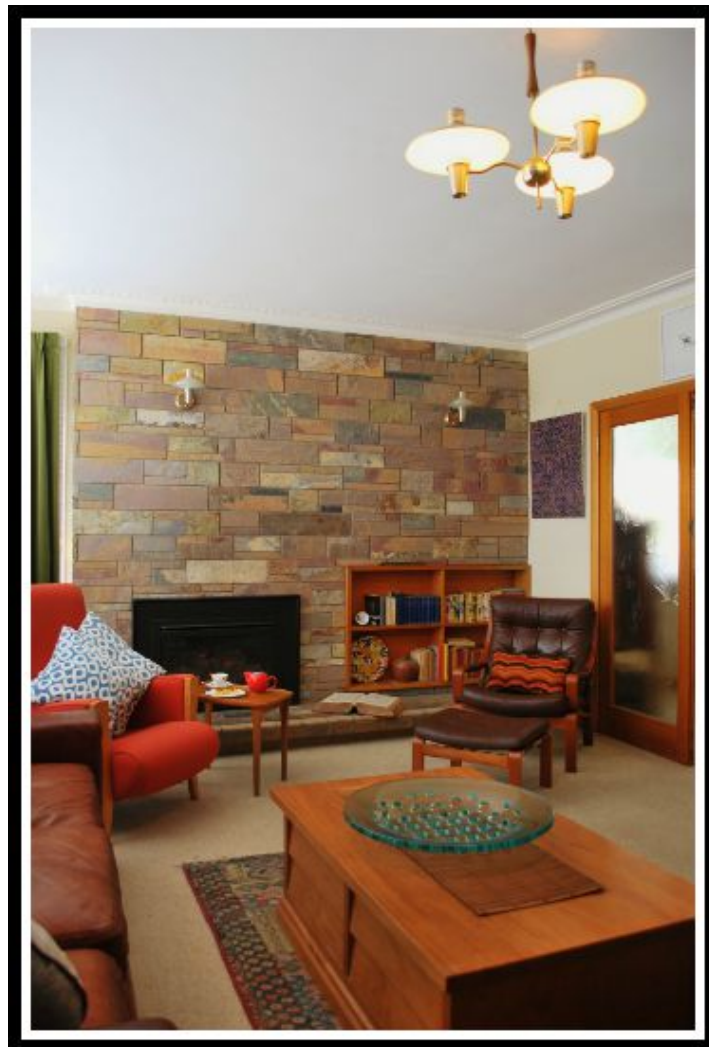
Every wall and room is adorned with both new and quirky retro art, sculpture or objects arranged with an intuitive and deft understanding of balance, colour and proportion.

The original features of the house have been retained and are cherished for their authenticity and domestic vibe – the crazy stone fireplace with spun aluminium wall lights reminiscent of Star Trek's 'Starship Enterprise', the bespoke pink bathroom complete with sunken bath and jaunty angled laminex cabinetry, period wallpapers and light fittings, and the piece de' resistance – an imposing 1960s Frigidaire upright

cooker in the kitchen.

In its day, this was a top-of-the-line model, complete with inbuilt fluorescent task lighting, onboard power points and a commodious oven capable of dealing with even the largest side of mutton or Christmas turkey.

Carol demonstrates an unexpected feature of this domestic wonder (proudly emblazoned with a badge that states “made by General Motors Holden”) – with the quick release of a concealed catch, the top panel swings up like a car bonnet for access to the inner workings of the hotplates. Looks like an oil change and tune up would be “easy as pie” too!



The light-filled lounge with original light fittings and crazy-stone feature wall. Image: Clinton Krause.

We return to the loungeroom to enjoy a cuppa and discuss the philosophical concepts of “home” for our generation living in Australia.

With perhaps “rose-tinted” retrospection, the three of us recall our childhood experiences of living in neighborhoods filled with double and triple fronted brick veneers, gaggles of kids streaming in and out of each others homes, out on the bike all day (but home by 5) and commandeering the street for games of ballsports or hopscotch.

With the realities of a changing world increasingly imposing itself on the Australian ‘way of life ’ and challenging our sublime naivety, perhaps it understandable that today more than ever we seek refuge and sanctuary within the comforts of these mid-century homes and the happy memories of an innocent youth they evoke.

