

A Valley Destination

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARILYN COLLINS

The highly sought rural countryside of Glendonbrook, north of Singleton, has become a haven for people seeking a tree change, especially Sydneysiders wanting a tranquil retreat where they can spend time relaxing, gardening or tending a small herd of beef cattle.

Inspired by mutual friends who had opted for such a tree change, the owners of this Glendonbrook property five years ago decided to “bite the bullet” and acquired a picturesque, 160-acre property comprising rolling hills and a flowing creek.

The acreage offered picturesque views on all sides which definitely helped to seal the deal, not to mention the peace and tranquillity – the only sound to be heard was the whispering breezes!

The pasture was perfect for their intention to graze a small herd of beef cattle with a good water supply sourced from dams and a creek running around the block, now dubbed the “Horse Shoe paddock”.

Once the land was purchased, the couple started out on what they described as “one of their biggest challenges” – building and creating a new home and establishing a house garden. ▶





“Stibbard Homes of Singleton came highly recommended to us as a home builder and they certainly have lived up to their reputation,” said one of the satisfied owners.

Stibbard’s designer received a brief to design an environmentally friendly home (to include water tanks and a worm farm waste water treatment system), in a most economic and maintenance-free design. The Sydney-based owners wanted a relaxed “home-away-from-home”, country-style home where they as a couple could enjoy the country lifestyle yet also be joined at times by their family and grandchildren.

The single-level, sprawling residence was built across the top of a spur on a hillside, in a private position that is virtually hidden from the road below and is accessed by a long, winding driveway to the top through two gates.

The exterior of the three-bedroom home is a combination of Rockcote Ultrafine painted brick, and Colorbond corrugated iron with a Colorbond skillion roof and wide verandah. The solar passive design eliminated the need to install air conditioning, however, ceiling fans offer summer comfort and a wood fire gives winter warmth. The outcome is a comfortable internal environment, regardless of the season.

The main living area occupies the central part of the home, with bedrooms at both ends of a long hallway leading away from the living area. The central, open-plan living area design encompasses a galley-style kitchen with an open-shelved pantry. High ceilings with louvred skylight windows above the living area allow natural light to flood into the room.

The owners opted for steel trowelled and sealed concrete floors in the main thoroughfare areas of the living rooms and hallway which are easy-care and ideal for a country lifestyle which involves coming in from working with the herd of beef cattle or garden area. Scattered floor rugs have been used to add a touch of colour and soften the overall look of the interior.

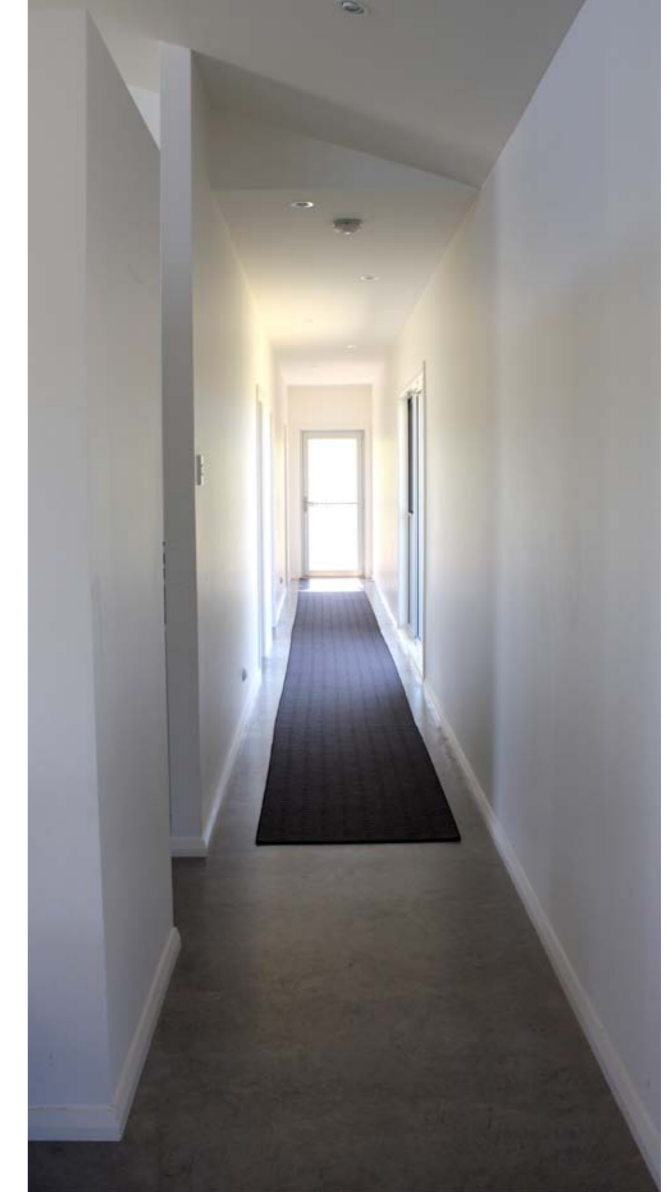
The master bedroom has a walk-in wardrobe which leads into an en-suite bathroom. Windows strategically placed on both sides of the bedroom capture the superb rural vista. At the other end of the long hallway are two guest bedrooms and a master bathroom.

A covered verandah across the northern elevation of the residence accommodates an outdoor entertaining space with room for a barbecue and outdoor setting. ▶





The owners wanted a relaxed “home-away-from-home” where they could enjoy the country lifestyle with family and grandchildren.





Consideration was given to accommodating additional visiting guests with the creation of extra sleeping accommodation off the large garage and machinery shed below the main house. Stepping through sliding glass doors, you enter a spacious, carpeted bedroom with room for any overflow and its own separate bathroom.

The owner of the house has established a lawn and self-care garden with plants such as lavender, geraniums and roses.

The end result is the creation of a retreat getaway destination where the owners can live a country life far from the madding crowd and indulge in life's simple pleasures in the great outdoors. 🏡

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