

# Love in the walls



*With the help of friends and family, Linnie Healy and Phil Williams created a coastal retreat that really does have love inside the walls.*

"Let me show you this," says Linnie, excitedly scrolling through photos on her phone. She finds the shot she's looking for – a huge beam with a heart embedded in the texture of the wood. "I was so thrilled when I saw that," smiled Linnie. "It's gorgeous. It had to be covered up, but I know that it's there." The beam is now encased in the walls of the kitchen, concealed like all hearts, but still a vital part of this home filled with life, love and family.

When Linnie and Phil decided to build a home together, they approached Ashley Beaumont from Beaumont Concepts to create a design to suit their lifestyle. "We told Ashley what was important to us," said Linnie. "We wanted lots of light and we definitely wanted to make the most of our view."

The elevated block in San Remo commands panoramic views across the bay from Cape Woolamai to Newhaven. For Ashley, the challenge was to find a balance between capturing the view and creating a sustainable building. "Coastal sites are always challenging," explained Ashley. "The main reason people buy this kind of block is to capture the views, which are to the south. But you also need to get northern light into the main part of the house."

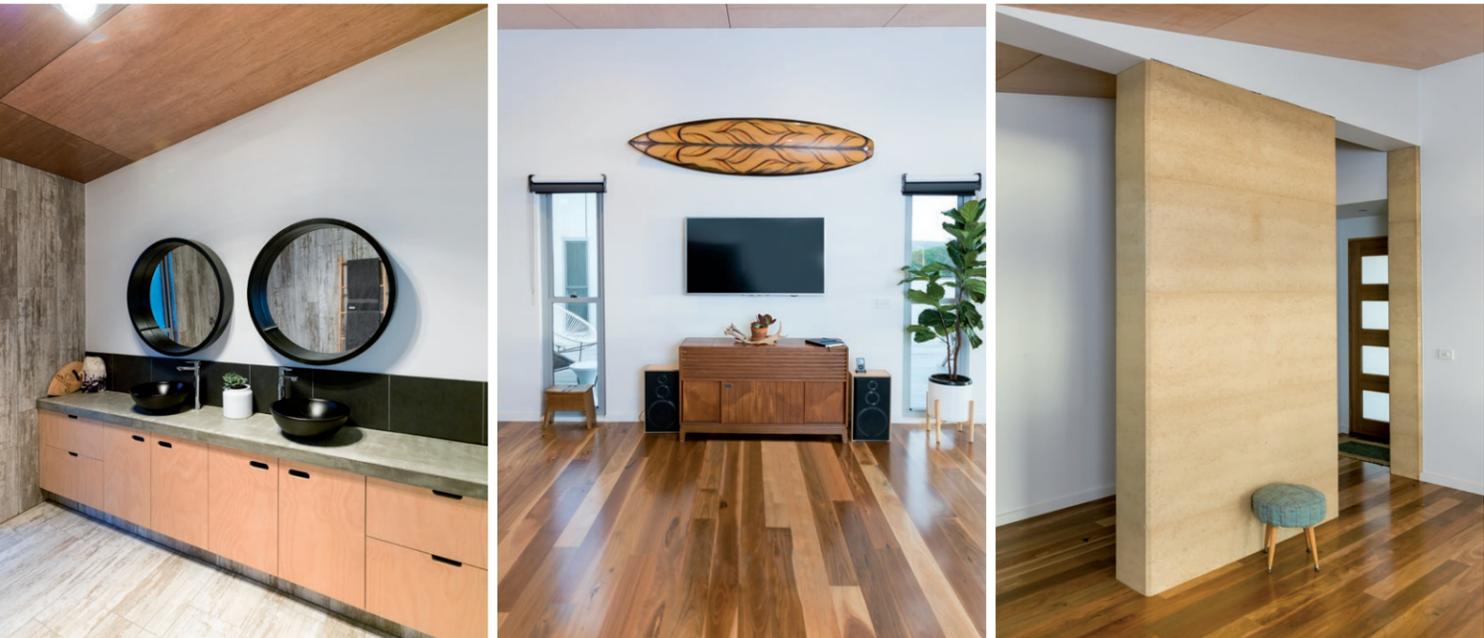
The design evolved as Ashley devised ideas to capture as much northern light as possible, while working around the height restrictions of the site. The house has a skillion roof resembling the raised wings of a butterfly, with two planes that slant down towards each other. "A winged roof allowed us

to have high windows for northern light, and it also provides space for north-facing solar panels." On the south side, the upward slope created space for massive floor-to-ceiling windows and glass doors, maximising the impact of the stunning ocean view.

The design incorporated a number of different elements to achieve the requisite six-star energy rating. All the south- and west-facing glass was balanced out with northern windows, and the house includes a rammed earth wall that runs through the lounge room. The wall, framed by a huge wooden pylon from the Bunbury Wharf in WA, not only looks spectacular but provides a vital thermal mass for the home.

The design also nominated Weathertex cladding – a chemical-free, sustainable product well suited to coastal conditions – and double-glazed windows and sliding doors. "We suggested using powder-coated aluminium windows because timber exposed to these kinds of conditions requires a lot of maintenance," explained Ashley. This matched well with Linnie's stipulation that the house should sit well in the environment. "I didn't want the house to be intrusive," explained Linnie. "It had to blend with the coastal tones, the grey of the local tea trees, the stormy skies, the ocean."

Another key consideration was the overall size of the home. "We didn't want a big house, and because of our >



age, we didn't want any stairs," said Linnie. She was also adamant that the house not have square, box-like rooms or long passageways. "It was definitely a challenge to avoid passageways," admitted Ashley. "In the final design, all the space is usable and practical. There's no wasted space and it's a very functional, compact home."

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The house's L-shaped design incorporates an east wing that houses three bedrooms, two bathrooms and an office space. The expansive kitchen, living and dining area makes up the entire west wing. The angled roof became an architectural feature internally, and helps to make the home feel much larger than its 18 squares. The house is surrounded by expansive decks in silvertop ash, a dense timber that lasts well in coastal conditions. The major deck faces south to capture the views, while the north-facing back deck provides a warm haven in winter and a spot to escape the frequent south-easterly winds.

With the design finalised, Linnie and Phil enlisted their son-in-law to help them build the house. Again, their list of requirements was covered with creativity and flair. "From a health perspective, I knew I didn't want carpets: I wanted floorboards," said Linnie. "I also didn't want plaster ceilings." They selected spotted gum timber for the floorboards and >



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after researching online, the couple decided to use plywood panels on the ceiling. They are delighted with the result. "The colour in the plywood matched the tones of the rammed earth, and I love that there are no two sheets that are the same." The resulting look is both impressive and healthy, with timber and plywood all having a low VOC (volatile organic compound) rating, so they release fewer toxins into the air than other surfaces.

The kitchen features plywood cupboards with cut-out handles creating a streamlined retro look, and a stylish, low-maintenance, grey-green concrete kitchen bench. Plywood cupboards and concrete benches are also used in the bathrooms, matched with textured porcelain tiles to create spaces that feel simultaneously elegant and industrial. Recycled barn-doors on external tracking add another superb feature to the bathrooms.

With so much thought going into the design, it's hardly surprising that the house radiates warmth and charm. The lounge/dining area is furnished with an eclectic mix of mid-century e-bay purchases including bamboo chairs and stools, a Nordic dining setting and a fully-operational vintage stereo cabinet. A large outdoor setting provides the perfect spot for a family dinner in summer, and wherever you sit, you can feast your eyes on the sparkling waters of Westernport or Bass Strait.

For Lynn and Phil, the home fits perfectly with their lifestyle and the environment. It's low-maintenance and great for entertaining their children and grand-children. And at any time of day, they get to drink in that incredible view. "I can't bear to pull the blinds down," admits Lynn. "The kitchen blind always stays up. You can watch the sunset and you can see the lights across Cape Woolamai and the reflection on the water. You can watch the fishermen coming home from their day out at sea. It's just beautiful!"

Designed by Beaumont Concepts [www.beaumontconcepts.com.au](http://www.beaumontconcepts.com.au)  
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