

HOW ABOUT?

with Louise Howland

Are you short on storage areas at your place? Lately, I have been doing too much complaining about the shortcomings of our home. Last weekend's visit to friends of friends' new house made me realise that my house isn't lacking at all!



Entering a mansion of minimalist modernism, in cool and neutral tones with clean, straight lines, a more spacious and less cluttered interior would be hard to find. This house was furnished with glass, metal and stainless steel, it had 70 metres between two of the bedrooms and the kitchen drawer acreage dealt me a pang that could only be interpreted as envy.

The furniture was purpose-built for the house. Books are captive in cupboards that blend into the walls and are barely visible. An interior decorator purchased the artworks on display to suit the wall space and colour tones. One room lies totally vacant, its purpose is yet to be decided.

Spectacular views through enormous windows were totally unsullied by fingerprints, suction rainbow-makers, sticky-jelly tropical fish and the like. With sweeping views, who needs a decorative interior?

My husband, daughter and I settled back in our living room that Sunday evening reflecting on the house that we had visited. It struck us as funny that we also had a dining room, playroom, music room, yoga room, craft room, reading area, games room and private screening room, all in this very room!

Last holiday's pastel artwork attempts by my daughter and I are still propped up on a window ledge. A glorious, rich red snuggle quilt given to me daughter for Christmas drapes the end of a sofa. It may clash in colour, but not in emotion with a zoo and button quilt in greens and browns made by my Mother for Rina.

In the storage place under the coffee table lies two incomplete knitted items. A magnifier lamp isn't a perfect match for our old and mainly oak furniture, but it's frequently used by my husband to look at maps and plans, by me as I stitch a new trapunto design and by my daughter to examine flowers she wants to press.

My Grandmother's chatelaine sits by the lamp and is filled with everything I need for a pleasant afternoon. A paper cut-out, a scrapbooked magnet, a small piece of Montmellick (finished!), an oil painting by my Mother, a watercolour by my Father, a radio restored by my husband and coloured wools in a bag with the part-mechanised pom-pom maker

we're still mastering somehow all fit together nicely in a dresser.

Friends and family are ever-present in a jumble of photos.

Our books and magazines, including numerous volumes of Creative Embroidery & Cross Stitch with future projects carefully bookmarked, can be approached with delight. A few items of particular personal interest include a bowl of seed pods collected over many years which are nesting in Pam's pottery bowl and a special collage made from found objects in our garden during the first week Rina joined our family.

For us at least, everything has a story and a purpose. Although in an ideal world I'd love more space, I now realise our living room is beautiful, just as it is.

Till next month,

Louise

