

Hidden

TREASURE

Building on the potential offered by a 75-year-old house, a young couple established a home perfectly suited to their family without losing its original charm

TEXT DIANA WEMYSS AND MARY JANE HARRIS
STYLING JULIETTE ARRIGHI DE CASANOVA
PHOTOGRAPHS MICKY HOYLE AND SUPPLIED



WHO LIVES HERE

Amanda Cumming, founder of Amanda-Jayne luxury candles, her husband Jason, who is in advertising, their four-year-old son Jamie, newborn Benjamin and dachshunds Harry and Moby.

THE HOUSE

A renovated 1944 house which now has an open-plan living area opening onto a wide veranda, four bedrooms, four bathrooms and a pool courtyard.

schools and parks and there are lots of other young families,” she explains.

Although it needed some attention, the house had loads of potential. North facing, it sat squarely on the generous site, which meant that they could ▷

THIS SPREAD, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

● This section of the generous veranda is furnished with a large wicker sofa and Malawian chairs. The colours in the outdoor rug from L’Orangerie are picked up in the scatters from Hertex. The lantern is from Morgan Associates. ● Amanda with Benjamin and Moby, the dachshund.

As a new mother, Amanda Cumming would often stroll around her neighbourhood, Lynfrac in Cape Town, with her son Jamie. It was on these walks that she first

spotted this 75-year-old house. When the owners, who had lived there for 69 years, decided to sell, she and her husband Jason quickly put in an offer. “It’s a lovely area, especially for a young family like ours, as it’s close to the



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: ● Painted white with a glossy black front door, the house looks contemporary, but still retains the charm of the original building. ● Polished parquet flooring, salvaged from the original house, was used in all the **living areas**. Amanda designed the practical hall stand. ● To give the **living room** impact, Amanda painted the bookcases in rich green paint from Annie Sloan. Throws on the chairs are from Pezula Interiors. The fireplace and chimney were rebuilt.





retain most of the outer walls and extend the house into the garden where necessary.

Amanda worked closely with the architect, Trevor Abbott, to open up the centre of the house to create an easy flow. “We knocked down the walls between the entrance hall, living room, kitchen and dining room, making it a large open-plan area. We also broke through the only bathroom, situated in front of the front door, so that when you walk into the house, you can see all the way through to the pool courtyard at the back. It brings in a lot of natural light,” she explains.

Extending the house into the driveway, they built on a new main bedroom, including a dressing area and en suite bathroom, and a guest bedroom. A new double garage was constructed nearer the road. The outside scullery was incorporated into the house and enlarged to make a new scullery and playroom for the children.

“The passages were widened and the ceiling raised, which gives a much more open feel,” says Amanda. At the front, extending off the living room is a new veranda supported by columns appropriate to the age of the house.

At the back, a pool was installed and



the area around it paved to form an enclosed courtyard. “Our builder was great and made sure that everything ran smoothly,” she says.

Although their intention was to modernise the house, Amanda was determined not to lose its traditional character. “As the floors were uneven, we had to lay new slabs. But first, we carefully removed the parquet blocks, kept them safe during construction

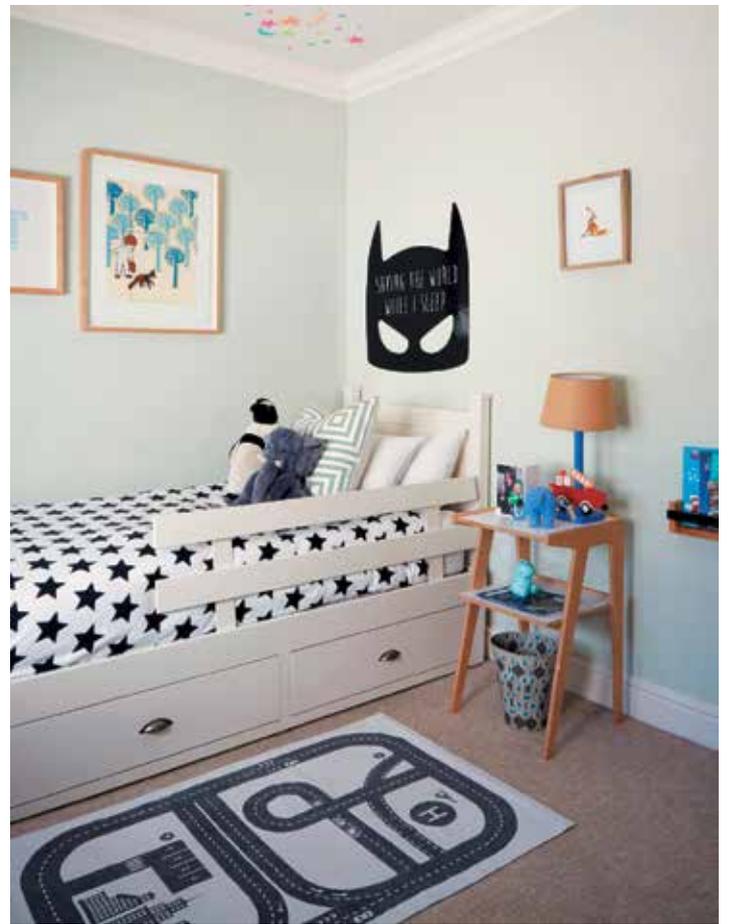
and then re-laid them. Now that they’re sanded and matt varnished, they look stunning.” The new bathrooms were also finished in the classic style of the era.

“My love of decorating and design ▷

THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ● The dining area maintains the traditional character of the house with a rustic table from Cottage Antiques in Diep River, cane-backed chairs found on Gumtree and a dresser painted in soft sage green. ● The focal point in the kitchen is an arched metal window that Amanda found at Wauhaus. The pendant light came from Pezula Interiors.



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: ● The **main bedroom** features a large headboard in a Lewis & Wood fabric from St Leger & Viney. ● The bed in **Jamie's bedroom** has useful drawers for toys underneath. The side table is from Superbalist, the book rack from Simply Child and the rug from H&M Home. ● Neutrals rule in the **guest bedroom** where the headboard is covered in a Whatnot fabric. The scatters are from Pezula Interiors and the throw from L'Orangerie.





stemmed from this project,” reveals Amanda, who designed much of the built-in cabinetry and sourced all the finishes and furnishings. Some of the furniture and several windows and doors were found on Gumtree and at stores along Main Road in Woodstock, Plumstead and Lansdowne. She found the arched window which forms the focal point of the kitchen at Wauhaus, an antique store in Woodstock. The kitchen stools were also second-hand-shop buys. “They were so inexpensive. I bought them quickly and put them in the car before anyone could change their minds.”

Although the Cummings’ previous house had been in neutrals, “here I wanted to experiment with greens, yellows and mauves,” says Amanda, who had fun choosing paint colours inspired by Farrow & Ball and Annie Sloan.

With the house almost completed



(although Amanda doesn’t think she’ll ever be finished), her creativity needed another outlet and two years ago she established a luxury candle business. Her natural, scented, soy wax candles come in nine different fragrances and are stocked in boutiques around the country.

They also contribute to the wonderful

ambience of the Cummings’ home, which exudes an air of considered craftsmanship. It’s neither over-styled, nor sparsely modern, but sits somewhere between in a comfortable classicism. It is also a good exercise in how to reuse and repurpose not only furniture, but salvaged architectural pieces. **CH**

THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ● For her luxury, scented candle range, Amanda developed nine different essential oil combinations. ● In the new **main bathroom**, custom-made cabinetry designed by Amanda and sanitaryware from Victorian Bathrooms recall the elegance of an earlier age. A door opens onto an outdoor shower.

SOURCES **Amanda-Jayne Candles** amandajaynecandles.com **Annie Sloan** anniesloan.com **Cottage Antiques** 021 712 7655 **H&M Home** 086 0690 707 **Hertex** hertex.co.za **L’Orangerie** lorangerieshop.com **Morgan Associates** morganassociates.co.za **Pezula Interiors** pezulainteriors.co.za **Simply Child** simplychild.co.za **St Leger & Viney** stleger.co.za **Superbalist** superbalist.com **Trevor Abbott** 083 664 8780 **Victorian Bathrooms** victorianbathrooms.co.za **Whatnot** whatnot.co.za **Wauhaus** wauhaus.co.za