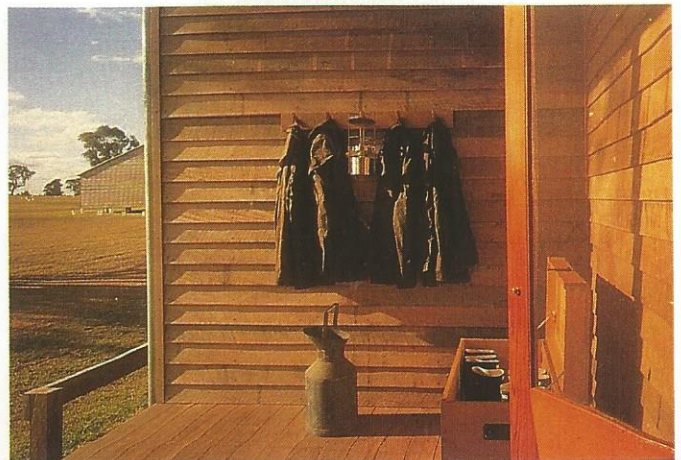
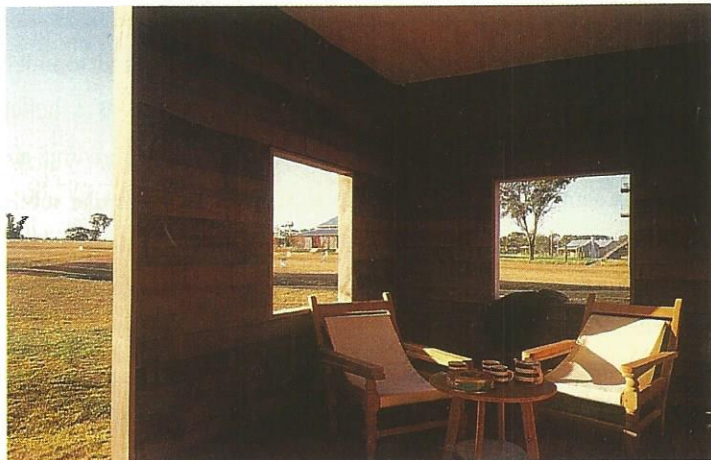


BUSHMODERNE

Burrawang West station and bush retreat is a new twist on old homestead tradition



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN GOL





Six hundred kilometres west of Sydney, on the flat grasslands near the township of Condobolin, Burrawang West Station is a new, gentle interpretation of the Australian homestead tradition. Its owner and project architect, Kajima Properties Australia, has infused the project with subtle Japanese traditions while the design architects, Denton Corker Marshall, and the interior designers, DCMi Interiors, are better known for being at the vanguard of contemporary Australian design. The combination of skills and cultures results in a serene, impressive design – which also happens to be a working sheep station of some 4000 hectares. The homestead replaces an 1880 house with a group of buildings – a main residence,

several smaller residences and outbuildings. Burrawang West in fact serves several roles: homestead and administration centre for the sheep station and resort for long-serving Kajima employees in Japan. The property had been owned and operated by the Japanese corporation for several years and when it approached Denton Corker Marshall with the rebuilding/resort concept, a very traditional approach seems to have been suggested, something which replicated conventional notions of Australian homesteads.

Above from left: the barn, woolshed and jillaroo cottage provide guest accommodation. Squatter's chairs on the barn veranda (right). Weathered brushbox clads the entry veranda to the jillaroo cottage (far right).



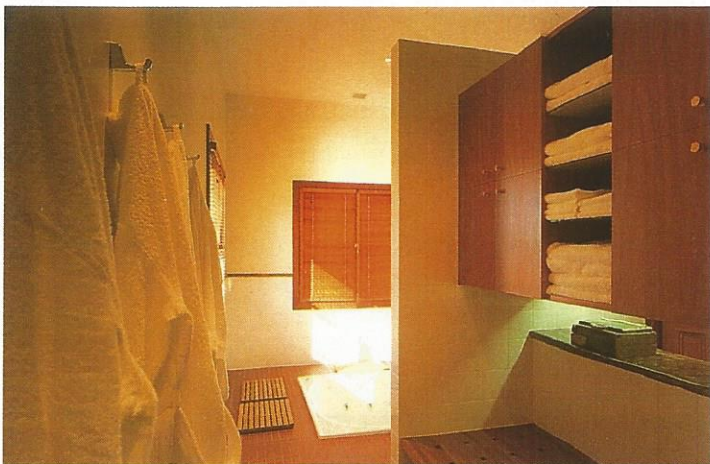
Denton Corker Marshall director Richard Johnson suggested an alternative approach. His solution was to give the feeling of the historical manner but to interpret it with subtle modernism and sensitive, discreet references to the culture of the owners.

The individual buildings have simple rectilinear plans, steeply pitched roofs and wide verandas. Construction methods are basic and direct. The cladding materials, weathered timber and corrugated iron, are part of Australian rural history.

Australian homesteads traditionally consist of groups of buildings and this expression has been used in the form of a main house, cottages, shearing sheds, haysheds and barns. They are grouped in clusters

according to their function, with the main homestead sited in an oasis of cultivated gardens – an Australian rural tradition which surrounded buildings with a very European influenced landscape as a buffer between the residences and the bush. The other groups of buildings are located in semi-formal arrangements to suit the site. A similar subtle blending of traditions influenced the interior design.

Says Sue Carr of DCMI Interiors, “There is a particular quality to Australian homestead interiors. The relative isolation of most of these **Sunlight pours into a guest bedroom off the veranda of the woolshed (above). Changing room to the clubhouse spa and sauna features custom-made brushbox joinery (right). The clubhouse games room (far right).**





places, coupled with the continuous occupation by just one family, provides a complex layering of decoration. The fortunes of the property and the family business dictated when money was available for furniture, decorations, garden ornamentation and extensions.”

DCMI has suggested this layering with subtle mixes of styles, with old pieces along with some modern items, all beautifully detailed. Despite the influence of traditional rustic bush buildings, the result here is understated, modern comfort.

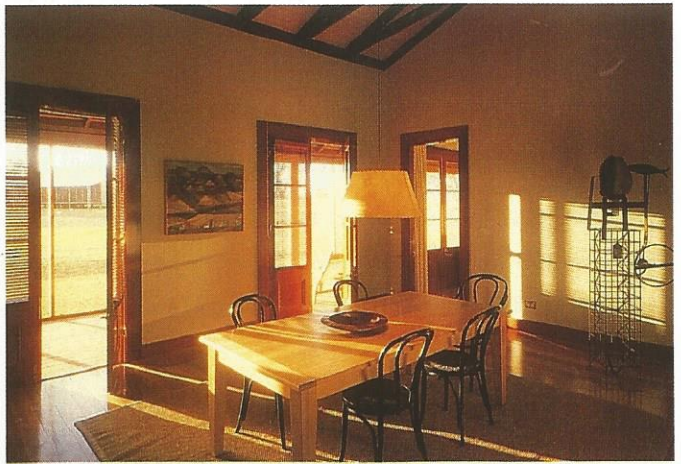
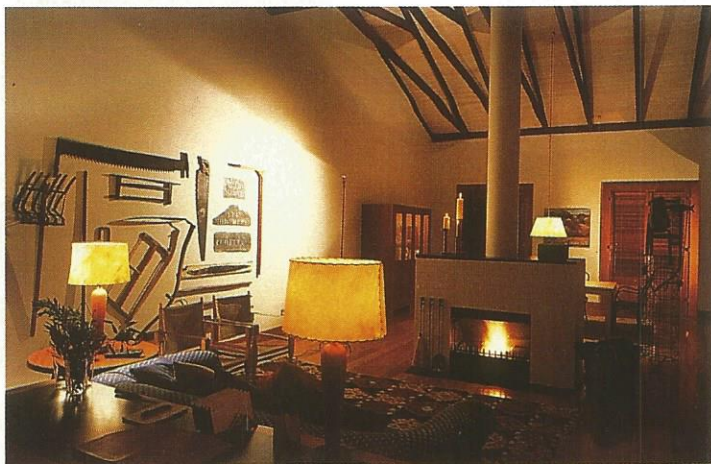
Guest accommodation reflects the more relaxed elements of rural life. “Outbuildings and cottages housed managers and staff and as such were practical and comfortable in their fit-out. Often locally

produced furniture would be used along with bright and practical materials and finishes,” says Carr. “These outbuildings were often also the depository of furniture and objects discarded from the main house. Again we’ve tried to suggest these historical approaches, which of course means integrating contemporary pieces from the 1990s.”

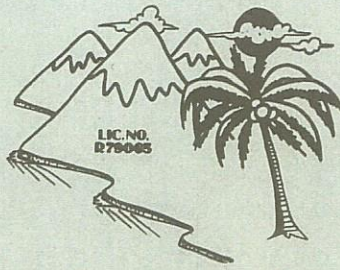
There are some modern homesteads in the Australian bush and there are plenty of old rural homesteads, but there is nothing quite like Burrawang West. □

MICHAEL DICKINSON

Above, from left: the jillaroo cottage, jackaroo cottage, barn, homestead and lookout. In the woolshed living area (right), early Australian farming implements cover the wall. Dining area (far right) with solid pine table.



CONSTRUCTIVE CONSTRUCTIONS



GREG HUNTER
18 Corniche Road
Church Point NSW 2105
Telephone:
(02) 997 7346

