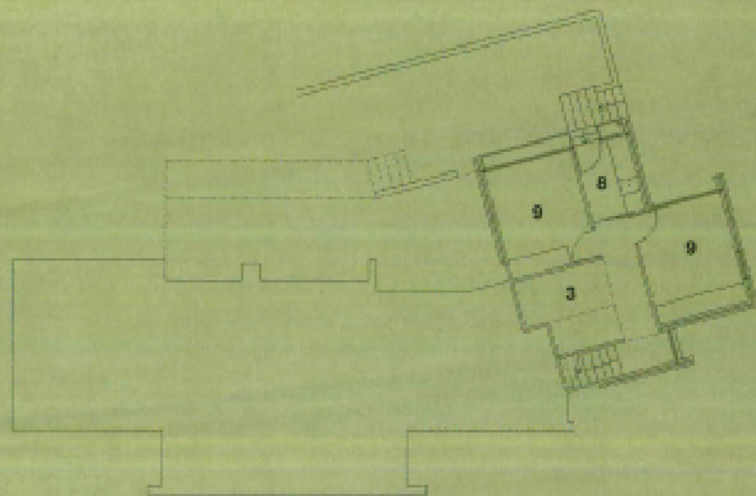
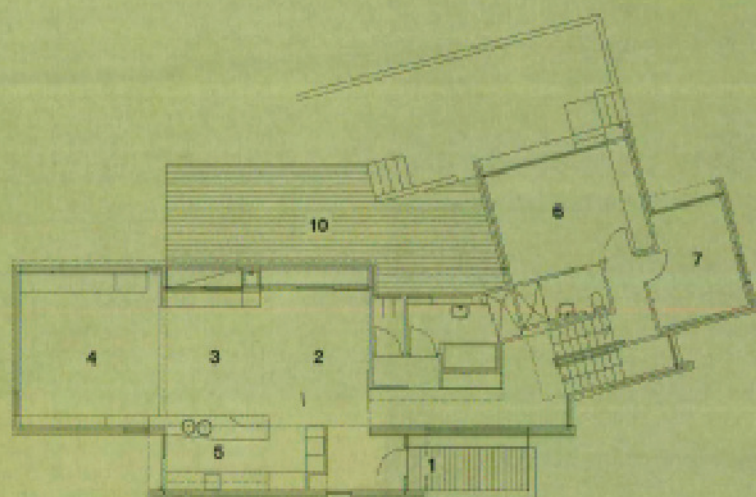




Lower level



Upper level

- 1 Entry
- 2 Dining
- 3 Sitting
- 4 Living
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Main bedroom
- 7 Study
- 8 Laundry
- 9 Bedroom
- 10 Deck

FOSSIL COVE HIDEAWAY

While a hideout at Fossil Cove sounds like the stuff of a boys' own adventure, the reality is a serene coastal



dwelling by Hobart-based architect Daniel Lane



PREVIOUS PAGES: When in the living area, the clients wanted to feel as though they were sitting out on the deck, so visual obstructions such as furniture and balustrades are absent from the line of sight. THESE PAGES, LEFT: Deep reveals create integrated, sheltered outdoor seating. CENTRE: From the front entrance one is conveyed down a hallway to the kitchen. Low slot glazing illuminates the floor and provides glimpses of the garden. RIGHT: Dusk view of the entrance.

RARE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO do not wish they had just a few more dollars to spend in the construction of their dream home. However, adherence to budgetary constraints can also be a challenge which inspires exquisite results. Lane Architects' Fossil Cove House is a perspicuous example of how an eye for economy has engineered an aesthetically inspiring and sleekly functional family residence.

Daniel Lane explains that numerous design aspects of the house emerged from the need to seek ways to stick to a strict budget. He points out that standard gutters, fixtures and finishes have been used in most instances, while the striking Tasmanian oak shiplapped timber boards feature only in selected locations.

And yet the levels of detailing and organisational rigour applied to this dwelling (designed by Daniel for his brother) afford it a sense of luxury that belies its budget. The catalyst of thriftiness has resulted in timber being used with elegant restraint, providing a subtle balance to the solid presence of masonry walls. Internally, the use of simple and unobtrusive fittings enhances the overall streamlined effect, allowing attention to be drawn away from the smooth grey and white toned surfaces toward the warm use of timber at all entrance points, and the lush views enjoyed through all windows.

Set on five acres of bushland 20 minutes drive south of Hobart, in the increasingly popular region of Tinderbox, the Fossil Cove House is blessed with a distant but divine view of the Derwent River. Daniel agrees that the north-facing locale couldn't be more perfect. However, amid an influx of extravagant but conservative production-line type housing on similar blocks, the Fossil Cove House subtly stands out as an intriguing home which blends with the landscape. "We wanted the house to naturally follow the topography of the land," Daniel notes.

By relating construction to the existing land form, the cut into the mudstone base was kept to a minimum, as was the need for retaining walls. The structural layout of the timber framing permitted large horizontal windows to be featured on the northern side of the house without requiring large lintels.

From the roadside, very little is revealed. The south-facing walls were designed to create a barrier that cradles the house, and the use of narrow windows was kept to a minimum. For the visitor, a timber panelled wall leading to the front door hints at what lies inside.

The panelling continues briefly as one enters, by passing through a glass sidelight and thereby establishing an initial merging of indoors and outdoors. As one approaches the main living area, this sense of being both inside and outside at the same time becomes even stronger. Broad windows of varying heights enhance the open plan nature of the kitchen, dining, sitting and lounge areas. It's a large space but certain structural demarcations – such as overhead ceiling planes and the differing thresholds to the outside – ensure that each aspect of the space reads as distinctive. "I think even if you are going to have a very big room you still want to separate it a little bit," Daniel says.

The dining area features large sliding doors, opening out to spacious decking that is completely free of objects that might obstruct the view (the outdoor setting lies hidden away on the eastern side of the deck). "They wanted to be able to sit in the living room and feel as though they are out on the deck. And we wanted to make sure that the outdoor setting couldn't be seen from inside."

The casual sitting area boasts a beautifully-integrated window seat, essentially a simple cushioned bench seat built into the wall. The tall windows slide open, offering the enticing comfort of a deep timber

ledge where many sun-drenched hours can be comfortably whiled away while contemplating the view.

Across the back of these two spaces lies the dark grey environs of a sleek kitchen in which a vast array of cupboards manages to keep everything connected with food from sight. A bronze mirror splashback has been used to "give you a view even when you are not facing the windows," as Daniel explains.

The fourth, and most distinctive, area in this open space is the lounge room. The polished floorboards feature only on a southern strip of the lounge room, with the rest of the area being carpeted, creating the illusion that a very large grey rug is covering the floor. Low shelving and a unit to house audio/visual entertainment goods have been built into the wall (in the same grey as the kitchen), providing a cost effective alternative to purchasing units of such dimensions and ensuring the streamlined continuity of the design.

A striking aspect of the lounge room is the suspended ceiling, which is supported by three studs across the far wall. Daniel explains that this "very simple" feature was made possible by the way the timber frame was organised. He also points out that, "the window height was specifically designed so you can sit on the couch and enjoy the view."

Daniel has allowed a provisional space for sliding doors to separate the lounge room if the clients' needs change in the future. "They have built this house with the thought of having children. They wanted the living area to be separate from the bedrooms, with a two-level sleeping area split from the main level of the building so as to create a closer connection between the two."

Daniel further explains that, having grown up in a two-storey house, he and his brother always considered downstairs to be "too far away".

With the split from the main level the number of stairs from the living area to any bedroom is literally halved.

The link to the bedrooms is a hallway which runs past an enclosed toilet and bathroom area, separated from the living area by a very large industrial-style sliding door in dark grey with exposed rail tracking. Rather than having a pair of closed doors directly off the hallway to hide the bathroom and toilet, an entire alcove area has been created. The bathroom offers a surprisingly large window looking out on to the decking, though careful location of the bathtub and shower ensure that privacy can still be maintained.

In keeping with the open feel of the house, a narrow floor-to-ceiling window on the eastern end of the hallway encourages natural light and give the occupants a sense of walking towards green bushland.

Upstairs, a main bedroom, ensuite and nursery are grouped together to suit the clients' current needs. Upstairs and downstairs, the bedrooms feature north-facing windows to capture the views and light. Downstairs is a carbon copy of upstairs, with space under the stairs used as a games alcove, while extra space directly under the main bedroom is occupied by a compact laundry with an external door.

Outside, simple landscaping has been employed as a transition space between the house and the natural landscape of the property. Material from the excavation has been reused as fill, ensuring a cost effective and environmentally efficient use of materials. An important aspect of the project was that the building would have a minimal impact on the land.

In this carefully-honed building, Daniel has shown that good design can achieve much more than a limited budget would suggest. The jury for the recent RALA Architecture Awards (Tasmania) thought so, too, giving it an Honourable Mention in the New Residential category. **KD**



ARCHITECT
Lane Architects
66 Hampden Road
Battery Point Tas 7004
Tel/fax: (03) 6223 2000
Email:
lane.architects@bigpond.com

PRACTICE PROFILE
Emerging practice engaging in
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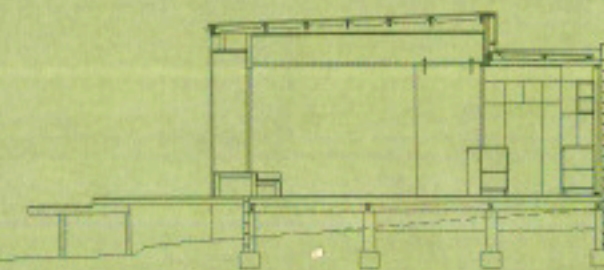
PROJECT TEAM
Daniel Lane

BUILDER
Cordwell Lane Balmforth

CONSULTANTS
Engineer Gandy and Roberts
Consulting Engineers
Interiors Lane Architects

THIS PAGE: This elevation shows how the house can be read as two distinct wings, the living section to the right and the two-level bedroom pavilion to the left. **OPPOSITE:** In the main living area, floor surfaces have been used to demarcate different uses – carpet for the lounge area, and timber for the dining and kitchen spaces.

Section



PRODUCTS
Roofing Trindex Hi-ten,
Colorbond 'Slate Grey' **External
walls** Tasmanian oak shiplapped
boards, oil finish; concrete block
with Mac render finish; cement
sheet, painted **Internal walls**
Plasterboard, painted;
Tasmanian oak shiplapped
boards **Windows** Caprel 300
Narrowline; powdercoated in
slate grey **Doors** Vantage Duo;
custom mat lining **Flooring** Tas
oak laid over Tru-Deck base;
Godfrey Hirst 'Netcorp' carpet
Lighting Lx downlights **Kitchen**
Baumatic appliances; Anzi
rangehood; Maytag fridge; AEG
dishwasher; Franke sink;
Laminax 'Espresso' and 'Stipple
Sax' to benchtops **Bathroom**
Roca semi recessed basins;
Villeroy and Boch toilet suites;
Doppel Rembrandt tapware;
Grohe mixer **Climate control**
Mitsubishi ducted inverter
External elements 20 mm
limestone; Pelovan decking

TIME SCHEDULE
Design, documentation
8 months
Construction 8 months

SITE SIZE
1760 m²

PROJECT COST
\$205,000

PHOTOGRAPHY
Richard Eastwood