



Passive delights of the

PIONEER settlers were quick to appreciate passive solar benefits, especially how to stay cool in a homestead during summer.

They exploited the verandas, high ceilings, massive walls and even some insulation in the form of wool or dried seaweed.

So it is not surprising that a descendant of pioneers at New Norcia has opted for the full passive solar benefits with his new farmhouse. For David Maher the new homestead represents the culmination of decades of

hard work in bringing his farm into the modern era. It is typical of the pioneer homestead, with verandas virtually the whole way around. The big difference is in the Tecto louvered pergolas on the north elevation and the top security system.

At this time of the year the angled louvres put the whole house in shade, but as the sun drops to the north in winter it progressively penetrates up to 3m indoors. Here the masonry walls and concrete floor will act as thermal banks, soaking up the heat by day



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pioneer life

and radiating it back into the main spaces for comfort at night.

A breeze-trap catches the south-wester and cross-ventilates all the main spaces. The double-brick outer walls have insulation and a double layer in the ceiling earns a rating better than R3.

Insulation has even been incorporated in the verandas, which have been lined with stained pine boarding to block the radiant midday heat.

Aesthetically it is still a traditional farmhouse which the owner specified after extensive reading on rural architecture.

One result is the great room, combining lounge, dining and the kitchen with bay window in a space extending for more than 11m.

A neat touch by architect Garry Baverstock, of Baverstock Murphy and Associates, is the way the overall roof shape has been broken up, suggesting additions at different eras, a feature of heritage homesteads.

The owners have indulged themselves with a separate wing that has the main bedroom, a big retreat and a generous en suite with a step-up spa. There is a home office off the foyer and this overlooks a big machine shed.

The construction is of double-size, rough, flush-jointed brickwork that gives the impression of earth walls. This and the beige corrugated roof help harmonise the building with its site.

The home is not open for inspection but details can be discussed with the architect, phone 9386 3888.

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