

# Our place

ONE+ONE ● PETS ● HEROES ● HISTORY ● BABIES ● SENIORS ● THANK YOU



HOUSE OF MARVELS: Leah Candace has found her home in Marvell Street. She lives there with her husband Kurtis and children Billie and River-Jay.

## Finding a marvellous place to make a home and let your creativity flourish

BY HOZANNA TAENI

THE setting of a fairytale romance, Leah Candace's family home in Marvell Street sure lives up to its name — 'House of Marvels'.

Born in country Victoria, Leah moved to Melbourne at age six before heading north to Byron Bay when she finished high school.

"I never fitted into the city, and was constantly searching for a place to really land myself," Leah said.

It wasn't long before she found it.

Leah took on a lease with five girlfriends and moved into the large timber house on Marvell Street, unaware that it would become the place she'd dreamed about for so long.

"In Melbourne I would dance on the street and people would look at me. In Byron I would dance on the street and people would dance with me," said Leah. "That's how I knew I was home."

The connection Leah feels with the street, and in particular her house, is very special.

"This house has an energy of its own," Leah said.

"It always has an influx of people walking through."

In the five years she's lived there, a lot has happened and many people have

### OUR STREET Marvell Street, Byron Bay

come and gone.

"Everything monumental that's happened in my life has happened between these walls," she said.

In this Leah referred to the creative process that started her career in fashion design, which took place in her living-room, and the friends she made out of people who walked through the front door.

But most importantly, Leah's home was where she first set eyes on her fiancé, and the birthplace of their two daughters.

"I'd been here three weeks, and Kurtis walked into the backyard while we were painting the house pink," Leah said. "He told us he had nowhere to live. We just looked at him, and he was so cute... we gave him the garage straight away."

Kurtis and Leah's romance led to them taking out a mortgage on the house, where their two girls were born — Billie in the bathtub

and 14 months later their second daughter, River-Jay, in the living-room.

The children's bedrooms are partly what gives the house such a positive feel, bringing a myriad of colours to the atmosphere and childish laughter that resounds throughout the house.

The back garden, which is under renovation, contains a tree-house, a tipi, and a fairy garden, created by Leah specifically for her girls to play in. The house and garden seem to encourage and support all types of creative expression.

The back deck being built is expected to be finished well before Christmas. Leah said it's the first thing they've done to the place in the five years she's lived there, so the house is in complete chaos at the moment.

"We're looking forward to a very social summer and hope to be in this house for a long time to come," said Leah.