



# Housing Style

## The Queensland Federation House

As the name suggests the Federation style house was built in the Federation era from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the 1920's. It was the first distinctive Australian house type, designed to embrace the outdoor lifestyles of the Australian people. In Queensland it followed the first distinctive Queensland house – the Colonial Queenslander.

According to architect Ron Tanton, typical Federation homes in Queensland show an interesting blend of characteristics found in southern states that reflect the Art Nouveau movement at the time of Federation.

The roofs of Federation houses are typically made of terracotta tiles. Decorative features such as gables and motifs adorn the exterior of the property. Leadlight windows are also a common feature of the Federation style house and as a result, Federation houses are often very picturesque and eye catching. Very different to their southern counterparts these were nearly always of timber and weatherboard with fewer chimneys.

Most Queensland Federation houses are free standing and 'high set' single storey. They are usually medium to large size properties, with the common layout, says Mr Tanton, being a main bedroom at the front off the verandah, a lounge room at the end of the hallway and utility areas towards the back. Roof lines became complex often with many hip roofs at right angles to each other.

Traditionally these type of houses had an outside toilet and laundry located under the high stumped home. Today most Federation homes have been renovated to relocate these areas inside.

The decorative features of Federation style homes does not end at the exterior of the property, with most Federation homes featuring internal decorative features, high ceilings, decorative plasterwork and even ornamental plaster ceiling roses at the ceiling lights for those upper market properties.

### **Positive Features**

One of the Federation house's most positive attributes is its aesthetic value. With its decorative external and internal features and rambling style, the Federation home can look visually sensational. In addition to presenting well, the Federation style has the advantage of being a good size. In Queensland modification of the characteristics of the style were carried out resulting often in a simplified form. In some, corrugated iron formed the roof.

### **Renovation Potential**

While there a number of challenges associated with renovating Federation homes, the end result is always viewed as being well worth the effort.

One challenge according to Mr Tanton is the need to compliment the original building with appropriate new parts. This may include repairs to leadlight windows, decorative ceilings and the like. This can often increase the cost of renovating this particular type of home. Earlier famous architects are often associated with these residences. Further architect advice may provide advantage in marketing the property or achieving quality renovations.

Kitchen and bathroom areas are often the first places that renovations begin. General home maintenance and formal gardening will ensure potential is maximized.