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CREATING A MODERN HIGHLAND HOME

RECALL: 2/1/17





CLASSIC OUTLOOK

A judicious mix of deep colour and traditional fittings celebrates the history of this elegant family home





DESIGNER Lee Collins,
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Can you describe the property?

Designed by visionary Victorian builder Alfred Heaver, this beautiful property in south-west London is now a substantial family home for Sid and Nancy McGrath and their 14-year-old twins, Spike and Betsy. The architecture is typical of the Queen Anne style – the windows are particularly glorious.

Did you make any structural alterations to the room?

Although this room offers the best views across the nearby common, the former owners had used it as a guest bedroom with a small en suite. However, when the McGraths bought the property, they decided the views were too good not to be enjoyed every day, so they turned it into the main bathroom and the en suite became a dressing room. Apart from adjusting doorways, the construction work was low level.

What was the design brief?

To respect the grand heritage of the property, the couple wanted distinctly traditional fittings, such as a freestanding bath and high-level cistern, and a regal blue colour palette. I recommended that they choose furniture and fittings from Drummonds to get the right look and quality. I've travelled the world scrutinising sanitaryware and have yet to find anything comparable.

How did you devise the layout?

From the moment I saw the windows, albeit in photographs sent by Nancy, I was really excited about their potential for framing a dramatic freestanding bath. We chose Drummonds' cast-iron Tay bath, a fantastic double-ended, roll-top design with a skirt that gives it a more classical look than feet. Centring the freestanding taps between the windows helps to highlight the symmetry. This also left a tall wall clear for a large walk-in shower enclosure. It was fitted with Drummonds' grand Chessleton shower balanced with subtle subway-style tiles.

Can you tell us about the vanity area?

Again, the focus is on substance and traditional styling. The Double Crake vanity unit has a handsome frame that offers ample storage for towels. The Arabescato marble of the top and the tall upstand is very striking, too, but also practical as it protects the walls from splashes. I love the contrast between the white marble and the deep-blue panelling. The shallow mirror cabinets don't encroach on the space, but have plenty of storage for toiletries.

What makes this room work so well?

The windows are, of course, inherently decorative. Combined with rich wooden flooring, a crystal chandelier, which is suspended from an original ceiling rose, and elegantly veined marble, they have a softening effect that prevents the room's dimensions and solid fittings from feeling too imposing.



ABOVE Subway style tiles add another dimension to the otherwise classic look of the scheme. **BELOW** White marble stands out crisply against deep blue panelling.



WHERE TO BUY

FURNITURE Double Crake vanity basin unit in Arabescato Marble with chrome finish, £8,940; **FITTINGS** Tay cast-iron bath with polished and lacquered finish, from £3,570; **Classic bath and shower mixer** with Mull heads in chrome finish and H-stand, from £2,448; **Classic pop-up basin mixer** with Mull heads in chrome finish, from £1,170; all Drummonds, drummonds-uk.com; **Chalfont floor-standing heated towel rails**, from £1,310 each, The Radiator Company, theradiatorcompany.co.uk.

WALLS AND FLOORING Panelling in Reign-Blue, acrylic eggshell, £51 for 2.5 litres, Zoffany, zoffany.com; **Walls** in Slaked Lime, Intelligent Matt Emulsion, £45 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene, littlegreene.com; **Hatters Oak flooring**, from £82.32sq m, Broadleaf, broadleaftimber.com; **ACCESSORIES** Medium bath rack, £582, Drummonds, drummonds-uk.com; **Astro Mashiko 500 wall lights**, £171.59 each; **Endon Tabitha 61384 chain lantern**, £163.20; both Bathroom-Lighting-Centre, bathroom-lighting-centre.co.uk.

WORDS LINDA CLAYTON PHOTOGRAPH DARREN CHUNG