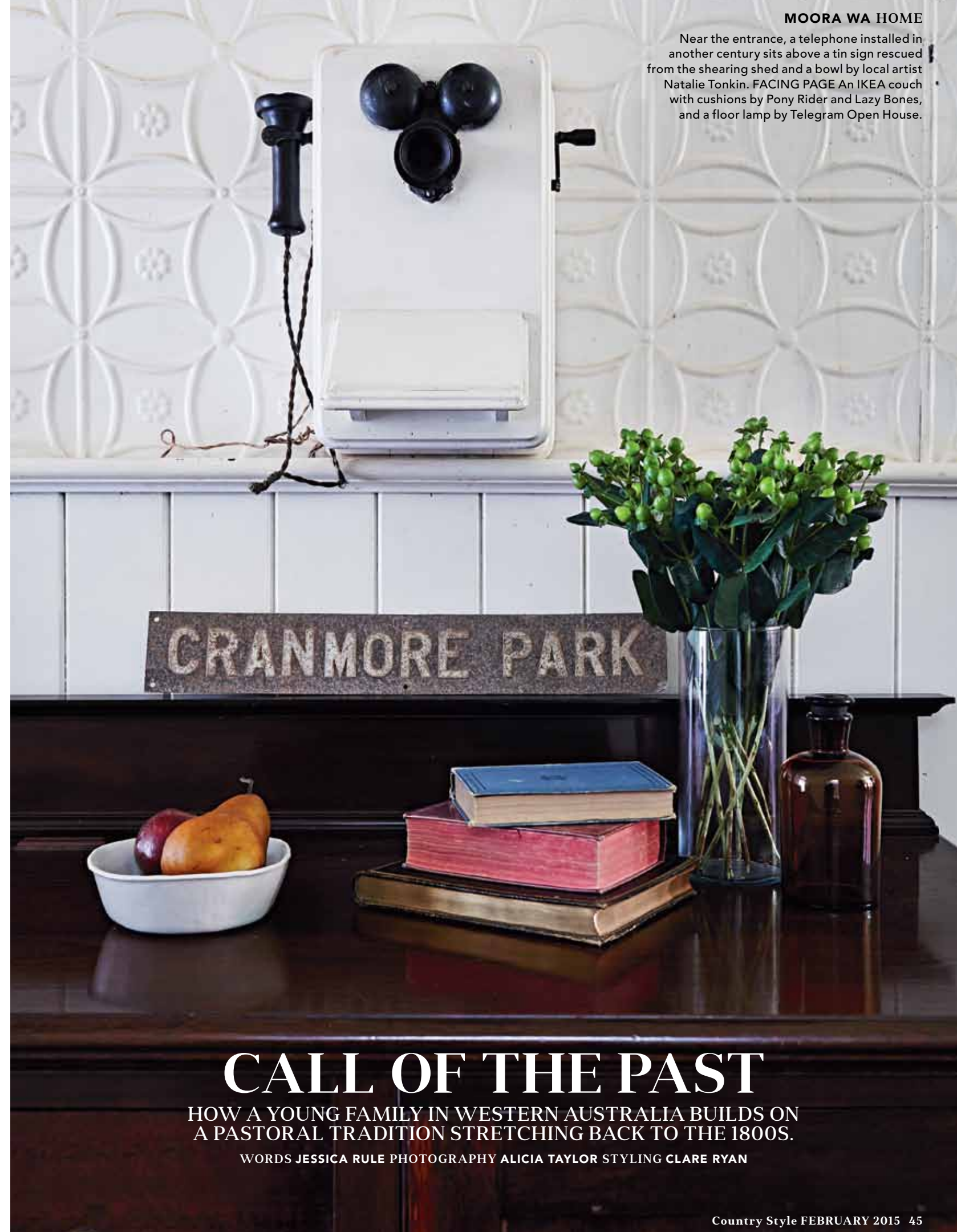




MOORA WA HOME

Near the entrance, a telephone installed in another century sits above a tin sign rescued from the shearing shed and a bowl by local artist Natalie Tonkin. **FACING PAGE** An IKEA couch with cushions by Pony Rider and Lazy Bones, and a floor lamp by Telegram Open House.



CALL OF THE PAST

HOW A YOUNG FAMILY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA BUILDS ON A PASTORAL TRADITION STRETCHING BACK TO THE 1800S.

WORDS JESSICA RULE PHOTOGRAPHY ALICIA TAYLOR STYLING CLARE RYAN



With an estate steeped in tradition, it's possible to be overawed — but the current generation of Lefroys seem at ease with their heritage. The family has lived at Cranmore Park near Moora for 105 years, and the memory of the past inhabitants is written into the floors, the walls and in the red earth of the 6000-hectare merino stud, cropping and cattle property. But these days that echo competes with the cacophony Kristin and Tracy Lefroy's three children create in the madness of the after-school witching hour. Around 4pm, Henry, six, Oliver, four, and little Eve, one, are likely to be zipping in and out of doors, with sheepdogs Yandy and Rosie hot on their heels.

The highway is at the end of an eight-kilometre red dirt drive and the nearest neighbour little closer. "But while my neighbours may be distant, I know that we're all there for each other to pick up kids, bemoan harvesting husbands and laugh over the day's events," Tracy says.

Kristin has lived at Cranmore his whole life, but Tracy came to the property, in the wheat belt 160 kilometres north of Perth, after they married in 2005. When Kristin's mother and father, Anna and Bruce Lefroy, moved to the family's Bindoon farm near Perth in 2009, Tracy began to take a more active role in decorating the homestead.

"We were very lucky in that the home comes with the job when you're a farmer," Tracy says. "I love the thought that we're bringing up our children where their father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great-uncle lived."

The Lefroy family have been prominent West Australian graziers since the mid-19th century. The original homestead was built in 1909 by Edward Henry Bruce Lefroy and over the next 40 years, two major additions turned it into today's five-bedroom, three-bathroom main house. The second building session took place in the early 1940s when Italian prisoners of war with masonry skills added a stone section to the original jarrah weatherboard house. Over the past couple of years, Tracy and Kristin >



"I'D LIKE TO THINK THAT OUR HOME REFLECTS THE ENERGETIC, YOUTHFUL FAMILY THAT LIVES HERE."

Handpainted tiles by WA's Anna Chandler hang above a Nkuku striped jute bag, and an heirloom armchair draped with a scarf from Once Was Lost. **FACING PAGE**, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Tracy and Kristin with (from left) Eve, Henry and Oliver, and Yandy the kelpie; in the kitchen, a moon planter and smaller ceramic planters, all from Love Hate Australia; a chandelier from Perth's Alti Lighting hangs over the Boots Off bench with cushions by Bonnie and Neil.





The oldest section of the house dates from 1909; heirloom pieces and original slate tiles in an entry area; the shearing shed dates from 1911; Tracy with a bale weighing machine, a relic of the property's long history as a sheep station; Henry's 'craft zone'. FACING PAGE The stone section of the house was built by Italian prisoners of war in the early 1940s.



“WHILE MY NEIGHBOURS MAY BE DISTANT, I KNOW THAT WE’RE ALL THERE FOR EACH OTHER.”



ABOUT THE HOUSE

- The addition of contemporary, handcrafted furniture lightens the space and reflects the young family’s energy. Many timber pieces in the house, including a kitchen table and benches, are from Fremantle’s Maeker Studio. 0403 964 171; maekerstudio.com
- For soft furnishings Tracy likes Pony Rider, 0402 067 908, ponyrider.com.au; and Emma Grace Hawtrey, 0431 927 408, emmagracehawtrey.com.au
- Tracy purchased Lazy Bones Australia linen for her children’s beds because “they’re fun styles and yet easy to maintain”. (02) 66291622; lazybones.com.au
- Metal sculptures scattered throughout the home are by local artists, including Moora farmer Natalie Tonkin.
- Oliver’s room is painted in Aalto’s Emerge, Tracy and Kristin’s bedroom is Solver Paints Intermezzo, and much of the remaining interior is painted in Dulux Natural White. 1800 009 600, aaltocolour.com; (02) 8867 3333, solverpaints.com.au; 132 525, dulux.com.au



In Oliver's room a zebra painting by Melbourne's Jesse Breakwell hangs above a bed from NSW's Incy Interiors, an Armadillo & Co rug, and an IKEA chair with a cushion from Freedom. FACING PAGE, FROM TOP Henry and Kristin out with Yandy the kelpie; cushions from Pony Rider and Emma Grace Hawtrey on the bed in the main bedroom.

have installed a modern kitchen and turned the farm's former general store into visitor accommodation. "Like the rest of our renovation, we kept it very simple and let the stone walls, reclaimed timber and the building's history be the hero," Tracy says.

The homestead's U-shaped layout was previously only one room wide, so Tracy and Kristin had the entire rear verandah enclosed to connect the rooms. "The kids love to run races along the floor, and it's big enough that a small motorbike can be ridden around it — we learnt that the hard way!" Tracy says.

Many historic touches remain, including the old photographs that line the pressed tin hall and relics of the past that populate the rooms. Exploration of the old store house, shearing sheds and outbuildings uncovered worn timber tables, lanterns, a treasured meat safe and travelling trunks stamped with the initials of earlier generations, which now decorate the house and guest accommodation.

Another outbuilding has been given new life as an office. "Running our farm and my business from here means our house is frequently overrun with meetings, products and visitors," Tracy says. "With three kids underfoot it can be chaos and I long for some separation of home and work."

From her office sanctuary, Tracy runs the online store Cranmore Home, featuring homewares, textiles, fashion, furniture and art by Australian designers. The venture was born out of frustration at not being able to find the right items to furnish her home. "I stopped searching shops and began looking for makers whose design ethos resonated with my own," she says. "Cranmore Home is very much a reflection of my own style and, as a farmer, I'm an advocate of Australian food and fibre, and the manner in which we produce it."

Kristin and Tracy are collectors of happy memories. "We love nothing more than spending time with each other," Tracy says. "We collect souvenirs on family adventures like leaves, feathers, shells and stones, which are scattered throughout our home."

While her mother-in-law was an avid gardener, Tracy ruefully admits she has let the formal garden slip a little. "My focus has really been on our orchard and vegetable beds, which provide an absolute abundance of fresh vegetables for us, and in years to come, the fruit trees will mature and provide us with homegrown produce," she says.

The couple agree that the luxury of crafting their home slowly, and taking care to impart love into it, has proved a rare pleasure in such a fast-paced world. "The memories, the conversations, the layers, can only be created authentically over time," Tracy says. "I'd like to think that our home reflects the energetic, youthful family that lives here, while referencing the generations who have gone before us." *
For more information about Cranmore Home, visit cranmorehome.com.au

