

Twinkle, twinkle not-so-little backyard star

■ Len Findlay

It is a bit like your granny suddenly coming out in bright purple, or the sun shining in New Zealand. Unexpected.

And that is what this Barrier Reef Pools installation gave Lynn and Meryl Widenbar. They settled on a fibreglass pool — with cost a big part of the consideration — and got, as they say in the movies, a pleasant surprise.

For a start, this new generation of pool has done away with the old light blue-or-nothing approach.

The Widenbars' is finished in dark blue, but with highlights. It looks like a granite worktop, twinkling. It houses spa jets.

Then there is the concrete support built in and the shallow (a few centimetres) flat space at one end.

This houses three little fountains which make "a nice sound", which pleases the owners.

The pool is 10x4m and has a maximum depth of 2.1m, which

allows for "proper" swimming and is heated by solar roof panels.

Mr Widenbar said: "We have built before and always had concrete pools. We contacted our usual contractor and the quote was high. In fact, this pool came out at about 60 per cent of the cost and we are very happy."

An existing pool could have been utilised but would have meant altering plans for the new home which now sits beside the pool.

An old Nedlands cottage has been replaced with a modern home of style and substance. There was a lot of work involved in the installation as the block slopes 1.5m from one side which meant a retaining wall was needed. A three-course limestone wall sits in front of house plants.

Now a big rear garden has a big pool to complement it, which might not be so surprising after all.

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