

# GW Living

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## Favourite things

By Cerentha Harris

**Sam Crawford**  
Architect

**"Silver" transistor radio** A beaten-up, boxy transistor radio follows architect Sam Crawford around his house in Sydney's inner west. "It's my dad's old trannie that I've had for 10 years." Crawford's father, a barrister, died when Sam was 15. He was a home handyman and the radio was his constant companion. Crawford points to the paint splatters as evidence. "Dad had it for 20 years and he was always listening to 2MBS-FM while he did stuff on the house." For Crawford it's not just a way to listen to Radio National while he gardens. "It is a beautiful object and it reminds me of my dad. Jane [his wife] says I'm sentimental ... and I guess I am."

**Photo** The photograph of children stoking a brick kiln in Malawi was a gift from photographer Claude Ho. "Claude was the reason I got into Architects Without Frontiers. He had a sketch of a youth centre for children orphaned by AIDS in Malawi. I think he thought, 'I'll just get Sam to have a look at it', and I thought we could do something so much better. So we started at the beginning and looked at the brief." Crawford, who became one of the directors of Architects Without Frontiers six months ago, is now juggling a small residential practice in Sydney with AWF projects all over the world, including a school and medical centre in Tibet. "We donate our time, do the design and drawings and then work with organisations to get projects built."

**Credenza** Crawford and his wife, Jane, who is also an architect, designed the unit that covers one wall of their living room. It has become a catch-all for everything from stereo equipment and CDs to their four children's toys. But beyond its obvious practical attributes it also serves as a reminder of why the couple don't work together. "Jane and I disagree on just about everything with regard to design," says Crawford. "I like to come up with an idea and quickly develop it. Jane likes to mull and change it a million times. I have to say, 'Okay, you go and change it and you'll eventually get back to what I want.'" Crawford laughs. "We drive each other nuts. You just want to come home at the end of the day and not have the stress of work." **GW**

