

# This is the dome home that Tony Clarke built

In the past year, this unusual house at Ballan has gone from an empty shell to a three-storey, five-bedroom, five-bathroom masterpiece.

**T**his is the dome that Tony Clarke built. When *The Courier* last visited Mr Clarke's monolithic dome in Ballan 12 months ago, it was an empty shell.

Today, it's a three-storey home complete with five bedrooms, five bathrooms, and five living areas.

According to the Italian-based Monolithic Dome Institute, a monolithic dome is a "super-insulated, steel-reinforced concrete structure that can be designed for virtually any use".

Mr Clarke's structure consists of a thick wall of concrete and polyurethane foam covered with a vinyl shell.

It has an interior framework of steel girders and timber.

Due to the level of specialised construction, builder Randy Smith was flown in from America to oversee the job.

He was assisted by contractors from the Ballan region.

"Everyone was keen to be involved," Mr Clarke said.

The immigration agent moved into his dream home — which has a six-star energy rating — five months ago.

Solar cells were recently installed on the roof of the adjoining shed while a wind turbine is on its way.

"The dome is probably about 90 per cent complete," Mr Clarke, who stood in the recent Moorabool Shire Council by-election, said.

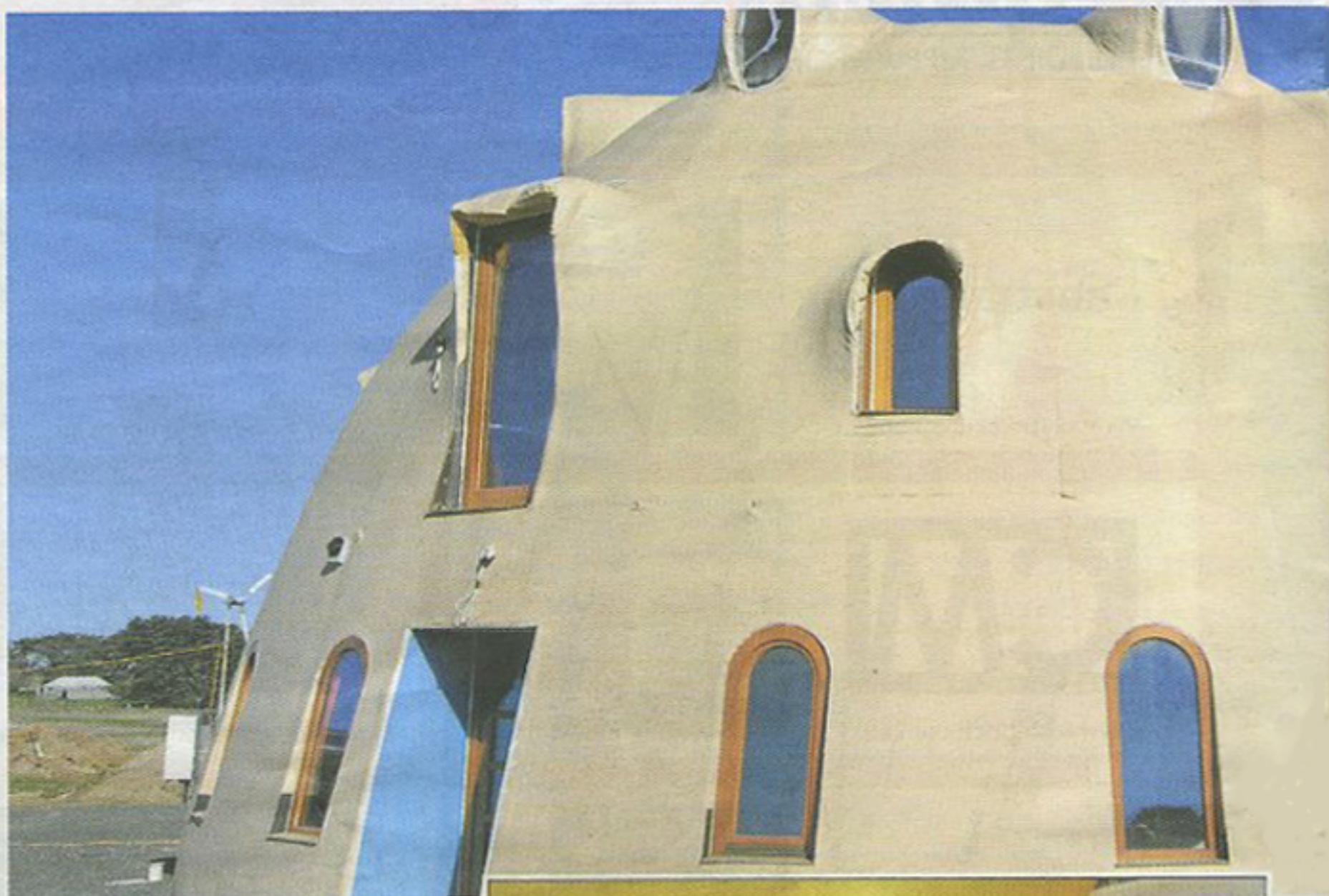
"But I've still got a lot to do to finish it off."

While Mr Clarke occupies the dome's second floor, his elderly father currently resides on the ground floor.

The third floor — which is a work in progress — is set to become a library.

Internally, the dome is a rainbow of colour.

The newly-laid carpet is rusty red in some rooms and dark blue in others while



the walls are painted the likes of red, yellow, green, and purple.

"I wanted to make it nice and vivid," he said.

Down the track, Mr Clarke said he would one day like to offer bed and breakfast-style accommodation at the dome.

"I think it would be fun to start doing something like that fairly soon," he said.

In the meantime, he has another intriguing project on the go.

"I've just started work on a labyrinth next to the house," he said.

The triple L venus labyrinth — or maze for short — will consist of two metre high walls plus vines and trees.

"It will look pretty amazing once it's finished," he said.



**PROUD:** Tony Clarke admires the views from the window of his dome home at Ballan.

