



# Secluded Chapman-Taylor classic

**MIKE SHAW**

## QUICK LOOK

**WHERE:** 190 Rata St, Inglewood.

**HOW BIG:** 3712sqm in land; about 150sqm in home.

**HOW MUCH:** Price by negotiation.

Concrete gateposts mark the gravel driveway into the trees at 190 Rata St in Inglewood. Although time-softened now, their substance hints at an early importance for this address.

In 1922, those gateposts, then fresh and sharply defined, welcomed visitors to the new home of county engineer Robert D. Climie. The status of the local authority engineer has faded with the years, but the home he commissioned is part of New Zealand's architectural history.

Given the name 'Riverside', the home was designed and built by Arts and Crafts architect James Walter Chapman-Taylor (1878-1958), recognised as one of New Zealand's most important domestic architects of his time. He designed and built more than 90 houses between the start of the 1900s and the early 1950s.

A number of those homes are in Taranaki, which is appropriate as he spent his youth here absorbing the craft of his builder father. He subsequently moved away, gaining his architecture qualifications by correspondence and twice visited England where he absorbed the work of the architects who influenced him and the English cottage designs he favoured throughout his career.

That's what you find at the end of the tree-lined driveway into 190 Rata St: a trademark solid-concrete residence in Chapman-Taylor's cottage styling, settled into its private, green surroundings.

That seclusion attracted Stephanie and Steve 30 years ago. "It was very peaceful and private," Stephanie recalls. "We liked the long driveway and the bush, and it was an interesting house."

Location was an advantage as well: a favourable family position on the edge of the Inglewood community, just across the road from the high school. The primary

Wood is part of the natural theme through Chapman-Taylor's designs. He believed in highlighting its grain and texture, often hand-finishing it with an adze to give it a seductively attractive surface.

It's history makes Riverside a home to treasure and respect, Stephanie says. So rather than make changes, they have carefully maintained it during their tenure. That shows in the new second garage they built, which is plastered to achieve a similar effect to the house and has small-paned windows that complement those in the house. "We have tried to do the right thing."

A visit here starts at the French doors that open into the front porch. Jack's adzed front door inside opens into the living spaces.

Massive totara beams and slender rafters in here make an impact; the age-darkened timbers stand out against the white-plastered ceiling panels. Substantial posts support the beams and their adzed finish draws you to run your hand down the textured surface.

The living areas are surprisingly open, with the dining-lounge space stretching from the entry through to the French doors at the far end that open into an enclosed sitting area. "We spend a lot of time out here," Stephanie says. Another set of French doors opens from there into the sheltered rear lawn and gardens.

To the side of the lounge space is another of Chapman-Taylor's favoured features: an inglenook. This is a recessed area for an open fireplace with built-in seating to capitalise on the warmth. In Riverside's original fireplace, Stephanie and Steve had a wood-burner installed for its efficiency. "We are now on our second one, with a webback."

A feature panel of vertical adzed planks in the living area marks the access to the family bathroom and master bedroom, which opens to the rear grounds

through French doors cut into the thick concrete walls by the home's previous owners.

The home's original second bedroom to the right of the entry became another living or study area when those previous owners built a bedroom extension to the side of the house and used it to access the new space.

Left of the dining area is the kitchen, modernised first in the 1950s and refined further by Stephanie and Steve. In the back wall is an original fireplace, decorative now as it has been blocked off. Anyone on cooking duties can look out into the front of the property to see visitors arriving.

Behind the kitchen is the third bedroom, looking out into the rear grounds. The laundry facilities to the side of the kitchen include a generous corner shower shaped in concrete and tile.

