



Brougham beauty: This central city residence features a wealth of original character, finely refinished and complemented by modern convenience and comfort.

Photos: SUPPLIED

Birdsong belies city setting

Quality character living is just a stroll from city shops and parks, **Mike Shaw** discovers.

along the road, there's Redcoat Lane which dips down and across the Huaroki Stream to lead up to the lower entrances to Pukekura Park. Instead of crossing the stream, you also can veer left and take the shady green pathway down to the city and on to the Coastal Walkway.

That option to enjoy walking to nearby attractions has impressed visiting family, Joan says. "The children and grandchildren love coming home. They live in the hills above Wellington and they can just park the car when they come here and walk everywhere."

The wealth of trees around here explains the birdsong that fills the air on this sunny start to a midweek day. And, surprisingly, it's the birdsong that dominates – despite looking down towards the flow of traffic along Vivian St. That bustle is just a barely imperceptible hum in the background.

"You wouldn't think we were in the city, would you?" Joan says. "There's something that seems to cut down the sound. We sit out on the deck in the evening and it is so peaceful." Woodpeckers and tui are regular visitors to the

area. "You can even hear a morepork sometimes at night," Gary says.

The move here from several years on a rural lifestyle property has been very satisfying for the couple. "We'd talked for a couple of years about moving off the lifestyle block," Gary recalls.

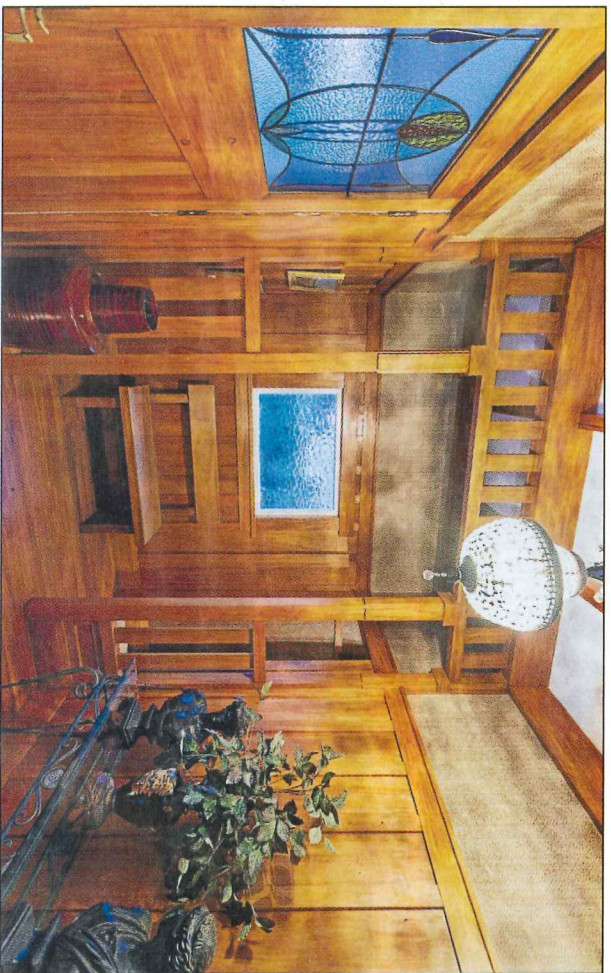
They knew the owners of 83 Brougham St and, having visited this home, recognised it as an "incredible" place to live. When they were told it was going to be sold, Gary and Joan quickly

Brougham St in New Plymouth is about as central as inner-city living gets.

That's why Gary and Joan bought here 11 years ago. "Location," Joan emphasises. The benefits of location are easy to appreciate on an early winter's morning visit. The two-storey character weatherboard residence sits at 83 Brougham St, on the corner of Hempton St and is just an easy stroll down into the centre of the city.

Across the road are the trees and lawns that frame the Taranaki Cathedral of St Mary; back





Rimu warmth: Original character flows through this city heritage home, and is carefully complemented by new kitchen and family areas.

Designed by noted architect

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negotiated a private sale to secure the property. Built in 1924, it offered them a very sound family home, crafted from quality native timber. While they were confident enough to buy the property without a formal report on the home's structural condition, a later appraisal by a building inspector confirmed their decision and noted the quality construction.

That's not surprising as the home is listed in Pulse Ariti records as being designed by noted Taranaki architect Thomas Bates for the owner of The Kash Menswear store, Mr. James J. Lomas. Bates also designed The Kash building on Devon St, the original New Plymouth Opera House, Colliers Building, Mayfair Theatre frontage and entrance, and the former Taranaki Club building in the city.

The fine finishes and detailing throughout the Brougham St home mark it as one of the city's premier homes of the day.

A visit suggests that with the first step from the front porch into the foyer. In here is your first taste of the beautifully grained rimu – in boards laid underfoot, in panelling that rises to the dado detail at door-top height, and in the battens that section the ceiling surface.

Doors lead off the foyer at left and right. At left, through the feature ingle nook space with its solid rimu seat, the door opens into a library or reading room with its tiled, open fireplace and rimu bookshelf surround. A bay window, flooded with natural light, offers a great spot to lie back with a favourite author.

The right-hand door off the foyer leads into the inspiring main lounge with its latticed-leadlight windows looking down Brougham St to the city. Another rimu-framed fireplace is found in here, this time occupied by a gas-flame heater insert.

There's more leadlighting in the French doors that lead on into the formal dining room and again on either side of the doorway in here where leadlight glazing fronts built-in china cabinets.

From here, you step into the central hallway that links these original living areas with the staircase to the upper storey, a downstairs bedroom with its ensuite services, a separate toilet, and recent extensions to the rear of the house.

Upstairs, there are three double bedrooms, complemented by a family bathroom and a separate shower room. The latter provides a contemporary fitout shaped into the slope of the roof. Roof spaces and a small hobby room off the hallway were also used to create the well-appointed ensuite and walk-in wardrobe for the

generous master bedroom.

The front bedroom of the three opens into a sunroom, originally an open-to-the-elements upper balcony, but closed in by previous owners with bifolding windows. "The grandchildren sleep up here; they love it," Gary says.

This home's appeal has been considerably enhanced by the contemporary comfort and convenience carefully incorporated into the new downstairs extensions with the help of city architect John Ardern.

About six years ago, Gary and Joan decided to upgrade the home's single separate garage to a more suitable double garage with internal access. Doing that properly would also allow a spacious open-plan link to the new garage and provide informal dining and a family living area with French doors out on to a new deck for improved outdoor living options.

The architect's design gave them all that, successfully marrying the original and new elements of the home with a subtle flow of rimu and character touches.

Three years ago, they added to the extension project with a major kitchen renovation. The kitchen is an unashamedly minimalist design from award-winning designer Glen Johns, but the simple addition of an ornate finish to the face of the custom rangehood helps the kitchen sit pleasingly in the new space.

An original bay window opens on to the new deck area while a set of French doors and another wider set of bifolding doors, all in timber, allow an easy indoor-outdoor flow for entertaining.

Gary and Joan took advantage of the extensions to include a bonus living space above the double garage. "For the sake of a few extra rows of blocks, we put the extra space in to give us a rumpus room."

A tongue-and-groove finish to ceilings in here provide a modest character touch, but the rich rimu battens across the ceilings of the new living areas adjacent, and the timber architraves and skirting and floor boards are a stronger link to the original areas of the home.

The quality of this home – in both old and new areas, and its location in the centre of the city, makes 83 Brougham St a rare property on today's market, says Harcourts consultant Zay Griffith.

"It's a successful combination of period style and modern comfort... and unlike many character homes, there's nothing that new owners need to do here," Zay says.

The number of bedrooms and ensuite options even give the home a bed-and-breakfast potential, she adds.



QUICK LOOK

WHERE: 83 Brougham St, New Plymouth
HOW BIG: 506sqm in land; 360sqm in home.

HOW MUCH: To be set at auction, at 5.30pm on August 29, 2013, at Harcourt House, unless sold prior. (RV \$860,000)

WHAT YOU GET: A spacious character property in central New Plymouth with stunning original features and recent high-quality extensions that complement and enhance the original home. Proximity to the city centre and nearby walkway and park spaces adds to the attraction of the property.

MARKETED BY: Zay Griffith at Harcourts – ph 06 759 9160 or 0272 422 175 (Freephone 0800FORZAY),

ON THE WEB: open2view.com – ref 296608; taranakiharcourts.co.nz – ref NP4824.

SEE IT: Viewing by appointment. A video walk-through is available on youtube.com – search for 83 Brougham St.



WEB EXTRA

See extra photos of this property at taranakidailynews.co.nz

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