

# Richmond Estate

City development approaching stage two

A Daily News Advertising Feature

## Apartment sales put the seal of approval on this development

Seven of nine apartments sold; four are occupied

By MIKE SHAW

EYES in New Plymouth have been focused approvingly skyward during the past 18 months as the Richmond Estate potential on the city's foreshore became reality. The former seven-storey Tasman Hotel has been transformed into a high-rise, high-quality apartment building — growing another storey in the process to incorporate a penthouse apartment. Two levels of apartments have been built off the side of the main tower block and an indoor swimming pool and sauna complex established in the basement of the building.

New colours gave a fresh image to the main structure, which gained style and a Mediterranean look with the addition of curved balconies for each of the tower block apartments. As each change was made, appreciative comments

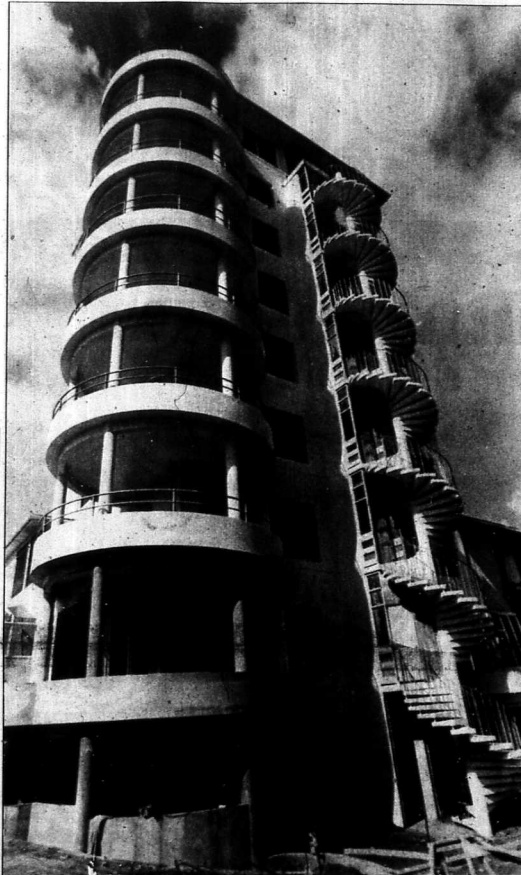
echoed about the city.

Approval in thought in its turn was transformed into signatures on paper as seven of the nine apartments in stage one of the development sold.

Four of the apartments are now occupied — the first owners moving in on September 4 last year. Three more residents are due to move in, one each month from now until December. The penthouse is yet to be sold, as is the largest apartment adjacent to the tower.

With work on this first stage nearing completion, developers Gary Pigott and Cedric Grantham are now looking to stage two and the construction of three executive townhouses on the seaward and city-side of the property's carpark area.

The first work has begun with the erection of a double garage for one of the townhouses.



ALL DECKED OUT: Circular balconies give a Mediterranean look to the high-rise Richmond Estate in New Plymouth. Photo: DWAYNE SENIOR

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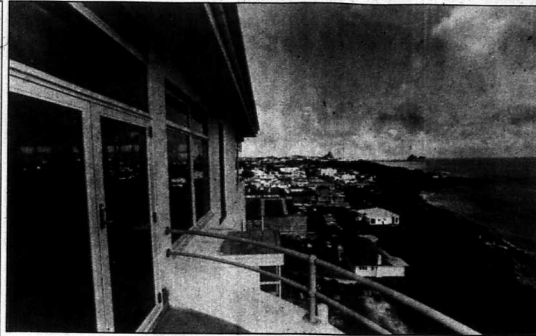
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OVERVIEW: The penthouse storey on the Richmond Estate tower offers spectacular views over city and coast. Photo: DWAYNE SENIOR

## Closer to the sea

RICHMOND Estate's first stage — the tower block — had height and impressive views over sea and city as a major feature.

Stage two has unique qualities of its own, focused on its intimate relationship with the sea and relishing the extra freedom of the more open site.

Set on the boundary of the property, the three townhouses are that much closer to the Tasman Sea than the restless waters will become a natural part of life in the townhouses. The ebb and flow of the tides, sunlight glinting off the sea, the mood and motion of more vigorous weather, the wheel and cry of the gulls — all will have their moments, adding interest to the outlook.

The townhouses are part of the grand concept which was created around the former Tasman Hotel building.

What the original hotel lacked in image, it more than made up for in location. That location was one of four key elements identified in the successful development.

The other three were exclusivity — and its associated investment value, security and self-contained recreation.

Potential residents quickly recog-

nised those elements in the tower block. But the same benefits apply to the townhouses.

Auckland architect Don Nelson approached the townhouse part of the project with a continuation of the theme adopted for the main tower block. Modern Mediterranean is the image set by the solid plaster construction and Monier tile roofing.

That style had wide appeal and was timeless, he said. "In 20 years' time they will look as good as the day they were built."

Unlike the tower development, there were no constraints of existing building shapes. Space on the property allowed development of townhouses that were exclusive and private in nature.

"They will be a little bit bigger than most of the tower block apartments, appealing to a different type of client wanting more of their own space with their own attached garages," he said.

Outdoor balconies opened off top floor bedrooms while the ground floor access to the private frontage allowed indoor-outdoor living.

Developers Gary Piggett and Cedric Grantham plan to complete one of the townhouses initially, interest from which should spur the follow-on development of the other two.



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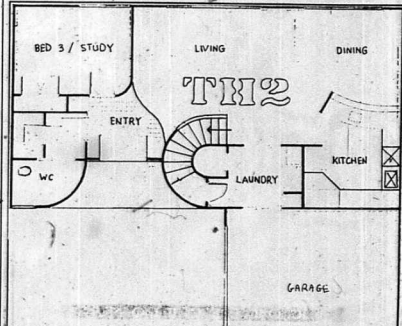
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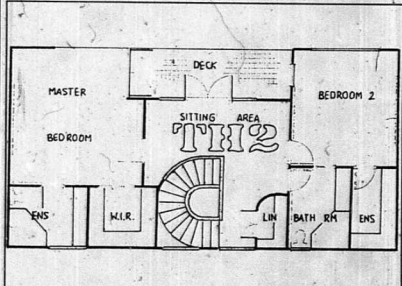


From left: Terry, Kelvin, Mark, Brian and George

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ENTRY: A Richmond Estate townhouse ground floor plan.



ABOVE: The upper floor plan for the townhouse.

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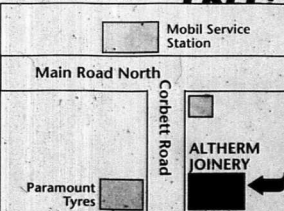


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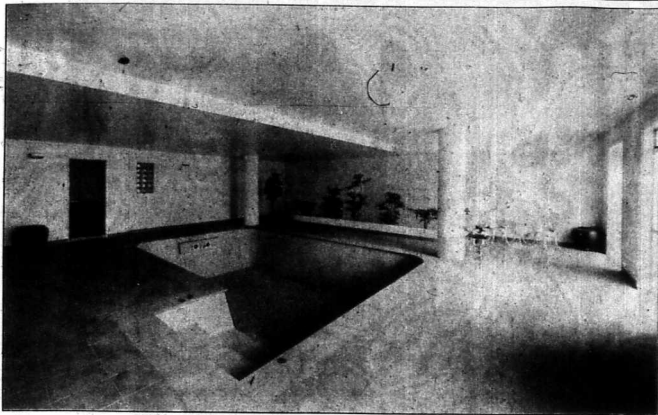


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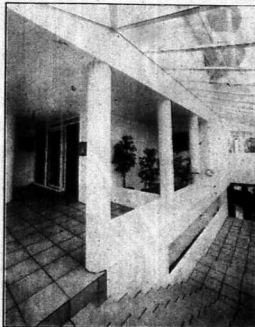
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POOL: Swimming exercise and recreation is the focus of the basement area.

Photo: ADRIAN MALLOCH



ENTRY: A stylish entrance welcomes residents and visitors. Photo: ADRIAN MALLOCH

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### Transformation work satisfying

PROGRESS on the Richmond Estate development was made easier by the high standards of the original building construction. Probably no one person knows that better than project foreman John Barriball.

He has been involved with the development since the first day, helping strip out the old hotel and refitting it with the high quality interior and finish which marks it today.

"It was remarkably square for a 30-year-old building," John said. "That made it a lot easier to redo."

As the work proceeded on the building, a variety of people spoke to the project crew, some telling tales of the old hotel, some who had worked on its construction. The latter told of the work they did and of the high standard to which they worked.

The current project also set high standards, requiring an ongoing quality control to ensure the work was completed to specifications and the satisfaction of the developers and residents.

The transformation of the building and the results of their work made the job a satisfying one for the project workforce, John Barriball said.

"It's the best job I've ever had," he said. "It's as nice a building as you could ever work on."

### Rumours wrong

MATCHING the buzz of interest generated by the Richmond Estate development in New Plymouth has been the number of rumours about its growth, its failure, its owners.

Each of those rumours has drawn a smile or two from developers and residents at the shoreside complex. Richmond Estate is an unqualified success for both.

For the record, the penthouse has not been sold. And it does not have a million-dollar price tag. Cedric Grantham said the final cost to a purchaser depended on the type and choice of finish and whether they wished to take advantage of a private bubble lift planned for the penthouse.

But he did say the apartment would sell for in excess of half a million dollars.

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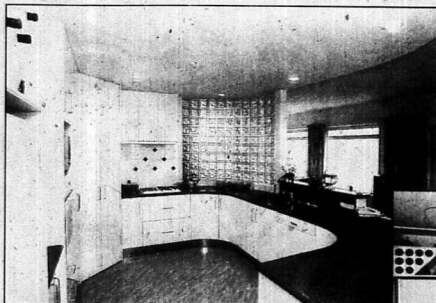
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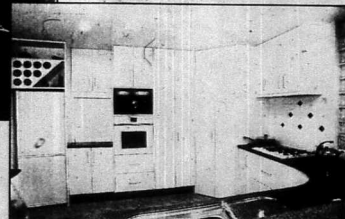
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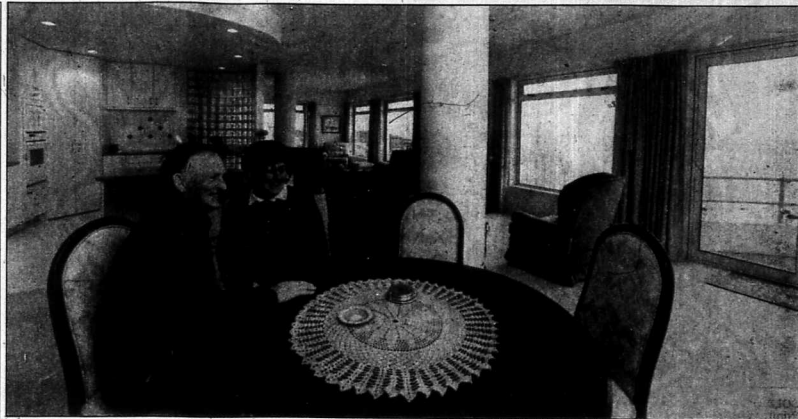
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AT HOME: Stuart and Marion Green replaced a farm home with this apartment.

Photo: ADRIAN MALLOCH



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## Lifestyle seeds sown in Sydney 23 years ago

SYDNEY in 1970 provided the seeds of a lifestyle change for Raboeta farmers Stuart and Marion Green — early residents of the Richmond Estate complex in New Plymouth.

They spent part of an Australian holiday in a 17th-floor apartment in a 23-storey residential block owned by Stuart's brother. "We believed that was the ultimate in living for a lot of people in New Zealand," Stuart said.

Farming their large Raboeta property occupied the Green's time in the years since that 1970 trip. Their farm, set up close to Mt Egmont, took in expansive 360° views, from the mountain behind them to the fields falling away in front of them to the sea. The Maui offshore platform was a distant view.

The attraction of apartment living had not faded for the couple in retirement.

"But we never thought we'd be able to do it here in New Plymouth," Stuart Green said. "If we'd wanted to have that type of living, we'd have had to go to Auckland."

Visits to that city over the years had revealed limitations in apartment options there. They saw two bedroom versions, with no lockup garage, space for only one vehicle in the basement and one-third less living space — and half as expensive again as the Richmond Estate option. "The decision wasn't hard," he said.

Health problems — the pain and restrictions imposed on Stuart by rheumatoid arthritis — had pushed

them into the decision to sell their farm and seek easier living quarters.

The comfortable lifestyle in the still-developing complex seems to have helped immensely. Within a month, Stuart was feeling great with no worries or tension, he could laugh at things going on around him — and the walking stick was back in a cupboard.

"We don't miss the farm at all," he said. The outlook still encompassed 360° with a sense of vastness — the same feel as the farm provided.

The apartment was not the only option the Greens considered. "We looked at homes on ordinary sections," Marion said. They would then go back to the farm look at the side fences and the back fences and imagine living with homes built adjacent and crowding them in.

"That was not for them. "Here we have a moving scenery," she said describing the changes and mobility of the seascape. "On the farm the paddocks never moved."

And it has been a resounding success for them. Adding to the conveniences and quality of life in the apartment development was the closeness of the city facilities — only minutes' walking time away.

And the communal atmosphere among the residents was a bonus, she said.

The move had its detractors — even family members were worried they might have made the wrong choice. "Most of our septics have sat down in here since and said 'I'm not going home,'" she laughed.

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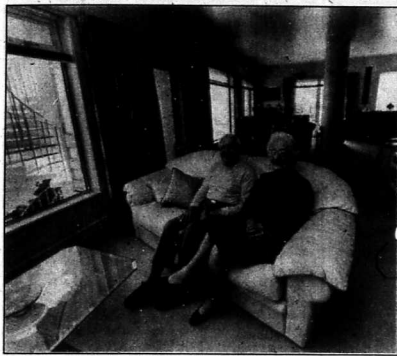


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**SOLD ON IT:** Apartment living is the life for Peggy and Hugh Primrose in New Plymouth. Photo: DWAYNE SENIOR

## Compared well with Auckland

APARTMENT living posed no problems for two of Richmond Estate's residents, Peggy and Hugh Primrose. The couple moved to their New Plymouth apartment from an apartment block in Auckland's St Heliers suburb.

"We knew what we were coming to," Hugh said.

The city in fact held fond memories for the couple. They first saw it on their honeymoon 45 years ago and left with a good impression.

Originally from Hamilton, they moved to Auckland in retirement, living out at Manly for six years before moving closer into Auckland for the improved access to services.

In St Heliers they boasted a nice apartment with view across to the harbour bridge and up to Takapuna. A deck area of more than 90m<sup>2</sup> carried more than 60 planter boxes.

Later, family members in Hamilton and New Plymouth suggested they move south so they could be closer to each other and the Primroses opted for a move to New Plymouth.

Only a couple of days after placing their St Heliers home on the market it was sold. Hugh was on a plane to New Plymouth the next day.

"We wanted views," he said of their needs in a new home. It also had to be handy to water and handy to the city.

He saw a number of properties but while driving past the Richmond Estate development site, the real estate salesperson with him asked if he wanted to see inside. He did and his first inspection drew the thought, "I could live here".

But a home required a joint decision and upon returning to Auckland, Peggy suggested they spend a week in the city looking around together.

The Richmond Estate option — the second floor apartment finished

first as a showplace for the development — found favour immediately.

The couple had specific requirements revolving around a collection of fine furniture. "Having lived in an apartment I could see where everything would go," she said.

Their possessions and the apartment matched well — right down to rugs and colour scheme. They were impressed with the finish and the design.

Sunday visits to open homes in Auckland had made the couple familiar with a range of apartment styles and designs. Richmond Estate more than compared with metropolitan options.

"It's a good lifestyle for retired people. It's either this or a retirement village — and a retirement village is not for us," Peggy said.

They appreciated the independence of an apartment lifestyle and the three-and-a-half minutes walk to either post office or bank was a welcome convenience.

It was a good move and one they were quite prepared to share with others. The sale of their Auckland home meant they were eager to move straight in to the New Plymouth apartment.

A deal with developers Gary Pigott and Cedric Grantham saw the Primroses take the first apartment and continue its use as needed as a show apartment for other potential residents.

They moved in on September 4, 1992, the early possession allowing them to enjoy the experience of seeing the development grow around them.

"We've thoroughly enjoyed living here," Hugh said. "The developers have been marvellous to us and the personal attention we have been given here is appreciated."

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