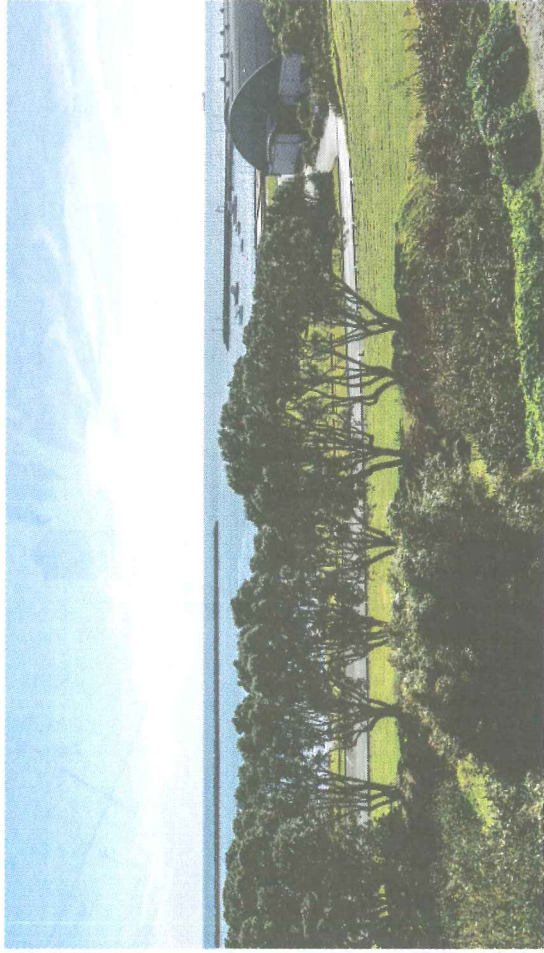


View Sun Sept 11th, 2.00 - 2.30pm



NGAMOTU ICON IS RARE REAL ESTATE 68 WHITELEY STREET, MOTUROA

The windows of Pirimoana have framed around a century of New Plymouth's harbour history. This striking two-storey black & white home at 68 Whiteley St was built about 1917, giving its owner panoramic views stretching from Paritutu Rock, across the commercial focus of the port and the recreational expanse of Ngamotu Beach, and up north past the city to the curve of coastline that reaches out to Kawhia.

The main breakwater was part of that original panorama; but, with development in subsequent years, the view grew to embrace the lee breakwater, and the power station and its towering chimney.

The location here is the obvious drawcard for its owners – the first being Alice Paul, the widow of James Paul, New Plymouth mayor from 1884-1885 and founder of the Egmont Brewery. James Paul died in 1906 and Alice is said to have had this home built as her summer home a few years later. The design was crafted by noted architect Thomas Bates, who also designed the original TSB Showplace and the former Taranaki Club buildings, among many others.

The setting here looking out over the port may well have been a reminder of her husband, who keenly promoted the development of the harbour and was a member of the Harbour Board.

The suggestion that Alice used this property as a summer home is given weight by an advertisement that she had placed into the Taranaki Daily News on March 13, 1920: To Let – Furnished House, "Pirimoana," ideally situated at Moturoa, end of 2d tram section; h. and c. water, electric light and every convenience, good garage. – Apply Mrs Paul, Brougham St.

She was, presumably, looking for tenants for the coming winter months.

They would have been very comfortable in this home, as the healthy financial position provided by the brewery and other business interest allowed the construction and detailing of a high-quality residence. That was obvious on a quick visit to the home in the past week. While time and weathering has taken its toll on the exterior of black-creosote-stained weatherboards and white window frames, the home retains seriously impressive features and finishes inside.

Step across the spacious verandah and inside the front door and you find a spacious foyer lined with richly grained oregon timber panelling. There's plenty more as well – in the adjacent lounge and kitchen areas, guiding you upstairs to the bedrooms and bathroom, and around the landing area at the top of the stairs.

Two of the bedrooms up here – the master and one of the guest or family bedrooms – extend out into what would have been open balconies in the home's early years. Closed in later on, they would have been prime spots to take in the port outlook – as would the window seat in the master bedroom. There's another window seat down below in the lounge area adjacent between the brick fireplace and leadlight-glazed French doors to the front verandah.

Walking through these rooms was a reminder of happy family times here for a visitor to last Sunday's open home. Val Patten's parents, Ted and Winn Wood, owned this home for more than 40 years.

Later, the tennis court disappeared as Ted and Winn subdivided their freehold property and built a number of brick units between their home and the street. Present owners, Michelle and her husband, bought Pirimoana 11 years ago. "We love character homes and I'd always admired it," Michelle says. "When I was on the beach, I would look up at this iconic home."

They lived here for five years before renting it out while they spent the next few years living overseas. Michelle says life here offered special touches – the sight of whales cruising past the port, and penguins coming into roost along the Ngamotu beachfront below. "At night, the sound of the waves lapping on the sand gave this a tropical feel."

Steps down from the front lawn gave easy access to the beach. "We loved living here; it was great for the kids with the beach on our doorstep." They could look down on high-profile events such as the world triathlon and kids' Weetbix Triathlon, while the seaside market gave an extra community focus to the beachfront. "It's close to the Moturoa shopping centre and very handy to schools and cafes. And it's just minutes to the walkway."

The outlook gains extra drama when fine weather gives way to rough, she says. "On stormy days, the waves would wash over the breakwater ... it was amazing to see ... we could see the squalls coming through."

When the larger storm-driven swells came through, their son used to surf down at Ngamotu Beach, she says.

Plans to eventually restore the home have now changed and new owners will have that opportunity. TSB Realty consultant Jane Simonson is fielding plenty of interest in rare real estate. "This is a real opportunity to own a home with so much history on a freehold property above the beach and restore it to its former glory," she says.

Expressions of Interest close 4:00pm
21 September 2016 (unless sold prior)

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