

CONTEMPORARY CHARACTER

A small 1920's bungalow in Auckland has morphed into a truly elegant family residence.

Words **Soraya Nicholas** Photography **Thomas Law**



WHEN IAIN AND ANNE FALCONER purchased their first home over twelve years ago, it was a modest bungalow with a tiny kitchen, separate dining and living areas, and what they describe as “a very bad flow.” It was here they lived for a number of years, enjoying the 1920s home despite its flaws, until they rented it out while they worked in the United Kingdom. On their return, they decided it was time to make some changes, and started thinking about a serious renovation.

While Iain and Anne did have a set of drawings semi-completed, unforeseen circumstances put a halt to their plans. This set the Falcons back by a couple of years, until they became excited once more about the potential of their home. It was then that they found a new designer, and discovered **Certified Renovations**. “In the build up to making our decisions, we had seen their premises, recognised their logo, and we felt right about them from the start. It was obvious they had our best intentions at heart from our first contact with them,” says Iain. “As the renovation progressed, we liked the fact they really respected our ideas, and listened to what we wanted.”

And while the ideas for their renovation did start out more modest, they soon became large scale. “Originally we were just going to change the overall layout of the home,” explains Iain, “but then our ideas changed and we decided to

go up. With two growing children we realised it was important to separate our master bedroom, so we now have the master upstairs, with an open-plan sitting area, office and bathroom.” This is now one of their favourite spaces in the house, although it comes second to the new downstairs area. “We completely changed the layout of the ground floor, although the bedrooms did

stay in roughly the same space.” The kitchen, dining and living spaces now spill out onto a large deck, which is full of sun and accessible via huge opening doors. “We all absolutely love this part of the home, especially over summer.”

The renovation was not just an aesthetic makeover either. Almost all of the walls were taken out completely, with hardly anything left of the interior aside from the basic shell.

ABOVE A new colour palette helped to create a truly modern feel for the home. The interior was painted in Dulux Quarter Hopelands, with Dulux Sandrock Bluff chosen for the exterior. The original timber floor was retained where possible, with matching Kauri sourced for those areas that needed to be replaced, and the original brick chimney was also kept as a homage to the original interior. **ABOVE LEFT** The original cottage had been well maintained, however it was not suitable as a modern family home.



Our Place

with Iain & Anne Falconer

Favourite room?

The back area is our favourite space, because it's a great place to be as a family, and it's nice that the deck now connects with the living areas.

Best buy?

Iain: The wooden banister for the staircase. I made it myself from recycled timber, as I didn't like the idea of glass. During the build so much wood kept coming out of the house, and I really wanted to do something with it. So I started sorting through the timber and spent many nights out in the garage planing away, with a mixture of Rimu and Kauri. Since then I've also made a television cabinet, and there is still some wood left over.

Advice to others preparing to build?

Iain: Don't get too stuck with all the decisions that have to be made. We are fairly easy going, and we didn't over-analyse things. While it is a big decision making process overall, you need to trust your builder and in your own ideas.

Anne: We went to the UK for four weeks, and then lived in a campsite for 10 weeks during the renovation, and the key for us was to just trust our builder. The time in the campsite was trying, but it was worth not having to live through the rebuild onsite!



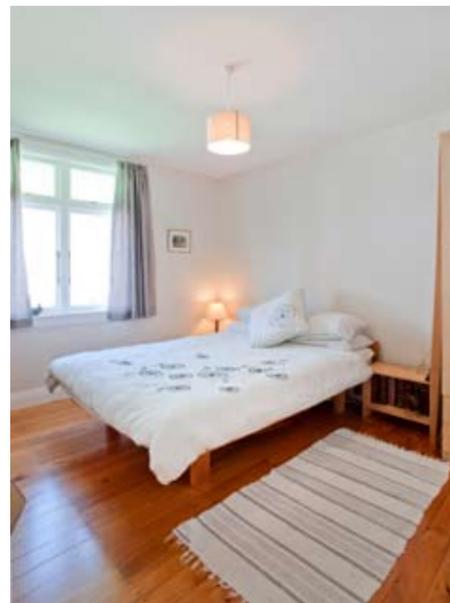
ABOVE TOP A new set of bi-fold doors were installed to open the home to the large deck, which is bathed in sun throughout the day. This is where the family spend the most time over summer, enjoying alfresco dining and the modern sense of indoor/outdoor flow. **ABOVE** Iain, Anne and their children Aidan (10) and Tara (8) spend time together as a family in their new living area.



ABOVE Iain made the handrail and upstairs balustrade for the stairs from timber recycled from the house.

ABOVE RIGHT The original fireplace was retained, as were the classic architraves.

RIGHT The kitchen is perfect for busy family life. To add a splash of colour, Resene Pohutukawa Red was selected for the kitchen splashback. "We just loved the red when we saw it, and we took a real gamble as we're not great at picking things like that!" **BELOW** Light walls and timber floors keep the bedrooms modern and simple in design.



This allowed all new insulation to be fitted, to make the home healthier and warmer over winter. Certain elements of the original architecture were retained, such as a selection of old architraves, and the floor was matched in order to keep the classic timber underfoot. Kauri was sourced and meticulously laid, and heating was installed beneath for additional warmth.

"The best thing about our home now, is that we may have given it potentially another 100 years of life," says Iain. "We had it rebuilt from the ground up really, and the work Certified Renovations did was to such a high standard, that the

home is essentially brand new with a character exterior. The floor and walls are solid, we have great insulation and heating, and the house works so well as a practical family home."

Despite the Falconers returning to the United Kingdom for four weeks during the renovation, they say that it all worked out perfectly. Certified Renovations kept the feijoa tree alive and cared for the family cat too, and by the time family returned their home was almost complete. ■

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THE SPECS

Auckland
\$300,000 - \$400,000
180 Sq m

