

abode

MAY/JUNE 2015

the home issue

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Designed by Stephen Crooks, this quake rebuild is all about paying homage to the past, Lucinda Diack explains

to the past *with Love*

Tucked on the edge of Redcliffs is a small private lane, which pre-quake boasted forty-four houses. Nearly five years later, thirteen of them have been red-zoned, eight have either been completed or are being rebuilt, eight rebuilds are still to begin, and the rest are facing, or have faced, major repairs. It is a section of Christchurch which has been dramatically changed by the devastating effects of the Canterbury Quakes; yet amongst it all, one family have rebuilt with a clear nod to what stood before.

Recognised by lovers of architecture as an exemplar of 1970s modernist

design, complete with strong, sharp geometric lines and a spiral staircase, the original structure on the site was designed by David Allen, and since 2000 has been home to Pip, Matthew and their two children.

"When the earthquake struck on 22nd February (2011) we were, thankfully, not here," recalls Pip. "As the house just crumbled, it could have been catastrophic." Completely uninhabitable, the young family spent four years in rental accommodation before they could once again call their beloved site home. "We never thought we would





build," explains Matthew, "but we had plans for minor alternations already being completed by Stephen Crooks, so when we were faced with a rebuild, he was a natural choice and most importantly, had a strong understanding of what our house had been like."

For Stephen, a director at Chaplin Crooks architects, Matthew and Pip's rebuild is a beautiful realisation of some of the magic and wonder that has come out of the earthquakes.

"This was our first rebuild following the quakes, and while so many across the city are paying homage to what once was, what makes this rebuild so special, is that the familiarity and essence of the old house has been restored. It is very clearly a relative, just from a different generation."

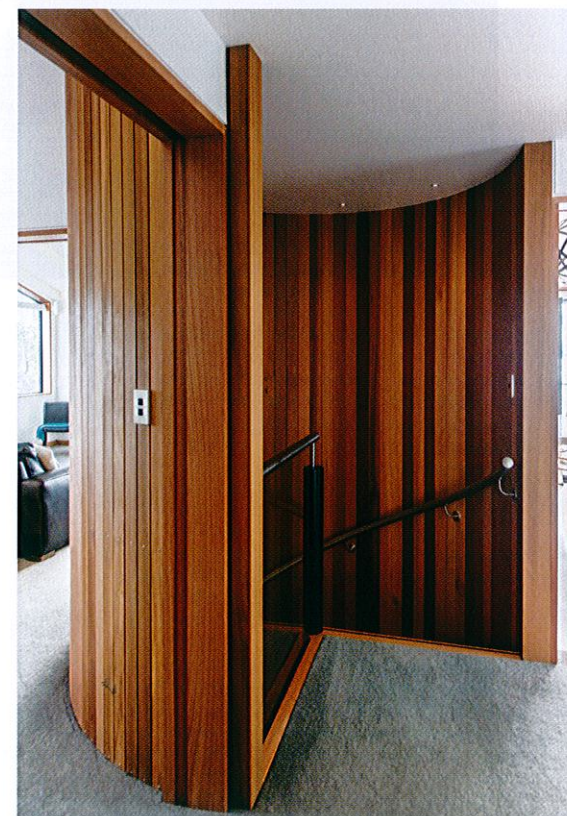
"It's a flash relative of the old house," agrees Pip with a smile. "We have taken the best of what was there and integrated it into a contemporary living environment."

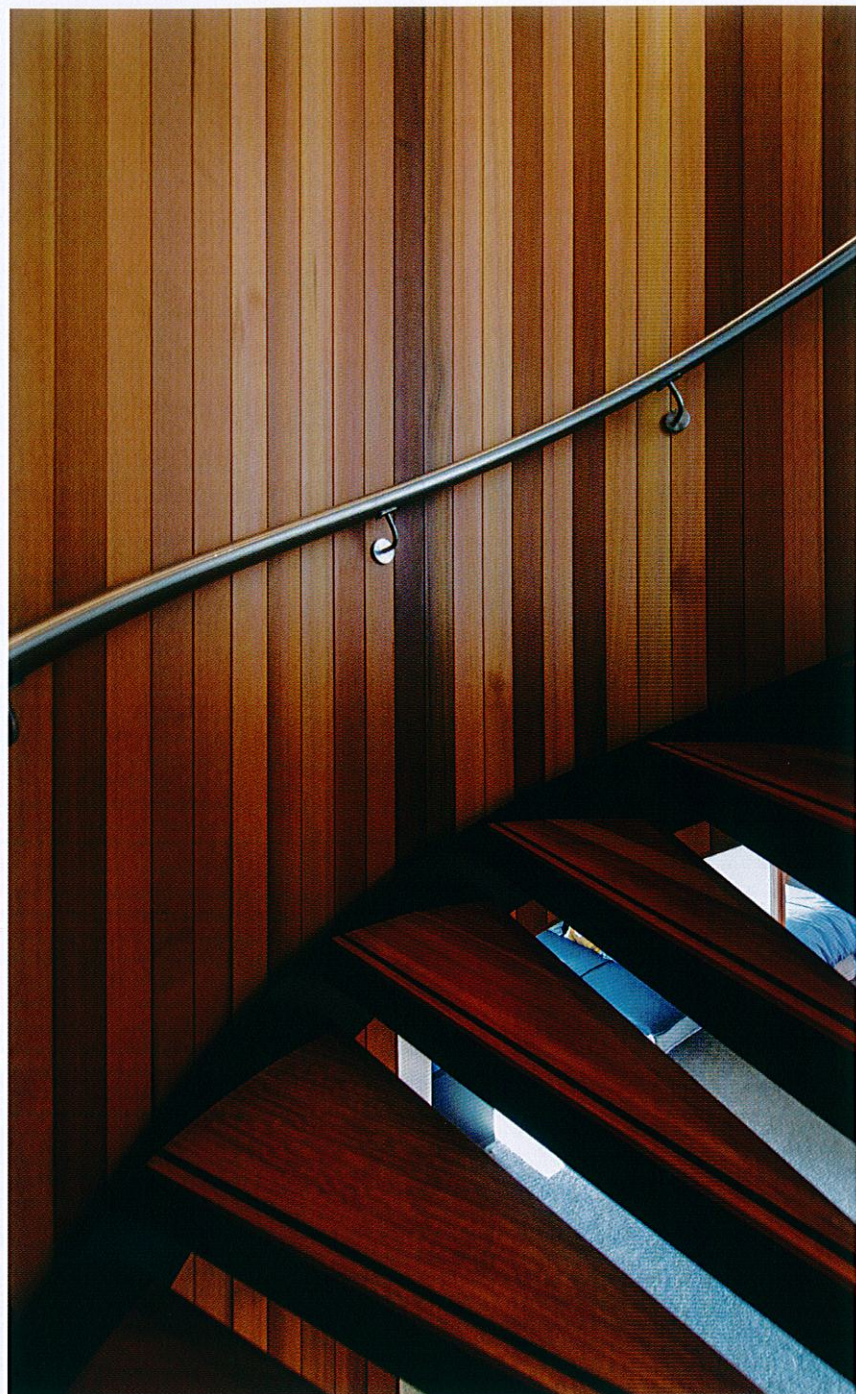


While the kitchen, living and dining are almost identical to the old house the laundry is now bigger, the master bedroom boasts an ensuite, and the lower level has been utilised so as to cater for teenage living. "Prior to the quakes Matthew and Pip had been looking at altering downstairs from being an under-utilised space, into a functional lower level with two bedrooms for the children. "So while the new house falls within the existing footprint, there is now far more livable space," explains Stephen.

Drawing on the 1970s architectural statements of the previous abode, Matthew and Pip opted to retain the use of a spiral staircase. Upon entering the home, it is this bold and integral component which first captivates. Leading guests from the upper level, which houses the living areas and master suite, down to the teenage haven below, it is unsurpassed in its detailing and execution. "The stairwell is the core of the home," offers Stephen, "and can be likened to a tree trunk. The vertical ship-lap cladding found on the outside is slightly rougher

The kitchen boasts the same view as pre-quake living, despite the home having been completely rebuilt. Where once the skillion ceiling of the kitchen and dining room had dark exposed ceiling beams, the couple have recreated the feel with faux beams. Painted white like the rest of the house they enhance the crisp, architectural aesthetic of the interior. A classic white Mitsubishi Electric Designer Series Heat Pump is discreetly positioned in the living room.





Drawing on the history and beauty of the original 1970s modernist home, is the inclusion of a central spiral staircase connecting the upper and lower levels. Like the original home, wood has been used extensively for warmth and texture, as well as architectural interest. The use of Linea Blend Mosaic tiles from Stone and Tile Solutions ensured the bathrooms were in keeping with the rest of the home.



than the timber on the inside, which is smooth and soft to touch, like the wood on the inside of a trunk. The living areas of the upper level then radiate out from the trunk-like branches."

"The attention to detail and execution which went into both the design and construction of the stairwell was amazing," shares Pip. "It was beautiful watching it come together."

Continuing the striking standard of design and quality was Stone and Tile Solutions. Brought to the team to execute the waterproofing and supply of tiles in the bathrooms and externally, the family-run company specialise in porcelain and natural stone tiles. Opting for a combination of white wall tiles, Anthracite floor tiles and Linea Blend Mosaic, Pip and Matthew were able to continue their simple, yet strikingly effective colour palette into the bathrooms with beautiful results.

The home also features five Mitsubishi Electric Designer Series Heat Pumps in classic white, installed by Hartnell Coolheat. Part of a total home Mitsubishi Electric Multi Split System heating solution, they ensure the house is not only warm and cozy in winter, but cool

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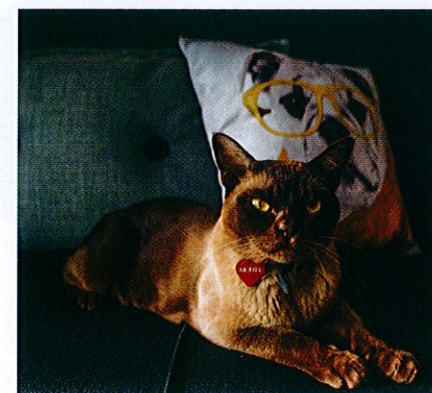
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and comfortable in summer. Combining exceptional energy efficiency with award-winning design they were a natural choice for such a discerning home.

It is not only the exceptional detailing and architectural nod to the past, which makes this house so special however. "From an efficiency perspective this house boasts a number of exceptional additions which sadly you can't see," shares Stephen. "Most notably is the edge insulated slab, which complements the extensive insulation, high performance glass and thermally broken aluminium window frames." Essentially wrapping the edge of the foundation in a polyblock sheet, the slab edge insulation completely seals the thermal envelope of the house, ensuring no loss of heat.

Sitting at the kitchen bench Matthew and Pip reflect upon the slightly surreal feeling that things are the same but different. "It is all new but so much of it is the same that it feels right," shares Pip. With the view across the bench and out to the seascape below, one of the many aspects of the house that has been retained, it is little wonder these homeowners were so passionate about recapturing the essence and beauty that first attracted them to this site. ■



Resene Shooting Star provides a vibrant splash of colour in one of the downstairs bedrooms. A space which Bruno the cat is very much at home in.



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