

Fit for a dynasty

Grand homestead leaves family's hands after 45 years, writes Jane Loudon

157 GILLIES AVE, EPSOM

Delve into the history of this stately Epsom home and you'll find its grandeur and craftsmanship belie the speed with which it was built.

The original building contract for the 1908 two-storey home, which still has most of its beautiful original features, deemed that builders Johns & Son were to complete it within 14 weeks or be fined £2 for each day they exceeded the deadline.

The house has been in the McCoach family for the past 45 years since Hugh McCoach, who died late last year, bought it for his wife Margaret and family of six children after moving to Auckland from Palmerston North.

Grattan McCoach, the youngest of the six children, was only 3 when his father bought the home on the advice of his wife's father.

"The conversation apparently went along the lines of, 'this will do you'. There might not have been too many six-bedroom houses on the market at the time," says Grattan.

He has great memories of growing up in the house which, with its near-level 1027sq m section, was ideal for the McCoaches' large family of five sons and one daughter.

"I don't know how many games of rugby and cricket we would have played out on the back lawn," says Grattan. "When we weren't at our beach house we seemed to spend every day of summer in the garden."

He says other than renovating the kitchen and bathrooms in the early 1980s, his parents made few changes to the interior of the house.

However, they did add a large carport outside that connects the back, northwest-facing side of the house to a single garage, two sheds, a sleepout and laundry.

The carport provided year-round shelter for outdoor activities including table tennis and countless barbecues for family and friends.

Hugh was a respected community figure who was a president of the New Zealand Dental



SIZE: Land 1027sq m, house 329sq m.

PRICE INDICATION: Interest expected above CV of \$1.59 million. Tender closes 4pm, April 11.

INSPECT: Sat/Sun 12-12.40pm, Wed 12-12.30pm.

ON THE WEB: harcourts.co.nz/ES4348

SCHOOL ZONES: Kohia Terrace School, Auckland Normal Intermediate, Auckland Grammar, Epsom Girls' Grammar.

CONTACT: Cheryl Crane, Harcourts, ph 632 1835 or 021 444 149.

FEATURES: Substantial six-bedroom home with original 1908 features on large, sunny site in double-Grammar zones close to Newmarket, Mt Eden and motorway entrances.

Association, and was well known in the Catholic community.

He and Margaret were "as social as anyone could be with six children", says Grattan, who adds that the house, with its large formal dining room, was an excellent venue for the countless high teas the McCoaches hosted.

All six children learned musical instruments and the formal lounge, across the hallway from the dining room on the ground floor, effectively became the family's music room where they would all practise and perform.

Like the rest of the home, these two rooms have generous 3.6m studs and board and batten ceilings.

All of the living is on the ground floor, which includes the kitchen and walk-in pantry, a shower room, toilet and large central hallway leading from the front door to an elaborately turned wooden staircase that leads to the upstairs level.

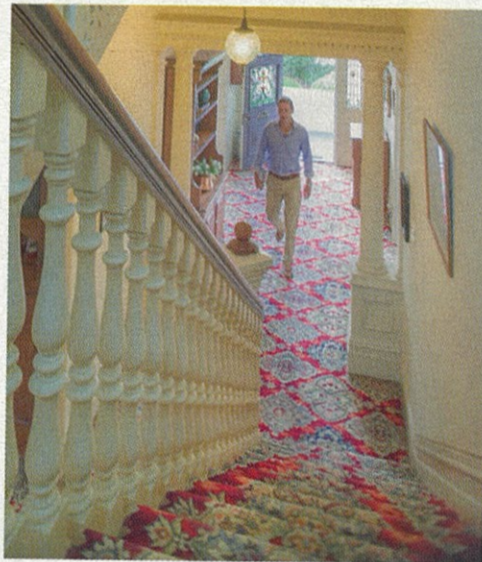
The main bathroom and all six bedrooms are on this level, including four which have been created out of two originally larger rooms.

From a deep, square-shaped covered veranda at the front of house on this level you can look out over to Mt Hobson and Mt St John and enjoy the morning sun.

The house also includes a huge head-height attic which, if developed and opened up with



PHOTOS/TED BAGHURST



Don't miss



Coast & Country, p64

windows, would give views across Newmarket and out to the harbour. The solid kauri house has been tastefully furnished in keeping with its era.

It still has its exquisite original front-door leadlights and two of four tiled fireplaces, which have ornately carved wooden surrounds.

Like his siblings, Grattan will be sad to see the house change hands but says it will a great home for another family.

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