



LIFESTYLE

A ONCE IN A LIFETIME BUILDING EXPERIENCE IN ASHBURTON

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THE FIRST AND LAST HOUSE THAT BARRY AND JAN FINE built was in the 1970s, and unlike their new home, it was far more basic. “The first one was a real first home,” explains Jan, “whereas with this one, we did exactly what we wanted.” Despite knowing roughly what they hoped to achieve, the toughest part of the process was actually finding a builder. Having visited plenty of showhomes and talked to many builders, they just couldn’t find anyone who had the requisite passion and enthusiasm for the project.




Travelling to Christchurch in their search left them wondering who to use, and with close friends having a bad building experience, it wasn’t looking good. “No one was helpful at all,” explains Jan, until they met the team at **K Fowler Homes Ashburton**. Owned by Mike and Andrea Lee, the building company are customer focused, something that Jan and Barry certainly appreciated. “They were absolutely wonderful! There was no stress whatsoever throughout the building project, it was 110% effort by Fowler Homes all the way. Andrea was incredibly helpful and became a firm friend. Their communication was great.”

From the outset, the Fines’ had a few aspects in mind design wise. “In general, we wanted a mono-pitch roof and bi-fold doors, with roughcast over bricks for the exterior,”

explains Jan. “We also wanted an extra-wide hallway.” Andrea adds that they set out to achieve “a smart, modern look with a comfortable flow from inside to out”. Overall, the home is very low maintenance, and the desired flow between the interior and exterior spaces was well achieved. “We have already had many happy times outside,” tells Jan, with indoor and outdoor areas on the same level making entertaining simple.

Aside from aesthetic design attributes, the shape of the section had a huge influence on the dimensions and overall look of the house. When asked if section size had any bearing on construction, Andrea answers with a resounding “Heck yes!” According to her, “achieving the clients’ wish list onto an unusual shaped section was fun and somewhat challenging, but it has turned out fantastic.” The Fowler Homes team also worked hard on all the “little things” both inside and out, all the while striving to listen carefully and then coordinate everything to make Jan and Barry’s ideals a reality. Minor features that made a big difference to the homeowners include the double doors that lead into the master bedroom, as well as feature recesses and an over-sized hallway.

For the Fines, indoor/outdoor flow was necessary to create an environment they would most enjoy, so the home was placed to face the garden. As with the house

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design, Jan and Barry were both very involved, and enjoyed the overall creation of the landscaping, from conception through to the final stages. Completed by **Phillips Landscaping**, who did everything from design through to full site work, the entire outdoor area is attractive and fairly low maintenance. Most of the gardens are 'no dig', which means the plants are planted through weedmat and mulched using local graded river stone. The plants have dripper irrigation placed on them prior to the river stone being laid, so the gardens can be watered without over spraying onto the deck or paving areas.

To enhance the low-maintenance landscape style, 500x500mm textured pavers were placed, after being mortared, painted and sealed, alongside a manageable stretch of lawn.

With such a lovely outdoor area, the Fines ensured they had an uninterrupted view from inside by selecting large windows and wide bi-fold doors. From **Rylock Canterbury Ltd**, the exterior joinery is made from hardwearing aluminium and is the ultimate in modern low-maintenance design. Through a powder-coating process, the joinery was coloured to Silver Pearl, with a Pilkington bronze tint chosen for the double glazed glass.

Because they specialise in aluminium joinery for all types of homes, Rylock are capable of devising various window and door solutions to complement house designs. In this instance, a flush sill was selected for the bi-folds and the French doors, to encourage an open flow from inside out. The front door was also chosen with care,

Modern weatherboards against solid plaster creates a timeless look

to work with the overall joinery and to provide a welcome entrance to the home.

Next the Fines turned to **James Hardie**, another popular port of call for many new homebuilders, and with a range of products to suit the exterior joinery. Recommended by Fowler Homes, Barry and Jan chose Linea weatherboards as a cladding material in a 150mm profile, with matching CLD Trim placed around the windows. The boards are 16mm thick, with a bevel back for strong, deep shadow lines.

James Hardie Linea weatherboards look just like real wood, but come without the hassle factor. Traditional styling has met revolutionary technology through the creation of a board that does not rot, twist or warp. CLD technology provides exceptional durability, stability and strength, and can flourish in even the harshest conditions. The tongue and groove ends provide an excellent, waste free finish, and the boards can be painted to any colour.

The homeowners were very specific about plaster over brick as the primary exterior cladding material, and the combination of boards and plaster has created a clean, sophisticated effect. Calling upon the services of **Buckland Brick-Block-Plaster**, Fowler Homes asked them to install Austral Avanti Render Bricks, which were later coated with a Dulux Acratex pre-coloured acrylic texture





The kitchen has a chunky Formica benchtop in Snow Sand colour

plaster system. The Tuscany Course texture was selected by Barry and Jan in Dulux colour Narrow Neck.

Bricks have long been a preferred building material, and there are many known benefits to using the Austral bricks. Most importantly, bricks resist the bumps and general mishaps of everyday family life, and the Dulux Acratex system means superior weatherproofing, long lasting colour and proven performance. It also makes a huge difference when the same dedicated team both lay the bricks and apply the plaster.

When it came to the inside of the home, the Fines sought to establish a laid-back, comfortable, modern environment. Although their own children have long since flown the nest, they regularly enjoy welcoming their three young grandchildren into the house. “We have them over a lot,” says Jan, of their two granddaughters and grandson. Ensuring that the home flowed well was key for this very reason, and an open plan layout between the kitchen and living was ideal.

To design and make the spacious kitchen, the Fines worked closely with **Sockburn Joinery Ltd**. The galley style worked with the home’s space, and an integrated look was achieved by way of a bulkhead. This effectively makes the cabinetry appear as if it is built into the wall area.

Designer Rachael Koppe describes the kitchen as “clean and crisp, with as little intrusion into the house as possible

while still being functional. It’s a simple design but one that still complements the home’s style.”

To create the minimalist look, Meltecca was used in colour Mist, with Melamine carbon feature back panels. The chunky style benchtop is crafted from Formica in colour Snow Sand, and provides an excellent frame for the breakfast bar.

Once the kitchen was completed, it was time for **Sarah Bennett Design** to step in. As director of the interior design company, Sarah is well experienced at matching interiors with the individual tastes of homeowners, and this house was no exception.

When selecting the curtains and blinds, Sarah took into account Jan and Barry’s lifestyle and personal interests. For the living/dining room, a natural, unique stripe was chosen and made from a linen material which hangs beautifully in the room. For the lounge, a simple clean fabric was selected and looks fantastic. The homeowners are thrilled with the interior style of their house, especially due to the fact that all of the fabrics co-exist perfectly with the neutral wall tones throughout.

In an effort to enhance the overall ambience of the interior, Barry and Jan decided to have a **Rinnai Lumina** fire installed. Utilising an open-plan design, the fire delivers a clean, decorative instant flame within what Rinnai refers to as “a stylish design driven package”. The Rinnai Lumina offers more than just good looks though, courtesy of an ever-constant commitment by the manufacturer to both design and technology.



The Fines sought to establish a laid-back, comfortable, modern interior; an open gas fire provides a warm ambience and throws a surprisingly powerful amount of heat

Due to the inclusion of an efficient Ceramat burner, a low form of gas input delivers a natural flame picture, with overheat safety sensors and flame failure detectors also included. Other important benefits of the Rinnai Lumina include electronic ignition by way of remote control, as well as a “whisper” quiet in-built convection fan and an integrated zero clearance box. This is built in, either at ground level or higher up the wall, with a removable flue access plate.

The Fines chose a modern brushed stainless steel style for their fire, which makes for a striking focal point in the lounge. Brushed steel is also used for the interior of the fire, for a more attractive frame. Paired with a realistic open flame, the fire portrays an almost organic look.

As an additional service completed for bulk housing and commercial clients, Fowler Homes utilised the services of **Alectra** on behalf of Barry and Jan. In recognition of the products sourced through their company, Alectra provide a free design service, selecting colours for the inside and outside of a home. This takes place over several appointments, and for this home, a soft, neutral palette was favoured. For the roof, Colorsteel colour Sandstone Grey was selected, with Dulux colours Double Haast and Rakaia Half chosen for the interior.

Although Alectra can supply a multitude of products, from appliances and heating through to home theatre systems, for this house they supplied all of the interior flooring and the kitchen appliances. 100% wool carpet from the Knightsbridge Tresori range was chosen, in colour Scalini. Tiles in the entrance way and kitchen are Lifestyle Argento.

Also working on the interior of the home, **Laser Electrical Ashburton** completed all of the general wiring and supplied all requisite plugs and switches. To increase the overall comfort level of the home, an underfloor heating system was recommended and installed in the bathroom and ensuite. Inside the home, the long-established company supplied and installed lighting, with halogens used exclusively for the interior.

Outside, lighting was used to accent key garden features, as well as to provide security. One of the home’s outdoor attractions is the stunning water feature, visible from the living room. Power was required to enable it to function efficiently; as market leaders in the electrical industry, Laser Electrical completed their portion of the project with ease, through an innovative, customer focused approach.

To future proof their house, the Fines engaged the services of **Ashburton Aerials**. An extensive plan was



designed to fully accommodate their needs, and the resulting work includes a comprehensive surround sound system and zoned speakers. Integral to the plan, and increasingly popular in new homes, a central digital communications hub was created; this effectively allows for complete ease of use, with additional connections and adjustments in the future easily allowed for. A remote changer system was included to allow channels to be changed from any room in the house.

One of the key requirements in a future proofed new home is flexibility, and this house is not only adaptable in that respect, it is also discreet by design, with neat cabling completed behind the scenes.

With their home completed, the Fines can only reflect on how enjoyable the project was for them, and certainly recommend building to others. Barry and Jan's appreciation of their home was recently reinforced when friends from Australia came to visit. "They all loved the house," says Jan proudly. And who wouldn't? ■

A neutral colour scheme keeps the house fresh and modern. Linen with a soft stripe was chosen for the curtains, this casual fabric hangs beautifully from ceiling high rods





Our Place

with Jan & Barry Fine

What do you love about your new house?

Everything! It all works really well.

What would you change (if anything)?

Jan: Nothing. If we were building again though and had the space, I would love a butler's pantry.

What advice do you have for others preparing to build?

Have confidence in your builder and project manager, and if you have something to say, say it! Building should be an enjoyable experience, and we can honestly say we enjoyed the entire process. Selecting the right builder is crucial though – make sure they are right for you.

Favourite room?

Jan: I love the dining room. The black glass table looks stunning, particularly when you look in from outside.

Barry: The whole house!

What do friends and family love about your home?

They all seem to love the house in general, and think we've put it together really well.

