

# Home for a Family

IN spring, along with the birds and the bees, domesticated man tends to turn his thoughts to families and places in which to put them, to houses and the building of them. Each season a new flight of home-builders emerge from their hibernation in rented rooms and boarding houses and start upon what may well be one of the major operations in their lives—certainly one which may influence profoundly the way in which they live. For those beginning the great adventure, for those who can remember and compare, or even for those still at the stage of day-dreaming—Beverley Pollock, of 4YA, has arranged three programmes called *We Build a House*, to be heard in the National Women's Session from the YAs and YZs on Wednesday, August 14, 21, and 28.

The house discussed is a real house, one built for a Dunedin couple, Murray and Fiona Paterson, and it will be used as an example of a well-designed small modern home—and everything will be discussed in relation to it. But in talking about this house, the reasons for the use of certain ideas and materials will be given, with the arguments pro and con, so that there will be room for dissenting opinion.

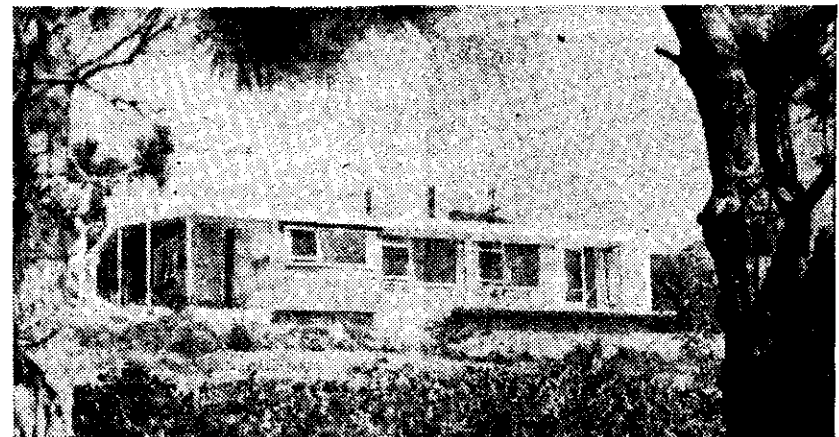
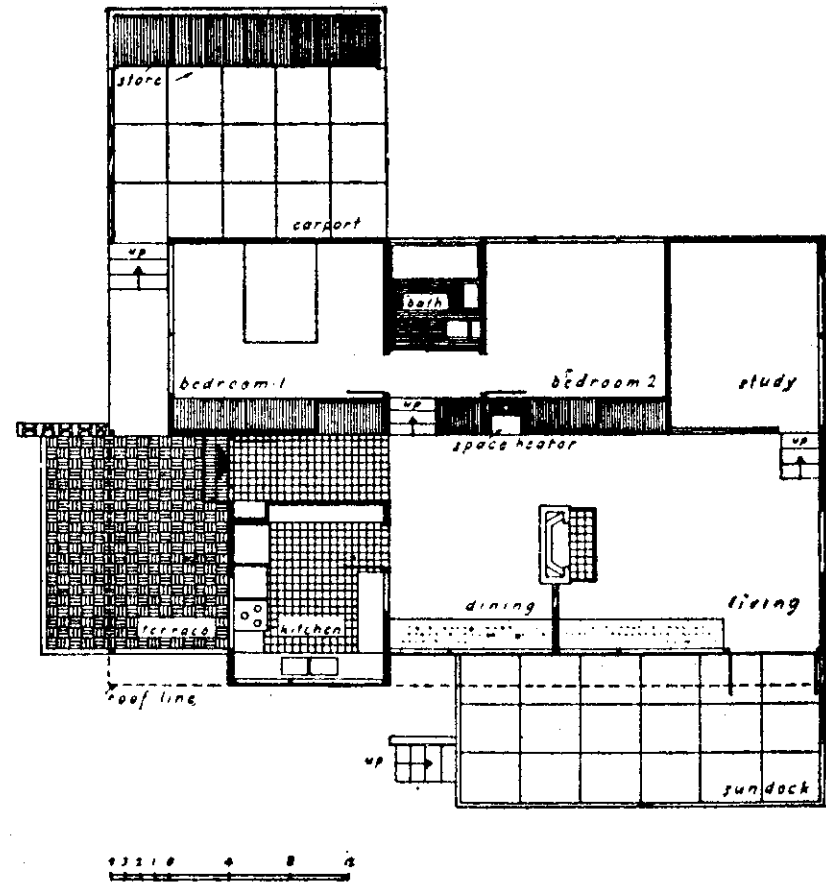
"There were three main reasons for using this house for the programmes," Beverley Pollock said. "The first reason was that it was an architect-designed house which didn't cost an exorbitant price. A great many people think they would like a so-called contemporary house, but that they cost more than they can afford. This house cost very little more than a 'builder's house' of the same size, and included in the cost are

such advantages as a large storage wall, built-in divans, room for future enlargements, and a character all its own. Not that a good builder couldn't give these things, but we have tried to show the advantages and disadvantages, of using an architect.

"Secondly, it isn't a brand-new, untried house. It has been lived in now for about two years, time enough to find out any defects. And Fiona and Murray Paterson love it!—that is the third reason. So many people can't say that about their homes. I've found that the usual reply to the question, 'What's your new home like?' goes something like this: 'Oh, it's lovely—but next time we build . . .' I've read somewhere that you have to build three houses before you get one that you're happy in, but not many New Zealanders will ever have the opportunity to build more than one house.

"Sometimes the reply is that something is wrong, but they didn't know anything about it when they built. Everything seems to point to the fact that whether you have an architect plus a builder or just a builder alone there are things you need to know about building before you start, if your house is to be a success."

One of the things that should be known is the exact likes and dislikes, interests and living habits, of the intending owners. A house is such a personal thing that it should be planned in relation to those who will live in it. That is why the first programme will include an introduction to Murray and Fiona and their little boy, their dogs and their interests, so that we know what



THE DUNEDIN home which will be described in the programmes "We Build a House." Above, a view of the house from the garden; top left, the living room, looking towards the dining room; top right, the house plan.

influenced their house. They will discuss their decision to build a house in the first place, instead of buying an old house and renovating it; and then their second big decision—the use of an architect. The buying of the section is discussed next, and the usually all-important question of finance, and the first programme ends with the preliminaries decided, and the Patersons visiting their architect.

In the second programme the emphasis is on the planning, the work of the architect. It looks at the training of an architect and his approach to designing a house, and then the stages from first sketch to where the builder can take over. It covers the decisions on style, exterior and interior finishes, insulation and heating, and what the client needs to know of blueprints and specifications. There will also be an attempt to find out where the money goes, in fees, building materials, labour, and so forth.

The final programme is on the construction, and what the owner needs to know of it, the furnishing of the rooms, and the business of living in the completed house.

These programmes have been designed in the hope that listeners can learn a little from other people's experiences. The Patersons learnt a lot in the course of building their house, and they are anxious to do anything they can to help other home-builders. Despite all the worries that go with building, Mrs Paterson says that they got more fun out of it than anything else they'd ever done in their lives.

By the time these programmes were almost ready, Beverley Pollock was claiming she had reached the stage where she, too, dreamed about houses. "I find," she said, "that you have only to mention the word 'houses' to most people and they're off! But since I love looking at and hearing about houses, I'm really thoroughly enjoying myself."

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