

23 January 2012

National NZ House & Garden Tours return in full force in 2012

The country's largest national house and garden tour, the *NZ House & Garden Tours*, will be opening the doors of 48 of the country's most spectacular private homes and gardens this March, to help raise more than \$200,000 for two very special charities.

The tours return in full force this year, taking place in four centres across the country during March. First up, on March 2, is a return to Canterbury after last year's event was cancelled following the devastating February 22 earthquake. The tours then head north to Auckland (March 9), followed by two new regions - Kapiti Coast (March 16) and Queenstown Lakes (March 24), which will be hosting their own tours for the very first time.

This year, organisers are aiming to raise a record amount for the Cancer Society of New Zealand and Look Good Feel Better charities, with a fundraising target of more than \$200,000.

NZ House & Garden Editor Sally Duggan says this year's event features some of the best homes and gardens we've seen in the *NZ House & Garden Tours*, now in their fourth year. "The eclectic mix of properties demonstrates the diversity in Kiwi home and garden style, the length and breadth of the land. It also illustrates the fact that our unique environments and natural landscapes in each part of the country are very much an inspiration for the way we live," says Sally.

"It's thanks to the immense generosity of the homeowners that we're able to run the tours successfully. It's no small thing to ask people to open their homes to hundreds of house guests in each region. Without them, and the many volunteers who make the tours run smoothly, we wouldn't be able to see such a great result for the charities."

The tours give people a rare opportunity to take a peek inside some stunning private homes and gardens - many of which have never been opened to the public before.

One such home, which will delight and excite architecture aficionados, is the iconic Peka Peka beach dome house of Fritz and Helen Eisenhofer, perched in the sand dunes on the Kapiti Coast. The Eisenhofers have never opened their home for a public tour before.

"I was approached about the tours and initially we were slightly overwhelmed by the numbers, having only opened our home to the odd design and architecture student group from Victoria University," says Helen. "Fortunately, we were reassured by an acquaintance who had been part of an earlier *NZ House & Garden* tour that it was okay. And, of course, it is for such a great cause, so we said yes."

Architect Fritz Eisenhofer, now 85 years old, has recently completed the design and build of a new house - a curvaceous white eco dwelling sitting atop the sand dunes next to their 20-year-old original dome house. This home will also be open as part of the Kapiti Coast *NZ House & Garden Tour* on March 16.

The first ever Queenstown Lakes *NZ House & Garden Tour*, on March 24, will open a treasure trove of the area's homes and gardens, set amid stunning lake and alpine landscapes. They include an ex-convent in Arrowtown, the home of Millbrook's Japanese owner Eiichi Iishi and, for garden lovers, the magnificent park Janet Blair has created near Lake Hayes, described as "a garden of national significance".

The Canterbury tour, on March 2, has gone country, moving out of central Christchurch to take in homes in North Canterbury. Auckland, on March 9, takes in some stunning properties in Parnell, Mt Eden, Epsom and the eastern bays.

This unique fundraising event has raised more than \$600,000 for the charities in the past to help reduce the incidence and impact of cancer, as well as to promote the confidence and well-being of women currently undergoing treatment. The proceeds are allocated to the local divisions of the Cancer Society of

New Zealand and Look Good Feel Better, according to where the ticket purchasers live. This allows everyone who supports the event to help people affected by cancer in their own community.

Tickets are available for \$58 from www.ticketmaster.co.nz, 0800 111 999. The tours are self-drive events.

Ends

For more information, images or to organise an interview, please contact Petra Mihaljevich t. 021 884 748 e. petra@portobellocomms.co.nz

About

The Cancer Society of New Zealand

The Cancer Society of New Zealand is the leading organisation dedicated to reducing the incidence of cancer and ensuring the best cancer care for everyone in New Zealand. It is the leading cancer patient advocate in New Zealand, providing a voice on all kinds of issues, including cancer detection and treatment. It has a national office located in Wellington, six regional offices and 15 centres, all involved in raising their own funds and providing local support services.

The Society's share of *NZ House & Garden Tour* proceeds will be used to help sustain a wide range of free support services for all people affected by a cancer diagnosis, which include the Cancer Information Helpline, 0800 CANCER (226 237), patient transport to treatment, a patient meals service, counselling, patient welfare, and the Liaison Nursing Service.

Look Good Feel Better

Look Good Feel Better is a free service offered to women undergoing treatment for cancer. It helps to restore and enhance the appearance of cancer patients during and after treatment.

The charity aims to put a smile on the face of every woman with cancer. It provides support, guidance and free makeover workshops at a difficult time in their lives when they need it most. The way people look on the outside can have a powerful influence on how they feel on the inside. With make-up, skincare, skills and a positive attitude, Look Good Feel Better transforms the look and the outlook of more than 3000 New Zealand women with cancer every year.

With more than 180 workshops across 23 New Zealand locations, the charity's programme is supported and endorsed by the Cancer Society of New Zealand.