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She bought the bach back in 1997 when she had her first teaching job in Pukekohe. It was in 2001, as head of drama, that she met Ewen. She'd asked him to be the judge of a school talent quest. They headed overseas together for a while, Ewen was a roaring success on the European comedy circuit, and when they returned, they lived in West Auckland. Late in 2007, Cathy was diagnosed with a brain tumour and had major surgery, so Ewen quit his job as a councillor a term early and the couple decided to live at the beach full-time.

As the bach was tiny, the 'big revamp' began in March last year. They were fortunate that their contractors were all locals. The only problem was, they were also surfies. "When the surf was up, they were off," says Cathy. Things get done in their own time at Port Waikato and nobody gets resentful, she says. The couple also built a beautiful studio for Cathy on the hill behind the house.

This is not your average West Coast home. Having morphed from an ordinary little bach it now radiates positive energy, combating any negativity that might dare show its face inside. **H**

Did you know? If you're planning a dark exterior paint or stain finish on your home's exterior, consider using a Resene Cool Colour. Resene Cool Colours are designed to reflect more of the sun's energy than a standard colour, reducing heat buildup in the coating, substrate and minimising heat transference inside. Available in a wide range of products and colours from Resene.

- Resene Gorse
- Resene Morning Glory
- Resene Quarter Spanish White
- Resene Sublime
- Resene Supernova

Above left Ewen describes the wall of the new music room as "a kind of 3D chequerboard on acid".

Above Resene Sublime walls in the kitchen are offset by a splashback of Resene Bullseye and bright blue cabinets.

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