

# Matapiro has wow factor

**TURNING** into the driveway leading to the homestead on Matapiro station is a “wow” moment.

The distinctive homestead is a spectacular sight and was originally built to reflect the wealth and status of early sheep station owners.

The homestead, however, was not the first to be built on Matapiro Station. The first homestead was erected in 1878 on a flat near the Ngaruroro River.

Eight years later it was moved by way of sleds up to higher ground. Today, parts of the original homestead remain, forming some of the station’s farm buildings.

When the current homestead was built, it was originally a single-level dwelling. Over a period of five years, additions were made to accommodate a growing family. A second storey was completed in 1905, and when the western end was erected, bachelor quarters were added.



# Perfect setting for garden tea party

By the time additions were completed, the homestead boasted 36 rooms, including thirteen bedrooms, a library, an office and a school room.

Stunning terraced gardens complement the north face of the homestead and include a sundial surrounded by a memorial garden. The garden is in memory of Walter Shrimpton Junior, who died at six years of age.

Another feature in the grounds is a distinctive cannon. The old cannon came from a vessel that was wrecked near Porangahau where legend says it was found by Walter Shrimpton and transported to the station.

The homestead exerts a commanding presence, and overshadows the other buildings on the station. The farm's other buildings are clustered and can also be seen from the road. A large woolshed was built in the late 1880s,

alongside sheep and cattle yards. There are also men's quarters, three cottages, store and implement sheds, stables, workshops, a cookhouse and a manager's house on the station. Many of these are two-storey buildings.

After World War 2, part of Matapiro was sold. Fifteen acres of that land was reserved for recreational purposes and is now home to the Matapiro Hall.

There are many anecdotal stories surrounding Matapiro Station and its stunning homestead, and thanks to the Crownthorpe Fundraising Group some of these stories will be told.

The group has organised an old fashioned garden party to be held at the majestic Matapiro homestead.

The fundraiser will give people the rare opportunity to view parts of the iconic homestead and hear numerous stories of life on

the station.

Visitors will be treated to a tour of the house, where they will see the glorious entrance, staircase and fantastic stained glass windows, and will feel the atmosphere of the building.

After a relaxed stroll through the grounds to see the chapel in the garden, and the old cannon, visitors will be treated to a fabulous old fashioned morning or afternoon tea complete with dainty food served on beautiful china, while musicians serenade.

Carriages drawn by Clydesdale horses and vintage car rides will add to the atmosphere.

The garden party is scheduled for Sunday,



Matapiro homestead, with its terraced gardens.

November 16, from 10am-4pm. Tickets are limited and cost \$40 each. Funds raised benefit Crownthorpe School. For information and tickets contact Fiona McKenzie on 874 3710 or Bridget Hyslop on 874 2834.