



A LABOUR OF LOVE

In the main street in Ramelton, Donegal, at the junction where the old part of town dating from the 16th century meets the Victorian part, stands a beautiful house overlooking the River Lennon. Busy GPs, Tommy and Karena, bought it 15 years ago when it belonged to the shop next door, which was the county emporium of the day.

The house was barely habitable, but we were young, enthusiastic and full of energy. We did it up bit by bit and slowly over the years and as we managed to get the money together – and our lives – the house came together,’ says Karena. ‘We finished the main part ten years ago.’

Through the front door lies the lounge the children use. This room had only one central window, which made it very dark, and so Karena copied everything from the room above – windows, architraves, shutters – installed them and then built the book shelves. ‘After we married, Tommy was working abroad, trying to get enough money together to buy a house and when I described the central staircase to him over the phone, that was it – we bought it! The house had rising damp when we bought it, so everything had to be taken out and concrete poured over the whole main house.’



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEREK ROBINSON.

KARENA'S FAVOURITE ROOM – SHE LOVES CURLING UP ON THE SOFA WITH A GOOD BOOK AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK.