MY FIRST PROPERTY

Picture: Angelo Soulos

Patrick Bright

Buyer's agent and author of The Insider's Guide To Saving Thousands At Auction

What was your first property?
It was a three-bedroom house (right) approximately 14km north east of Brisbane. I purchased it in 1998.

When did you sell it?
I still own it. My investing strategy is to buy quality property and hold on to it.

What's the story behind the purchase?
At the time I was a real estate agent and I knew that to get ahead I needed to invest my money. After researching the two major options, property or shares, I decided that property seemed like the safest and most sensible investment.

How much did you pay for it?
$130,000. Today it's valued at around $350,000.

Did you have a mortgage?
Yes. I left school at 15, became a carpenter and started to save money. By the time I was 18 I was on my third car and had blown most of my savings. I decided I wanted to invest my money rather than wasting it.
For the next five years I worked two to three jobs and saved $32,000. I was advised to put down

a 20 per cent deposit and so the maximum purchase price I could afford after purchasing costs was going to be around $130,000. After several weeks of research I decided that at the time Brisbane was a good investment. I flew there, looked at around 100 properties and submitted several offers before I secured one.

Were there any disasters with the property?
After about three years of owning it I decided that it was time to buy a second property. But then I had my first property revalued and discovered it had only gone up by about $20,000. Friends and family told me that I had purchased a dud and advised me to sell it. I did consider doing that, but I decided to review my original research and plan which was a minimum 10-year buy-and-hold strategy. After my review I still felt it was a sound investment. Ten years later it has more than doubled in value.

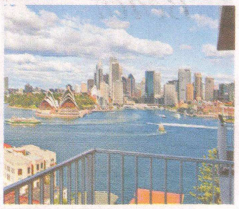
What lessons did you learn?
That good research, quality property and the right strategy will give you an above-average result. Stick to your plan and don't listen to people who aren't experts in real estate.

Where do you live and why?
I live in Kirribilli (above). It's such a beautiful place with easy access to great restaurants, the city, the harbour, to my office in Neutral Bay. My wife works in the city so she can catch the ferry, the train or walk over the bridge in 30 minutes.

What advice would you give people either buying their first home or investing in property?
Although I own several investment properties, I rent as it's been more convenient and better financially for me to do so in order to build my property portfolio. In a few years my wife and I will decide where we want to live and raise children and we'll purchase our family home. The old saying of rent money is dead money couldn't be further from the truth. If I purchased a home to live in first, rather than an investment property, I would be lucky to be on my second property at this time instead of owning several. Because of my investing approach we'll now have more choices when we're eventually ready to buy the family home.

SNAPSHOT KIRRIBILLI

Median house value: $2.06 million
Median unit value: $696,000
Unit growth in past 3 years: 14.7%



710/57 Upper Pitt St
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Price guide: Bids from $550,000
Auction: May 27
Agent: Ray White Neutral Bay, (02) 9953 7333
SUNNY seventh floor, 51sq m unit with harbour views to the Opera House. Renovated bathroom, functional kitchen with tiled floors, built-in robes and cupboards, lift access, walk to ferry and Milsons Point station.

Source: The Sunday Telegraph