



Hooker home sets pace with \$22m deal

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RIVENDELL, the Balmoral waterfront home, has lost its crown as Middle Harbour's priciest abode - to its neighbour, Karawa.

About \$22.5 million was paid for the Hopetoun Avenue house, toppling the suburb's six-year-old \$15.5 million record set by the Oatley winemaking family.

The Trivest property developer Albert Bertini, who is refurbishing the South Sydney Leagues Club in Redfern, is the new owner of Karawa, a three-storey house with boatshed and slipway.

The property, which looks across Middle Harbour towards Clontarf, was bought from the property developer Phil Arnold in the year's fifth highest deal.

The record for the eastern suburbs stood for six years until earlier this year, when Altona lost its mantle as Sydney's priciest house to the nearby Point Piper home Routala in a \$28.75 million deal. Tahiti, the Hawaiian-style residence in tropical gardens above Hermit Bay, Vaucluse, took the record when it sold for \$29 million in September.

The refurbished 1950s Hopetoun Avenue house was once owned by Sir Leslie Hooker, founder of the L.J. Hooker real estate agency. Sir Leslie argued it was Sydney's finest property.

So attached was he that he insisted his ashes be placed in an urn at the high-tide rocks of his longtime home.

"When I die I want to be north facing, with the greatest view in the world," he said. "This is where I want to lie to rest," he insisted before he died in 1976.

This story was found at: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2007/12/03/1196530576339.html>