



**WHANGAREI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# Civic Honours

## Citation – Vivienne Dobson

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Vivienne Dobson.

Vivienne, or “Viv,” as she is affectionately known by people young and old, has served the equestrian community and the St John movement in Northland for many years, and has contributed to many other activities in the community.

In particular, this award recognises her long-standing work and dedication to St John Ambulance duties, assisting those in distress at any time of the day and night, sharing these duties with her husband Dave, to whom she has been happily married for nearly 60 years. Viv has also given many, many years of loyal service to the equestrian movement in Northland, bringing the joy of her love of horses to those who had the privilege of working with her.

Her experience, knowledge and equestrian coaching have been praised by New Zealand Olympic gold medal winners Mark Todd and Blyth Tait, and just last month she was awarded the New Zealand Pony Club Service Award for exceptional and long term service to Northland.

Vivienne’s list of achievements and constant service to the Northland community is extensive, there are too many to mention.

A member of the Order of St John for 27 years, 26 years with the Whangarei Agricultural and Pastoral Society, 44 years associated with the Mid Northern Rodeo Association, 60 years with the Northland, Whangarei and Kamo Pony Clubs, and 10 years with the Whangarei Indoor Bowls Association. And we must not overlook her involvement in the Kamo Indoor Basketball Club, and the Kamo Athletic Club where she met Dave in 1948.

Viv is well known as a highly qualified and respected equestrian judge, officiating at many horse events throughout Northland, establishing and guiding pony clubs in Northland and is a founder of Riding for the Disabled in Northland, allowing those with various disabilities to pursue a recreation which means so much to them. Over the years funds raised through the Mid Northern Rodeo has helped send scores of up and coming pony club riders to national championships.

In spite of a busy life alongside Dave with a family of one son and three daughters, 10 grandchildren and six great grandchildren, Vivienne always had time for all her voluntary work, a mark of her unstinting dedication to her community and its causes.

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Vivienne joined St John Ambulance in 1978 and qualified as an instructor in 1986. She became a Serving Sister of St John 1993, was awarded Most Efficient Public Duty Officer in the Auckland area in 1995, and received her Certificate of Service in 2000.

As a member of the Order of St John Viv is the first aider for all horse events she attends throughout the Whangarei area.

Vivienne was made an honorary life member of the Whangarei A & P Society in 2004, and with her extensive St John experience and qualifications has also been the first to respond to any first aid requirements or emergency situations involving horses and/or riders at the summer shows.

She can be seen on show days in her golf cart, first aid kit on the back seat, ready to assist wherever required!

Her kind, friendly and helpful personality has endeared her to the many people in Northland to whom she has given so freely of her time without seeking recognition. She declares modestly that she could not have carried out her outstanding service to Northland without the love and support of her husband Dave, family and friends.

Many in Northland have been touched by her love and the way she has enhanced their lives, either as a St John Ambulance officer comforting someone during a time of distress, being there at all times at a summer show, or sharing her passion for horses with hundreds who have learnt from her wisdom and experience.

Vivienne Dobson shows the true spirit of a volunteer dedicated to helping others and improving their lives.

For this, we honour her.

Thursday 26 August 2009

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Mayor



**WHANGAREI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# Civic Honours

## Citation – David Dobson

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to David Dobson.

David, along with his wife Vivienne, has been a stalwart of St John Ambulance in Northland for many years, and this award recognises his total, committed dedication to assisting others in their times of need.

David, who has been happily married to Vivienne for nearly 60 years, has shared many experiences with her as a fellow St John Ambulance officer, attending many incidents where they were asked to comfort those injured, in pain and anxious about their situation.

David, individually, and as a team with Vivienne, has given voluntarily, many years of distinguished long service to clubs and organisations within the community of Whangarei and Northland. He is still doing so.

David joined the waterfront division of the Order of St John in 1967, transferring to the Whangarei St John division in 1979, becoming a sergeant in 1990.

He received service medals in 1979 and again in 1984. David qualified as a St John instructor in 1986 and has always served the organisation with distinction.

David and Vivienne were nominated by the Whangarei St John Ambulance in 1989 for the Brian Maunsell Trophy for service to sport, recognising their long and involved participation in various sporting codes in Northland.

It was no surprise when they won the trophy.

David spent many hours on duty in all divisions of St John, at the rodeo, rugby games, Whangarei A & P shows, plus pony club and equestrian federation events.

David and Vivienne were elected life members of the Mid-Northern Rodeo in 1990, in recognition of their services to the event as St John officers.

Their contribution to the rodeo is described as outstanding. David was also the event's "maintenance man", building yards, and putting up signs and gates.

David has always maintained a strong interest in various sporting codes, which he has helped and supported for many years, much of the time behind the scenes.

He was a foundation member of the Kamo Athletic Club and served the association for more than 20 years, as well as playing a role in Police Civil Defence.

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Although he played rugby and later took up the whistle to referee, David in time became the St John person on duty at sports grounds, giving his time freely to do so.

David has been involved with the Whangarei Indoor Bowls Association for 15 years, the Whareora Indoor Bowling Club for 25 years, and Ngunguru outdoor bowls for 25 years, not to mention his 26 years involvement with the Whangarei A & P Society, or, together with Vivienne, his 44 years with the Mid-Northern Rodeo Association.

David has devoted his life to the care and well-being of many in his community. He has been a leading light in many fields, including sport, and has sought nothing in return.

David says he is humbled and thrilled when informed of the award, saying it was so nice to be recognised for doing what he enjoyed and adding that he would do it all over again.

There are so many people in Northland who have been touched and reassured by David's caring and compassionate role as a St John Ambulance officer and his involvement in enriching the lives of others in so many ways, either through sport or always giving a helping hand where needed.

For this, we honour him.

Thursday 26 August 2009

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Mayor



**WHANGAREI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# Civic Honours

## Citation – Yvonne Stewart

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a civic Honour to Yvonne Stewart.

This award recognises Yvonne's selfless and tireless devotion to the betterment of Hikurangi and its people, especially her work with the local museum, making sure Hikurangi's heritage is maintained and preserved for future generations.

Yvonne can truly be described as a guardian of the township, there at all times to help people in so many ways, whether simply answering somebody's request for information, steering people in the right direction if they are in strife, or just being there to listen.

A guiding principle for Yvonne has always been "do unto others as they would do for you," and "quality care with a community heart."

In her own words Yvonne has been in Hikurangi for forever and likes to know what is happening. She has an attitude of involvement which many in Hikurangi have come to respect. It is that desire to know what is happening which has led to Yvonne's influence and, her role as a mentor to many citizens of Hikurangi.

Her list of service to various organisations is impressive and has made for a full and busy life.

She has spent four years with the New Zealand Fire Service as a support person; more than 23 years with the Hikurangi museum, both as president and committee member; four years with the North Haven Hospice as a support helper; more than four years on the committee of Friendship House; more than 20 years as a helper with the RSA; more than six years as the chairperson of the organisation looking after Lake Waro; and more than eight years as a doctor's help.

Yvonne has been a strong part of the Hikurangi community, helping in many different ways, often without people realising who has helped them until afterwards or sometimes not at all.

She is often asked if she will watch over more than one of her neighbour's properties at a time. This can include feeding animals, collecting mail and opening up and checking on properties daily.

Never has she said "no" or "I can't".

It is often said around Hikurangi that if you need to know anything about the town or its inhabitants past or present, all you need to do is ask Yvonne. She will volunteer her services if they are wanted for any activity in Hikurangi.

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Yvonne visits many of the elderly, dropping in to just sit and chat, giving them much needed company.

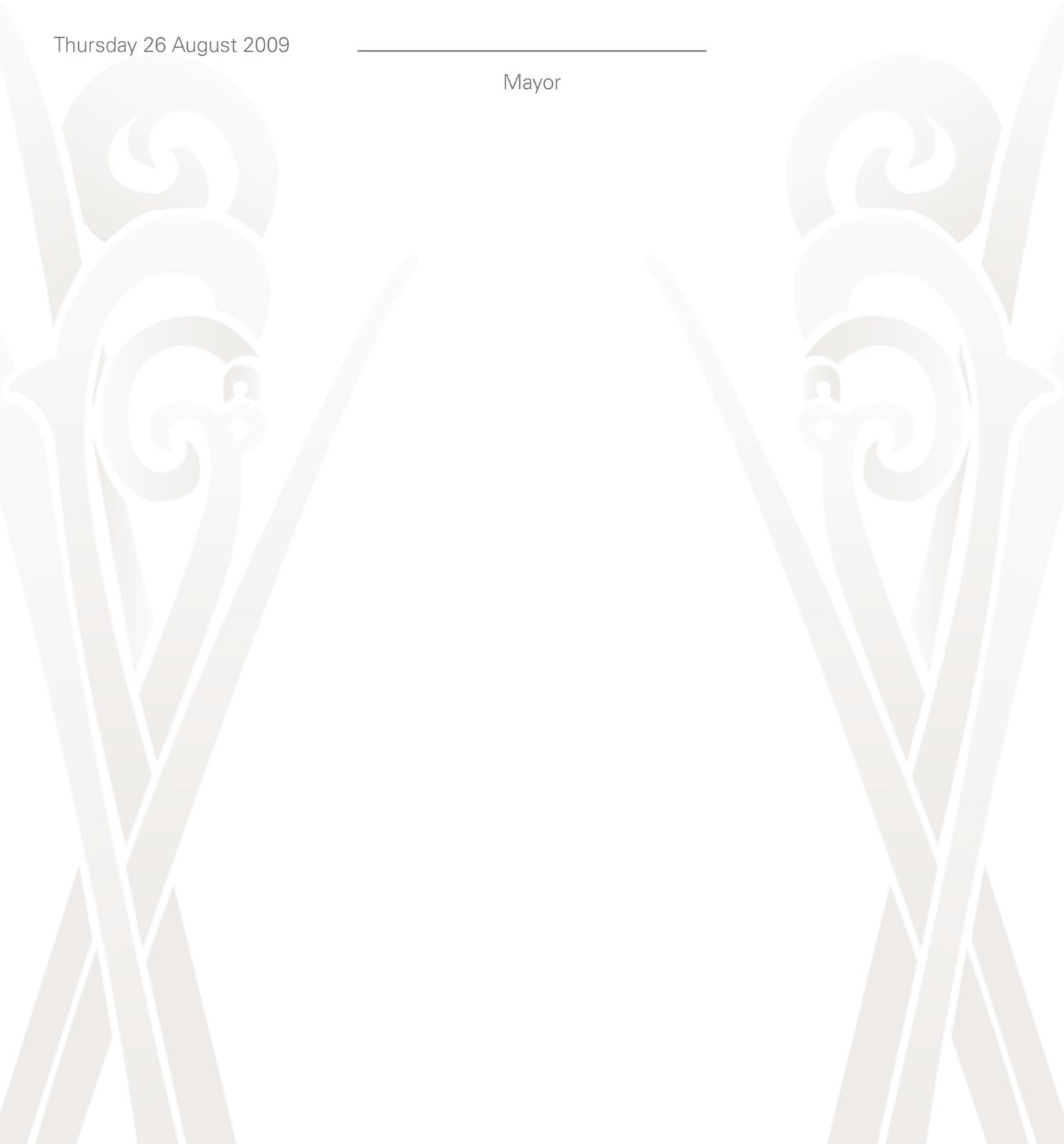
She is constantly there in so many roles, a generous person who can truly be regarded as a friend by all who come into contact with her. Yvonne devotes a large part of her life to the service of others in Hikurangi, quietly, efficiently and not expecting anything in return.

For this, we honour her.

Thursday 26 August 2009

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Mayor





**WHANGAREI  
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# Civic Honours

## Citation – Ray Palmer

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Ray Palmer.

This award recognises Ray's long and distinguished service to Northland, teaching and mentoring the hundreds of people he has introduced to the joys of music.

Ray's life has always been filled with the sound of music and theatre. His list of qualifications, his ability as a musician and his gift of teaching are famous throughout Northland.

Ray started with the Whangarei Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society (WAODS) around 1965-67 and he was the first conductor of youth music in Whangarei 25 years ago.

Ray's influence in Northland music is great, ranging from musical director of the Basin City Big Band, musical director of the Whangarei Theatre Company and life membership of the Bay of Islands Jazz and Blues Club.

He is also the founder and musical director of the Whangarei Bell Ringers group.

On another note Ray is involved with the Whangarei Railway Club. He is very proud of his certificate of competence to drive a steam locomotive.

Ray organised the Opononi music camp in the Hokianga on an annual basis for more than 26 years, giving of his time and talent willingly, encouraging and guiding young and old musicians to participate together.

The opportunity for Whangarei students to take part in this well organised and supportive event gives all who participate a great sense of achievement and confidence which enhances their overall growth and well-being, engendering in young minds a good sense of sharing, participation and service to the community as a whole.

Ray has been involved with many local musical shows over the years. These musical experiences have launched many a budding career.

Ray has enjoyed a long career teaching music in schools in Dargaville, Whangarei and Tauraroa over 35 years.

He has donated thousands of hours to promote and encourage children and adults into music, which includes the organisation of practices, the collection and transport of students to practices and rehearsals, fund raising and mentoring young minds.

He adjudicates at music competitions and encourages pupils to take overseas examinations.

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With his Air Force engineering background Ray has also encouraged many students and young adults into apprenticeships with local engineering firms and into polytechnic study.

He is also a registered assessor in engineering industry training and visits schools around the North moderating for Competenz .

While the gift the has made to the development of musical talent in Northland shines, Ray has given, supported and promoted Northlanders selflessly in a broad range of areas.

For this, we honour him.

Thursday 26 August 2009

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Mayor



**WHANGAREI  
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# Civic Honours

## Citation – Archie Dixon

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Archibald (Archie) Robert Dixon.

This award recognises Archie's contribution to Whangarei and Northland and the way in which he has provided many years of service to so many, making a huge difference in his community.

Archie has a strong military background. He has dedicated his life to the well-being of others and believes strongly that communities should be able to achieve their aspirations, to open up doorways of opportunity and that people should reach their full potential.

Archie's military career lasted more than 28 years from 1955 to 1985, rising in rank from corporal to major. He served in the infantry, military police, Territorial SAS, transport, supplies and in United Nations peace keeping.

Archie's service was influenced by his strong values of "welfare for the people you are serving and care of others".

In the final years of his mother's life, family duty called, and with the support of the army, Archie took up a post, at lower rank, in Northland, to become her caregiver.

He has been a caregiver to Northland ever since.

Archie's role with the New Zealand and Whangarei Returned Services Associations is truly impressive.

Among his positions he was a member of the National Executive for 10 years and chairman of the National Pensions and Welfare Committee for seven years. He was awarded the Gold Star badge for meritorious service, established the RNZSA national secondary schools speech competition, and was president of the Whangarei RSA in 1984, 1995, 1996, 2005, and 2006.

He has been Chairman of the Whangarei RSA Trust, fundraiser for the Telethon events, raising more than \$8,000 to support local efforts and he has recorded the history of the Whangarei RSA.

The list of his contributions is long.

Archie was also strongly involved in the Department of Labour's former Project Employment Programme in the late 1980s, executive officer in charge of the special PEP projects task force team, restoring and developing community facilities in Northland.

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He is one of the founding members of the Northland District RSA Charitable Trust which has provided funding for 100 cataract operations that have improved the health and vision of veterans and their spouses.

Archie describes this as hugely rewarding as the operations have such a significant impact on people's well-being.

This year Archie initiated and facilitated the poignant Field of Remembrance which was installed in Whangarei's Laurie Hall Park during the 30 days leading up to Anzac Day.

More than 300 school children and others took part in this event, placing more than 600 crosses in the field. Each cross carried the name, and where possible a photo, of the person who did not return from war.

The Anzac Day dawn service was conducted at the site of the Field of Remembrance and a crowd of more than 5,000 attended. This was the largest crowd to attend a dawn ceremony in Whangarei in the past 30 to 40 years.

Archie's legacy of service comes from his loving parents who taught him to share with others, and help households that were less fortunate. He became an 'ambassador of giving'.

Because of his outstanding record of voluntary work, Archie is affectionately described as a much loved friend, colleague, brother, coach, mentor, and role model who is willing to give generously of his time.

Archie says he is richly blessed with his circumstances, and other people can rightfully say they are richly blessed because of the impact Archie has had on their lives.

For this, we honour him.

Thursday 26 August 2009

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Mayor