



WHANGAREI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Civic Honours

## Citation – Robert (Robbie) Louis Stevenson

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Robbie Stevenson.

This award recognizes Robbie's commitment to road safety in Northland, and in particular his part in establishing and managing "fatigue stops".

Following a tragic accident involving his daughter some 20 years ago, Robbie took up the challenge to lower the number of fatigue-related road deaths on two of Northland's most accident-prone stretches of highway.

He became involved voluntarily with the Northland Road Safety Association, first as a member and then as its president. From that time forward, Robbie's determination to reduce road trauma has never faltered.

For many years now, he has coordinated and managed "fatigue stops", overseeing the funding, volunteer rosters and briefings, stocking, setting up and closing down at the stops, and helping man them when other volunteers are not available.

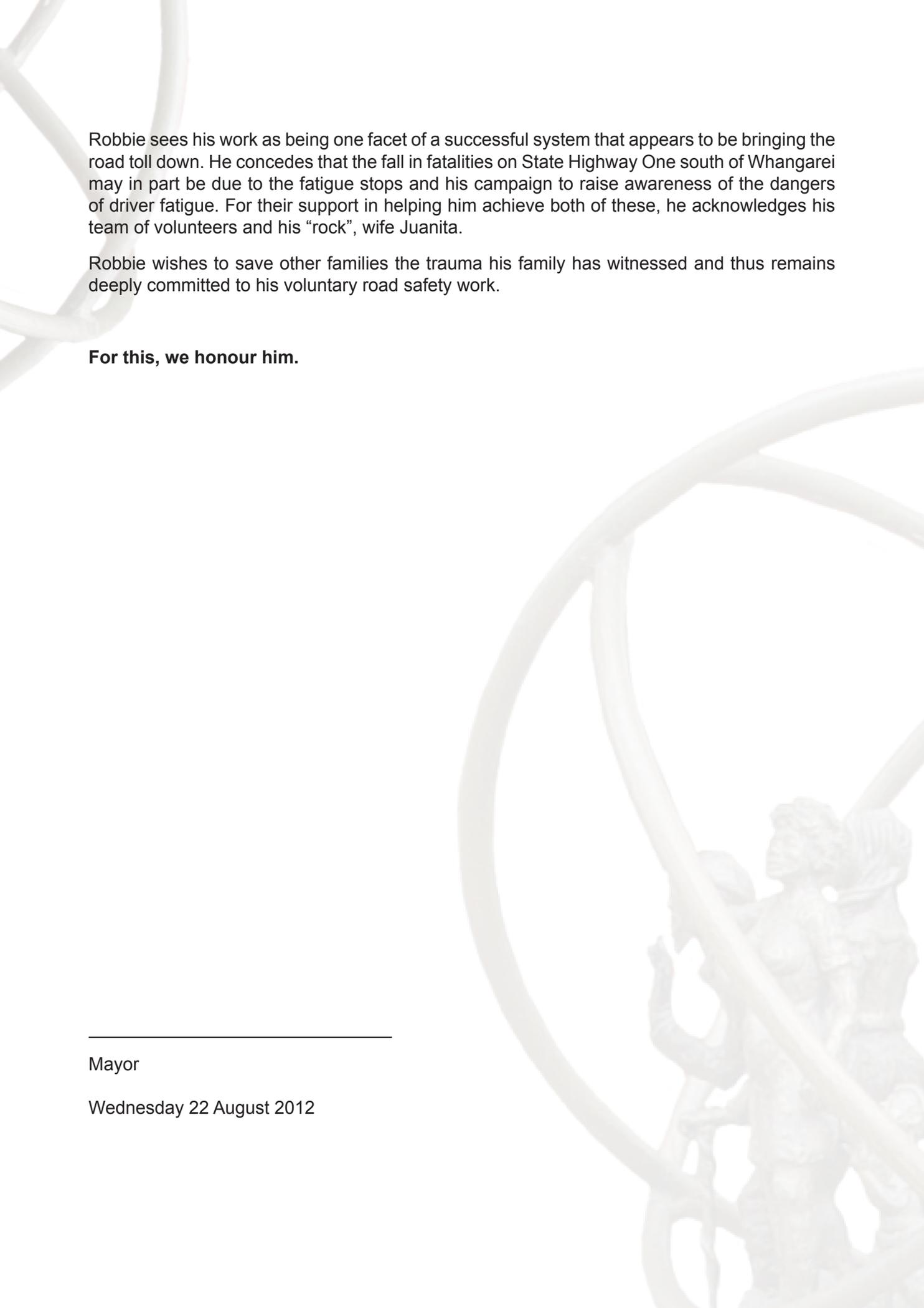
He helped obtain substantial funding for the purchase of a Road Safety bus and display trailer, transforming them in his business workshop into the now-familiar vehicles of refreshment and education on the roadside at Uretiti and Waiomio on State Highway One.

In addition, Robbie donates many voluntary hours in support of road safety campaigns at events such as the A&P Show, Rotary Youth Driving Awareness Field Days and Bikewise events.

There are now six Fatigue Stops a year at both Uretiti and Waiomio, and two a year south-bound on State Highway One in conjunction with State Insurance. Many hundreds of people a day can pass through them on high-traffic holiday weekends.

When the Uretiti fatigue stop was first established, an average of 23 roads deaths a year occurred on that section of State Highway One. That number is now down to one or two a year.

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Robbie sees his work as being one facet of a successful system that appears to be bringing the road toll down. He concedes that the fall in fatalities on State Highway One south of Whangarei may in part be due to the fatigue stops and his campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of driver fatigue. For their support in helping him achieve both of these, he acknowledges his team of volunteers and his “rock”, wife Juanita.

Robbie wishes to save other families the trauma his family has witnessed and thus remains deeply committed to his voluntary road safety work.

**For this, we honour him.**

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Mayor

Wednesday 22 August 2012



**WHANGAREI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# Civic Honours

## Citation – Elizabeth (Betty) Fyfe

It is with great pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Betty Fyfe.

This award recognizes Betty's long-standing commitment to the welfare of the Hikurangi people and their wider community, with particular dedication to their educational, spiritual and physical wellbeing.

Born in Papua New Guinea and moving to Australia to live as a child, Betty eventually arrived in Hikurangi with her husband and young baby in 1963. She has lived there ever since, becoming an integral part of the community and developing an intimate knowledge of its people and their needs.

With young children, Betty's first involvement in local voluntary work was with the Hikurangi Plunket Society, to which she gave eight years of service. As her children grew she became involved with a private kindergarten, and would then work for eleven years to help fund a new Whangarei Free Kindergarten Association building.

Since then she has spent six years on the Hikurangi Community Trust, four years on the Healthy Hikurangi Trust, ten years serving with Hikurangi Senior Citizens, many years as a Meals on Wheels helper during the 1970s, and 23 years with the Hikurangi Friendship House Trust, the last ten as chairperson.

Betty's interest in providing education for her community goes well beyond her 24 years as a school teacher. She has worked voluntarily for the Hikurangi Community Library and the Hikurangi School Holiday Programme for 19 years, and has contributed her mentoring skills to the Ngati Hine Sages Programme for five years.

Known to many as the Reverend Betty Fyfe, she was ordained as a minister in the Anglican Church in 2002. This would see her add another dimension to her charitable work in Hikurangi, Kamo and Whakapara through her role in shared ministry at St Paul's Anglican Church in Kamo. Aside from her regular church duties, she has officiated at many local events and ceremonies, including the 150 Year Celebrations for Hikurangi, which she also helped to organise.

A stalwart of her various communities, Betty also finds time to support her children and grandchildren. Family means much to her, but in many ways she treats all she meets as family.

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Betty is universally acknowledged and respected for her caring nature and willingness to help. From being a ready listening ear to serving as a guiding light and moving force for many community organisations, Betty Fyfe exhibits the true qualities of a good citizen.

**For this, we honour her.**

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Mayor

Wednesday 22 August 2012



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# Civic Honours

## Citation – Peter Silas Harding

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Peter Harding. This award recognizes Peter's service to the people of the Whangarei Heads area, and his significant contribution to improving their natural environment.

Peter and wife Betty moved to McLeod Bay in 1990 from the Central Hawkes Bay where he had been active in voluntary work for 30 years. This was not about to end on his arrival here, and he soon joined the Mt Manaia Club and Whangarei Heads Citizens' Association (WHCA), and went about organising the distribution of RAPID numbers.

At the Mt Manaia Club, Peter served as president for one term, acted as a volunteer barman and became extensively involved with the Club's move to its current rooms.

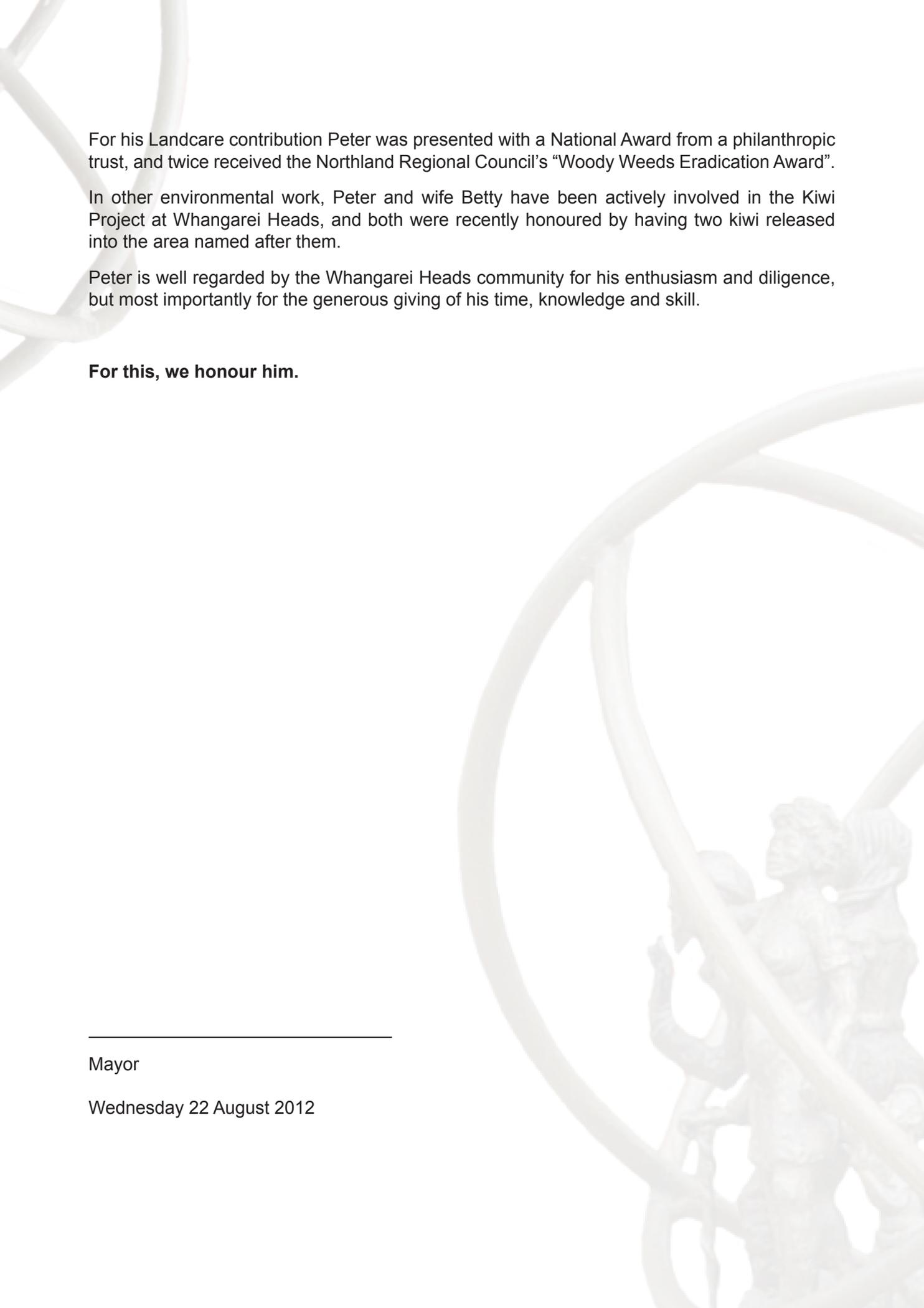
For the WHCA his activities included being a committee member, vice president and president, maintaining and upgrading the McLeod Bay Hall, organising fundraising events and securing funding for specific projects. In acknowledgement of his dedication and hard work he was awarded a life membership of the association.

For 12 years, Peter has been producing the Whangarei Heads Newsletter, keeping Heads' residents informed on local events and issues. Since taking up the task, the newsletter has grown considerably in size, print run and popularity.

Peter has been responsible for reinstating Neighbourhood Watch at the Heads, and in 1998 received Whangarei District Council's "Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator of the Year" Award. He has also been actively involved in the Whangarei Heads Civil Defence Group, helping to develop the Whangarei Heads civil defence community plan, attending civil defence training sessions and contributing to the tsunami siren project.

Peter is acknowledged as a local hero for his work with the Whangarei Heads Landcare Group, in particular his determination to eradicate weeds. He has been responsible for securing hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding for the Group and for supervising the many community service workers ordered by the court to assist in the Groups' projects. He also ran the local "work for the dole" programme when it was operational.

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For his Landcare contribution Peter was presented with a National Award from a philanthropic trust, and twice received the Northland Regional Council's "Woody Weeds Eradication Award".

In other environmental work, Peter and wife Betty have been actively involved in the Kiwi Project at Whangarei Heads, and both were recently honoured by having two kiwi released into the area named after them.

Peter is well regarded by the Whangarei Heads community for his enthusiasm and diligence, but most importantly for the generous giving of his time, knowledge and skill.

**For this, we honour him.**

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Mayor

Wednesday 22 August 2012



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# Civic Honours

## Citation – Sheryn May Comrie

It is with pleasure that Whangarei District Council awards a Civic Honour to Sheryn Comrie.

This award recognizes the huge difference Sheryn has made in the lives of many children and their families through her work with SPELD, a not-for-profit organization helping those with specific learning disabilities. It also recognizes her work as a special needs and ESOL teacher, as part of the Kamo Girls' Brigade leadership team, and as a Bible in Schools teacher, school co-ordinator and teacher trainer.

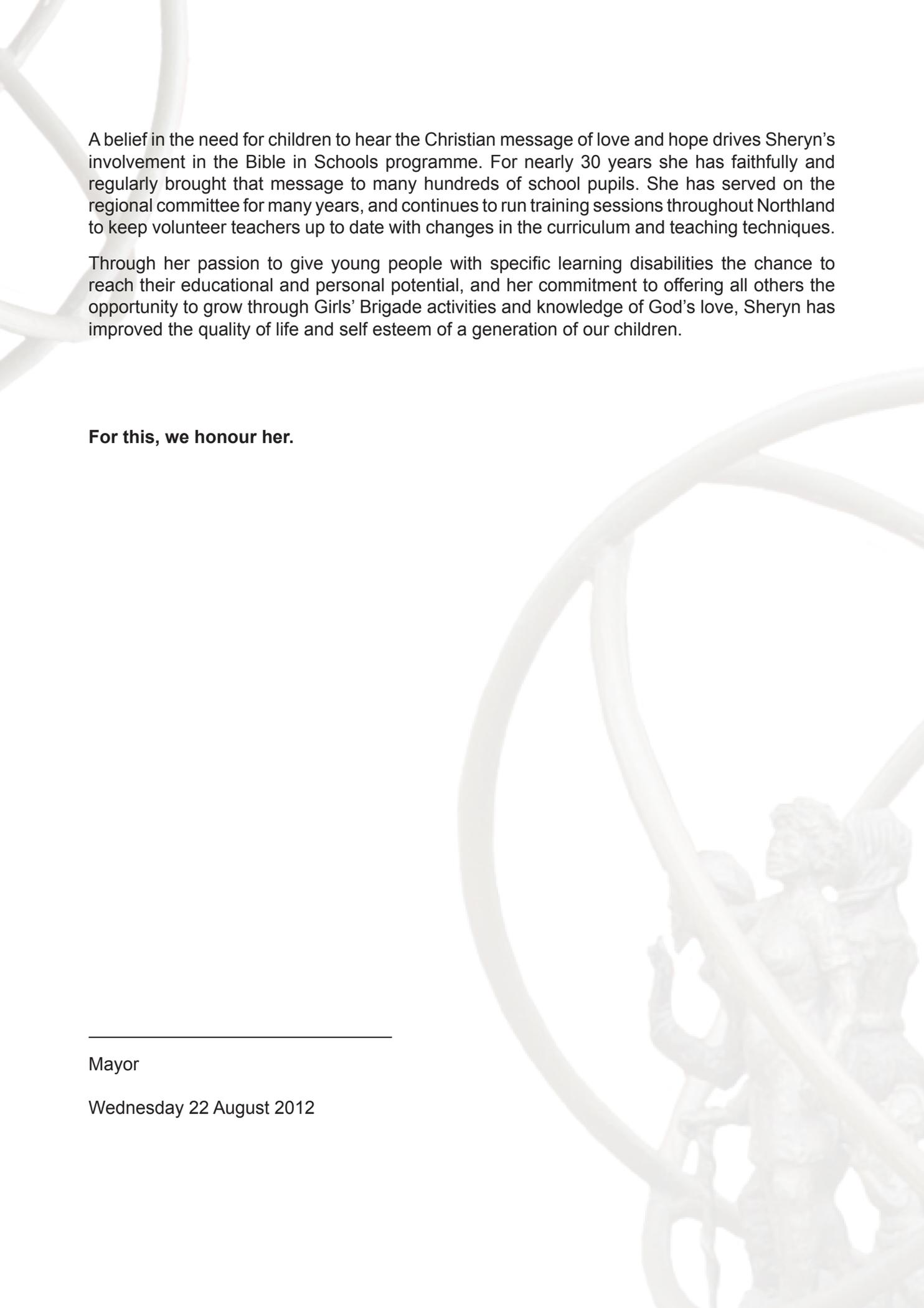
Sheryn trained as a SPELD teacher in 1987, and qualified as a SPELD Director of teacher training in 1989. Since then she has served the local organization as librarian, Director of the Parents' Course, President and Director of Teacher Training - in total training over 200 tutors in Whangarei, Hamilton, Kerikeri and Hastings. She has also been an active member of the National SPELD Association.

Her voluntary mentorship of SPELD tutors, committee members, teachers, parents and children in Northland and beyond has gone well beyond the call of duty. Sheryn's advice is well known to be only a visit or a phone call away, and many have gained from her ready availability and willingness to assist.

Matarau School counts itself fortunate to have had Sheryn's services as a teacher of special needs children for over 20 years and, more recently, children with English as a second language. Staff at the school often seek her advice on special education issues, and she has facilitated professional development for teachers wishing to grow their skills in this area.

Her voluntary assistance with the Kamo Girls' Brigade began 25 years ago when her elder daughter was part of the group. With both daughters now long gone from the Company, Sheryn has continued to support the group and has been a member of the leadership team for the past 20 years.

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A belief in the need for children to hear the Christian message of love and hope drives Sheryn's involvement in the Bible in Schools programme. For nearly 30 years she has faithfully and regularly brought that message to many hundreds of school pupils. She has served on the regional committee for many years, and continues to run training sessions throughout Northland to keep volunteer teachers up to date with changes in the curriculum and teaching techniques.

Through her passion to give young people with specific learning disabilities the chance to reach their educational and personal potential, and her commitment to offering all others the opportunity to grow through Girls' Brigade activities and knowledge of God's love, Sheryn has improved the quality of life and self esteem of a generation of our children.

**For this, we honour her.**

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Mayor

Wednesday 22 August 2012