



# CIVIC HONOURS

## Awards 2021

### *Sharon and Lou Davis*

Whangārei District Council takes great pleasure in awarding a Civic Honour to Sharon Ruth Davis (Ngāpuhi/ Ngatiwhaatura) and Louis Henry Davis (Ngāpuhi) for their substantial and impactful contribution to the Whangārei community.

Sharon and Lou are an extraordinary couple who, while raising their own three children and holding down full time jobs, have worked tirelessly for the benefit of the Whangārei community. Their extensive service began in 1983 as passionate volunteers and then youth leaders, which evolved into the development of Te Ora Hou Northland Inc, a faith-based Maori youth and community development organisation of which Lou would become manager in 1992.

The couple's leadership and service has focused on the specific needs of youth and their whanau, especially those who are marginalised and disconnected from our community. The collaborative nature of their work with others has seen the formation of numerous innovative community projects to address the identified and arising needs of these specific groups.

These projects include pioneering the establishment of the Whangārei Youth One Stop Shop in Raumanga known as The Pulse - an alliance of community groups providing specialised services to young people and their whanau; He Mataariki Teen Parent School; He Kaakano Early Learning Centre for the children of young parents; Whangarei Young Parent Services with wrap-around social workers; a specialised Alternative Education (AE) school and the supportive AE collective that emerged; Maia House residential home for teen parents, where Lou and Sharon served as inaugural House Parents for six years; and a purpose-built Community Facility and Recreation Centre to enhance community connectedness and well-being.

In collaboration with others in their community, the couple has instigated the mobilising and training of youth workers and volunteers to provide youth mentoring programmes, after-school clubs and school holiday programmes, group mentoring and support for teen fathers, childbirth education classes for teenage parents

and community play groups. They have enabled many community-led events including the annual Children's Day Festival, and continue to support young people to get active and healthy by coaching rugby and basketball and volunteering at community sports programmes in their neighbourhoods.

Lou and Sharon have volunteered their personal and professional skills over successive years to help others with their community projects. They have jointly and independently served on a range of community trusts and boards that lend a helping hand to young people, including local marae, philanthropic funding trusts, national working parties, advisory groups in health, education, youth and justice, faith-based trusts and community groups.

This considerable service to our community has resulted in young people embarking on careers in teaching, nursing, youth work and social work, amongst other professions; children of teen parents being kept up to date with immunisations, wellness checks and school readiness; young people provided with safe spaces and positive relationship experiences that help redefine their life pathways; and improved community mental, physical and emotional wellbeing outcomes through increased connections and engagement with others.

Whanaungatanga and intentional relationship building are the cornerstones of Sharon and Lou's visionary leadership, and it would be impossible to quantify the huge impact of these intentions on our community - past, present and into the future. Suffice to say, their inspiration, sacrifice and devotion to our youth and their whanau make Whangārei a better, stronger, healthier more productive and purposeful place.

*For this we honour them.*

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**Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai**



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### Murdoch Ross

Whangārei District Council is very proud to award a Civic Honour to Murdoch Ross in gratitude for his contribution to the Whangārei, Parua Bay and Whangārei Heads communities.

Born into one of Whangārei Heads' first Scottish settler families, Murdoch was destined to be an integral part of the Heads' community, although few could have anticipated the extent and impact of the contribution he would make.

Educated in Parua Bay and Whangārei, on leaving school Murdoch went to work on the family farm where he quickly displayed a talent for recognising and breeding quality stock. This skill led him to the stock sales, which subsequently became a successful business venture for him, to the extent that he could purchase four further blocks of land in the Parua Bay area.

Murdoch's commitment to kaitiakitanga led him to covenant a significant and sensitive area of this land. He engaged in weed and pest eradication and fenced wetlands with the aim of encouraging the return of native flora and fauna to the area by providing food and habitat for bees and birds.

Well known and respected in the community, in the early 1980s, Murdoch was elected to the role of chair of the Parua Bay Hall Committee. This was a huge achievement and expression of faith in his abilities, given the monumental task required at the time to revitalise community interest in managing and using the hall.

He proved he was more than up to the task. At Murdoch's instigation, and in collaboration with other prominent residents, the idea was floated for an expanded community centre, including a gymnasium and squash courts, meeting rooms, large kitchen facilities and adjacent bowling club and rugby fields.

This bold move for a small community gained momentum thanks to Murdoch's negotiating skills and diplomacy.

He also made a substantial contribution to fundraising for the project, donating proceeds from bull servicing hire and gifting Ross family land from adjacent farms to accommodate the much-expanded complex.

Murdoch remained chair of the Parua Bay Community Centre for many more years, ensuring the smooth operation of the centre and the completion of improvements to the land surrounding it. In 1998, the Ross family established a charitable trust to administer the sports ground adjacent to the hall on family land, with Murdoch donating a portion of profits from cattle sales to the trust to help in the administration of these sports fields.

In 1992, Murdoch co-ordinated community interest to get the much-needed Parua Bay Medical Centre built and the doctors' surgery established in the village area.

Murdoch's determination to pursue goals, his strength of character and resolve are qualities from which we can all learn. His is a familiar face and smile around the Parua Bay village where he is universally respected and liked. He continues to keep in touch with Whangārei Heads' people, and to help Heads' residents build ties with each other and their community.

It is something to be celebrated for a person with disabilities to rise above their significant challenges to put the service of others ahead of their own needs, and Murdoch Ross is such a person.

*For this we honour him.*

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**Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai**



## **CIVIC HONOURS**

### **Awards 2021**

#### ***Janelle Beazley***

Whangarei District Council takes great pride in awarding a Civic Honour to Janelle Leoda May Beazley in recognition of her extensive service to Whangārei's community and culture.

Janelle is acknowledged by all who know her as a trustworthy, conscientious, self-motivated woman with a warm, compassionate nature and giving spirit. Born, raised and educated in the district, Janelle left Whangārei in the 1970s to complete a trade training scheme, returning home to begin her working life at Whangārei's post office where she took various roles before leaving in 1988 to pursue study at Northtec.

That study was followed by employment in a number of Northtec positions, where Janelle proved a popular staff member and began her quest to encourage youth and whanau to enrol for study courses, and to never give up or stop learning. She sets a fine example of that mantra, being in the third year of study for a Bachelor of Maori Performing Arts degree.

Retiring from Northtec in 2011 to focus on the welfare of her hapu and iwi, Janelle turned much of her attention and time toward voluntary work with marae, kura, kapa haka groups, kohanga reo, organisational leadership and management, and being a Justice of the Peace.

The projects, programmes and initiatives for which she has been a driving force or significant influence are many. She was the conference organiser for the Best Practice Workshop, Te Toi Tauira mo Te Matariki at Waitangi in 2007, a programme designed to support and encourage Māori excellence at the graduate and postgraduate level of studies.

Since 1978, she has performed, been secretary and treasurer for, and is now a life member of, the Waitangi Cultural Society Inc. regional body for kapa haka, the committee managing all kapa haka in Te Tai Tokerau. In 2008, Janelle was made a life member of this committee, and 43 years after first becoming a part of it, still offers her time and talents voluntarily at the annual kapa haka competitions.

Janelle has acted as secretary, Board of Trustees member and Reference Group member for Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Te Rawhitiroa since 2012, and was a marae member and member of the Raumanga community Te Puna o Te Matauranga at Northtec from 1992 to 2011. She has supported and been active at Manaia View School since its inception in 2002, and has held the roles of treasurer, secretary, trustee and honorary aunty and nanny at Te Kohanga Reo o Raurimu since 2019.

Janelle has acted as trustee and secretary for Te Tarai o Rahiri Marae in Mangakahia from 2011 to the present day, and since 2005, has been an executive member of Te Tai Tokerau Tarai Waka, the organisation formed in the 1980s to provide practical training in waka construction, sailing and traditional navigation.

She has served as a board member and Hapu Kaikorero for Tuhoronuku since 2014, and since 2000, been a highly valued trustee, secretary and absolute stalwart of Whangarei Terenga Paraoa Marae, including by managing the bookings at this increasingly busy facility to ensure the marae can rest after each hui held there.

As a trustee representing Te Runanga a Iwi o Ngapuhi since 2017, Janelle has co-ordinated the provision of water, heating and sometimes food for vulnerable Whangārei whanau and the elderly from Pipiwai in the north to Takahiwai in the south, including those on marae and in urban areas.

Janelle's words of encouragement to others are always, "If I can do it, you can do it!" She is a woman who never stops learning or giving, encouraging, caring or leading by example in all she does for her community.

***For this we honour her.***

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***Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai***



# CIVIC HONOURS

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### *Maurice Whittaker Brownlee*

Whangarei District Council takes great pride in awarding a Civic Honour to Maurice Whittaker Brownlee in gratitude for his service to the Whangārei and Maungakaramea communities.

Maurice has lived in Maungakaramea since 1958 with his wife Jacqui, their three children, and now eight grandchildren and one great grandchild, all of whom live locally. He began his working life in a Maungakaramea lime quarry, a business he eventually purchased, and would go on to establish a trucking and earthworks contracting business there, and buy several farms in the area.

From his early adult life, Maurice has given freely of his time and resources to a wide range of community endeavours, organisations and people. He was a member of the Otaika School Committee for the duration of his children's primary school education, chairing the committee for many years. In another contribution to education, Maurice was an inaugural member of the group responsible for building the Tangihua Lions Lodge, and among those who offered their farms as guarantee to raise bank funding to construct the lodge. He designed, provided materials for and built the lodge's confidence course, and has been part of the small group devoting many hours to maintaining the facility.

A successful businessman, Maurice also contributed voluntarily to the wider business community in which he functioned. He held the role of president, and is now an honorary life member, of the Northland Road Transport Association, and was long-standing secretary of the Northland Lime Millers' Association. He also served as vice president for the Maungakaramea Saleyards Committee, a charitable organisation providing funding from profits for local businesses and individuals in need.

Maurice's generosity has also touched the local sports' community. His love of competitive axemanship and sawing led to his setting up and running the highly successful Mid-Western Axemen's Club alongside his brother Bill. Competing at many levels himself, Maurice

also encouraged other young men into the sport and willingly gave of his time as coach.

Likewise, he has been fully involved in all aspects of the Mid-Western Rugby and Squash Club since the 1970s, including a stint as a coach. Maurice served as club president from 1991 to 1998, during which time he and Jacqui ran the club canteen. He is the current club patron, and both he and Jacqui are life members and remain active supporters of the club.

When the Mid-Western Lions Club was chartered 41 years ago, Maurice became a founding member. Since then, he has held many service positions in the club, including the role of president eight times, and has earned numerous Lions' awards for service. Maurice and Jacqui have raised and donated cattle for the club to use as fundraisers, as they likewise have for the Mid-Western Rugby and Squash Club. These acts of generosity have contributed many thousands of dollars to the clubs and their communities over the years.

Through the Mid-Western Lions Club and Maungakaramea Saleyards Committee, Maurice has played an important role in funding a wide range of community organisations and individuals in the Maungakaramea area. He and Jacqui are themselves well known for helping community members in need of financial and other support, although they prefer to have their generosity stay under the radar.

Nonetheless, the Maungakaramea and Whangārei communities are aware of Maurice's sizeable and longstanding contribution to their successful function, wellbeing and prosperity, and extend their deepest gratitude.

*For this we honour him.*

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**Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai**