



Arise, Sir Roderick

Sir Roderick Deane FACA has been knighted for services to business and the community.

WHEN NZICA tracked down newly minted knight Sir Roderick Deane FACA, he was on a boat in the middle of the Mediterranean. No doubt it's a welcome break for a man whose extensive career in business is rivalled by his diverse ongoing community and cultural involvement.

Sir Roderick says when he heard the news of his award he was particularly pleased, as it acknowledged the various teams he has been working with over many years in different spheres.

His CV includes senior positions in the public sector such as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank and Chairman of the State Services Commission – both of these during the major reform periods of the 1980s. In the private sector he has been CEO then Chairman of Telecom. He was Chairman of the ANZ National Bank at the time of the merger of ANZ and National Bank, and of Fletcher Challenge and its successor Fletcher Building. He has also held substantial overseas posts including a Director of TransAlta Corporation in Canada and a Director of both Woolworths and the ANZ bank in Australia.

Sir Roderick was also Professor of Economics at Victoria University of Wellington for a number of years.

He has been involved in a range of community work since he was a university student, with both charitable and cultural organisations.

A passionate supporter of the arts, he is former Chairman of Te Papa and founder and Chairman of the City Gallery Wellington Foundation.

Another area of particular interest is working with people with disabilities. He was Vice President and then President of the IHC for many years and he and wife Gillian remain joint patrons of the IHC. This area has led to some of his most satisfying work, he says.

In the 1980s he and colleagues at the IHC advocated for all children to have the right to go to their local school and in 1989 the law was altered to allow all children this right.

Another key success in this area was helping move thousands of people out of psychopaedic hospitals and into regular homes in the community, helped by the IHC buying 700 houses.

His most satisfying work also includes creating the New Zealand Seed Fund, which he still chairs, which formed a variety of companies to help science and innovation in New Zealand. The acquisition of the National Bank by ANZ and the creation of the Deane Endowment Trust to help people and organisations in the arts, music, disability and science are also highlights.

He says he has been fortunate enough to enjoy all the roles he has occupied, but the one which has impacted him most on a personal level has been his association with IHC.

"Many of us have worked hard to ensure that people with disabilities can lead normal lives in the regular community."

Deane and his wife became involved with the IHC after their only child, Kristen, was diagnosed with a degenerative condition. She died at the age of 27.

He has loved working in the arts arena as well as in the commercial and public sectors and the teaching work he has done.

"The knighthood is a nice acknowledgement of the contribution made by so many of the teams with whom I have had the great pleasure of working – that is its significance to me."

He says his greatest team member has always been his wife Gillian without whom he would not have been able to successfully tackle so many different top jobs, and enjoy doing them.

"She is my greatest supporter and is a wonderful person."