

2023 TNZ Lifetime Service Honours – Te Tohu Hapāi



Glen Hunter, Dawn Morrison, Alan Chester, Robyn Dry & Tony Ralfe
Absent: Ross Morrison & Warwick Brew

Dawn Morrison

Dawn is recognized for her services to tennis by the conferment of this Award in the same year as her husband Ross is also conferred the Te Tohu Hapāi award. The award however is not in a joint award; each of Ross and Dawn has, by her or his respective contributions to tennis over several decades earned this recognition independently of the other, but it is appropriate to recognise each of Ross and Dawn in this manner in the same year.

Dawn has provided service to the sport over several decades, many of these services aligning with those of her husband Ross, with both working tirelessly for the North Shore Tennis Association since the 1970's, in a variety of roles. These services by Dawn included administrative services to the Association but more particularly a leading role by Dawn in the transition by the Association from providing operational services at local tennis clubs to the conversion of the Forrest Hill facility to a regional facility, converting grass courts to hard surface, providing flood lighting and some court cover, and then, a decade later, being a leader in creating the tennis complex at Albany now known as Albany Tennis Park, which provides a superb tennis facility for a large part of the Auckland tennis community.

Dawn is widely respected for being a leader of the tennis community for some decades as a result of the many roles in which she worked and she and Ross have prepared a book on the history of tennis on the North Shore.

Dawn was also Secretary of the North Shore Tennis Association from 1987 through to 1991 and Secretary-Treasurer of North Harbour Tennis from 1991 to 2006. After that time she continued to administer Junior Interclub and served as a team manager of a variety of representative teams.

Dawn also provided extensive service to Seniors tennis in New Zealand, particularly in her role for NZ Tennis Seniors (now Tennis NZ Masters) and is a Life Member of that entity and in particular has led the running of the National Teams event every year.

Dawn's services to the sport were recognised by the award to her of a Royal Honour (Member of New Zealand Order of Merit), with Ross also being conferred with the same Royal Honour at the same time, a fitting recognition of their respective contributions to the sport.

Ross Morrison

Ross is recognized for his services to tennis by the conferment of this Award in the same year as his wife Dawn is also conferred the Te Tohu Hapāi award. The award however is not a joint award; each of Ross and Dawn has, by her or his respective contributions to tennis over several decades earned this recognition independently of the other, but it is appropriate to recognise each of Ross and Dawn in this manner in the same year.

Ross commenced involvement with tennis as a player in the mid-1960's. His willingness to serve the sport in administration led to him being elected to the Committee of the North Shore Tennis Association and by 1987 he was President of that Association. Under his leadership, over a 20 year period, numerous significant and substantial programmes and projects were established which greatly expanded the ability of the Association to deliver tennis to the area, particularly in regard to the development of facilities, starting with greatly improving the Association's main facility at Forrest Hill with court resurfacing, flood-lighting and partial court covering.

In the early 1990's the facility initiative was taken a much greater level, as plans were commenced to develop 6 hectares of land in Albany which is now the Albany Tennis Park which was completed in 2000. Among Ross's many leadership roles was to establish the Trust which owns and operates the facility, Ross acting as Chairperson of the Tennis Charitable Trust from 2000 to 2014 and remains still a Trustee

Ross has acted in many other administrative roles including delegate to Tennis New Zealand AGMs and a variety of roles both for the Association and, after restructuring in 2007, for Tennis Northern Region including Chairperson of the Judiciary Committee. Ross also performed the role of CEO of Tennis Northern from 2003 to 2007.

Ross also contributed extensively to tennis officiating, acting as a referee for many tournaments and also serving on the Boards of Auckland Tennis Umpires Association and New Zealand Tennis Umpires Association for many years.

Ross's skills and experience both as an administrator and an official is also reflected in his roles in the organisation of ITF Tournaments, Davis Cup ties and other international tournaments such as the World Masters Games held at the Albany Tennis Park.

Ross has further served seniors tennis for many years and is a Life Member of Tennis NZ Masters (formerly NZ Tennis Seniors).

Ross's services to the sport were recognised by the award to him of a Royal Honour (Member of New Zealand Order of Merit), with Dawn also being conferred with the same Royal Honour at the same time, a fitting recognition of their respective contributions to the sport.

Warwick Brew

Warwick has provided volunteer service to the tennis community at both club and regional level for almost 50 years. He has been a Club committee member at Otumoetai Tennis Club in Tauranga since 1975 and has served both as Club Vice President from the late 1970's through to 2005 and then Club President from 2006 through to 2023 (and ongoing). He has also served numerous other roles within the Club, particularly in regard to grounds and facilities and was made a Life Member of the Club in 1996.

A very significant contribution to the wider community was his role as Business House Manager operating one of the largest Business House competitions in the country which ran all year round and served over 200 players on a regular basis, he being in that role since 1975 through to the present time.

His contributions have been recognized by being made a Life Member of Tennis Western Bay of Plenty in 2020, he having also served in a number of roles with that Tennis Association, primarily again in regard to facilities, and was a founding trustee of the Papamoa Tennis Charitable Trust which owns and manages a 16 tennis court complex in the region.

His contributions have included prominent roles in the running of ITF tournaments in the Region over the years and he is reported still to contribute 30 to 50 hours a week on volunteer work for tennis.

Glen Hunter

Glenn has provided service to one particular club, the Patumahoe Tennis Club in Pukekohe and to the Counties tennis community, for a period of over 40 years from 1982 through to the present time.

Glenn was on the Club Committee for all of those 40 plus years and also having served in various other roles including several terms as President and Club Captain for over 30 years. His contributions included a key role over many years in regard to the Club's facilities, including the conversion and replacement of court surfaces and being a motivating force behind the installation of lights which established a community night tennis programme, which he organized for some years. His contributions also have included providing financial services, including the preparation of financial statements, not just for Patumahoe Tennis Club but also for other clubs on a voluntary basis as well.

He has also been involved for some 48 years, from 1974 through to 2022 as a Member of the Committee of the Counties Tennis Association, including various roles including President, Treasurer and Committee Member, with a particular commitment to establishing an indoor tennis centre in the area.

In Seniors Tennis he has been a Committee Member of "Counties Racquetees" (being the regional veterans or tennis seniors association), since 1975, being heavily involved in the organisation of seniors tennis for almost five decades.

Glenn is a Life Member of Counties Tennis Association and in 2008 was made a Life Member of Patumahoe Tennis Club. He has received an award from Counties Manukau Sport for Services to Sport and was twice named as the Counties Tennis Personality of the Year, in 1979 and 1986.

Alan Chester

Alan's lengthy service to tennis in New Zealand has been at numerous levels. Having played club tennis for several decades in Auckland and having served in various officer roles for those clubs over those years, particularly for Blockhouse Bay Tennis Club, Alan continued to serve as a governance leader of the sport for many years at a regional level, sitting on the Board of Auckland Tennis for many years, and was the Chair of both that Board and its successor entity Auckland Tennis Region for a decade (2004 to 2013). In that role he worked tirelessly for governance change, particularly focussing on financial sustainability, not only for Auckland Tennis/ Tennis Auckland Region but also for the clubs in the Region and led the process to redevelop the ASB Tennis Arena, driving the joint venture between Next Generation and Tennis Auckland which greatly modernised the Stanley Street complex for the hosting of WTA and ATP Tournaments held there every year providing enhanced benefit to the New Zealand tennis public.

Alan was made a Life Member of Tennis Auckland Region for his services to tennis in the Region.

Alan was also highly influential in terms of elite player development and was one of the creators of the Seed Foundation to accumulate funds to provide financial support for the development of elite players, acting as President of the Seed Foundation from 2005 through to the present time.

Alan's service to Māori tennis in New Zealand has been recognised by Aotearoa Māori Tennis Association.

His services to sport were also recognised by the conferment on Alan in 2014 of a Royal Honour, the New Zealand Order of Merit.

Robyn Dry

Robyn has served on the Khandallah Tennis Club Committee since 1976 through to the present time (and ongoing) and has served in various roles as an Officer of the Club.

At the same time, she has provided extensive service to the Management Board of the Wellington Tennis Association during the period 1976 to 2008, while also for that Association (and then Tennis Central Region following restructuring in 2008), acting as the Convenor of the Mid-Week Committee which organised regional mid-week tennis, serving in that role for 30 years from 1991 to 2021.

The services provided by Robyn over the decades are amplified by her being a major organiser in support of many tournaments held at the Renouf Tennis Centre in Wellington. She was instrumental in recruiting and organising the many volunteers required hosting national and international events including Fed Cup / Billie Jean King Cup ties, Davis Cup ties, the ITF Women's International event, the ASB International event and the Configure Express International. Such events require both intensive organisational skills and lengthy and sustained commitment of time for some weeks and these events occurred more or less on an annual basis over the decades. Robyn has also organised the Halberg Charity Tennis tournament for over a period of 20 years which raised substantial funds for disabled children over the years.

In 2005 Robyn was awarded the Tennis New Zealand Administrator Award and in 2007 recognised as the Wellington Sport Volunteer of the Year.

Robyn was elected as Honorary Vice President of Tennis New Zealand in 2012 and in 2016 she was made a Life Member of Tennis Central Region.

Tony Ralfe

Tony has been a leader of organised tennis in Canterbury for several decades. Soon after commencing his club administration service by becoming a club committee member in 1967, and serving in a number of club officer roles thereafter, Tony was elected in 1968 to the Canterbury Tennis Competitions Committee, which had the extensive and demanding role of organising inter-club and tournament tennis within Christchurch and Canterbury, a role in which he served for 32 years, including 20 years as Chairman.

A year later in 1968 Tony was also elected on to the Management Committee of Canterbury Tennis, serving on that Management Committee for 31 years, therefore providing service in a voluntary role across those two Committees for over 30 years in each case, as well as in a variety of other roles (including as a Canterbury Tennis Selector (8 years)).

In 1999 Tony was elected to the role of President of Canterbury Tennis and sat ex-officio on the Management Committee and then the Board of Tennis Canterbury Region for the next 13 years.

In 1991 Tony was also elected to the Committee of the then Canterbury Tennis Veterans Association, a role in which he has served since that time, for a total of 32 years to date, served for two different periods as President of that entity (now Tennis Canterbury Masters) and being made a Life Member in 2018.

In 2014 Tony was elected Patron of Tennis Canterbury Region and in 2019 he was awarded with the Ian Jones Memorial Trophy for services to tennis.

His services to the sport in Canterbury resulted in Tony being made a Honorary Life Member of Canterbury Tennis Incorporated in 1993, and in 2000 he was appointed to the role of Honorary Vice-President of Tennis New Zealand.

Tony's passion for sport was supplemented by him operating a sports-goods store in Christchurch for some decades and Tony was also the lead racquet-stringer for the ATP and WTP tournaments in Auckland for over two decades.

In 2001 he received a Sport Canterbury award for Outstanding Service to Tennis.