



**ROADING TRIBUTE:** New Plymouth MP Harry Duynhoven (left) and New Plymouth district councillor Mike Merrick (right) assist Joy Barclay (centre), the wife of the late Ron Barclay, down the new road in Fitzroy named after her husband. Photo: TREVOR READ

## Fitting tribute for Fitzroy Ron

By ROCHELLE WEST

RON BARCLAY would have smiled to know a Fitzroy street had been named after him, his wife Joy said yesterday.

After the official unveiling yesterday of the new Ron Barclay Drive sign, on the road leading to the upgraded Fitzroy Beach Reserve, Mrs Barclay said the reserve had been so much of her husband's life.

"I think it's terrific. Ron would have been thrilled," Mrs Barclay said.

Mr Barclay, who died on April 29 last year, was a resident of Beach St for many years, Labour MP for New Plymouth for a decade from 1966, and later a city councillor for 12 years, the last three as deputy mayor.

He also owned and operated a shoe shop in Fitzroy Village, founded the Fitzroy Rugby Football Club, was a member of the Fitzroy Rotary Club and

was a patron and honorary life member of the Fitzroy Surf Club.

New Plymouth district councillor Mike Merrick came up with the idea to name the road, at the end of Beach St, after Mr Barclay.

At the unveiling, which attracted several dozen people, Mayor Peter Tennent said Mr Barclay was a real gentleman, who made a huge difference to Fitzroy and it was only fitting that he was recognised.

Yesterday's ceremony not only marked the unveiling of Ron Barclay Drive, but was the official opening of the Fitzroy Beach Reserve, following its \$900,000 upgrade.

The reserve was the second in a series of key coastal areas the council planned to upgrade as part of a programme to strengthen the district's coastal culture, New Plymouth District Council parks and recreation assets manager Kelvin Shooter said.

Work on the project began in March this year.

"This upgrade has been a big job, and when you look at the result you can see that the redevelopment has successfully opened the area up and given the reserve a fresh look," he said.

The redevelopment moved the public carpark back from the edge of the coastline, established a new playground area, and reshaped the dune as part of erosion management.

A new boardwalk between the boardriders' and surf lifeguards' club rooms was constructed, a small hill on the coastline was flattened to create a picnic area with sea views, and an improved stormwater system was installed to reduce the likelihood of surface flooding during heavy rainfall.

Work was continuing on a new paved section of the coastal walkway in the reserve, to separate pedestrians from the carpark, Mr Shooter said.