

# 'Back rower' now at the top of the class

► **Richard Loader**

In the thirty-seven years that Warwick and Katie Rhodes founded their Warkworth based business Rhodes for Roads the company has grown to be a major operator in the region.

Now employing over 40 staff from the local area, and undertaking projects throughout the upper North Island, Warwick grew up in Warkworth at the time the Satellite Station was being built and says back in the day he was always a back-rower in the classroom.

"In my last year of college the teacher walked around the class and asked all the kids what they were going to be when they left school. He got to the back row and said, 'And Warwick what are you going to do?' I said, 'I'm going to be like my dad and work on the roads.' All the front rowers were laughing, and the teacher patted me on the top of my head and said, 'oh well Warwick, someone has to do it.'"

That was back in '75 and not long after Warwick started working for the local Council doing roading he was given a book written by a client that contained a quote, 'If it's going to be, it's up to me.'

"There's another word we don't use and that is 'try'," says Warwick. "You don't 'try,' you 'do'. You have to believe in yourself and interestingly, most of the back rowers of that class are still in Warkworth and doing very well."

It's a good story that tells us people should never judge the worth of someone else, but also that with self-belief, a goal and determination we can be anything we want to be.

Rhodes for Roads is a success story. It was started in the Muldoon era of deregulation, user pays and Think Big, when Warwick and Katie seized the opportunity to go out on their own, specialising in grader, roller and water-cart road finishing, seal extension, pavement preparation and forestry roading.

While retaining the family spirit, Rhodes for Roads has progressively grown as the local area has grown along with the demands from clients, some of whom are now into their second and third generation.



Warkworth based Rhodes for Roads provides a diverse range of civil contracting services, specialising in driveways and car parks right through to motorway work.

Working for local authorities, central government, tier one contractors, forestry companies, developers, builders and private residential clients, Rhodes for Roads provides a diverse range of civil contracting services.

Specialising in driveways and car parks right through to motorway work the company has built a reputation for doing the job once and doing it right first time.

"Our work involves road construction and rehabilitation for both the local Council and NZTA. We've built numerous roads between Auckland, Warkworth and north of Warkworth, improving road safety.

Rehabilitation is an upgrade of an existing sealed road, normally by correcting the shape of it, widening it, putting in better shoulders — generally improving its safety by removing

blackspots where there have been fatal or serious accidents. Once the road has been improved it no longer appears in the papers as the scene of fatal car accidents."

In addition to helping to improve road safety, the Rhodes for Roads team are currently working on the new motorway from Puhoi to Warkworth for the NX2 Group.

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