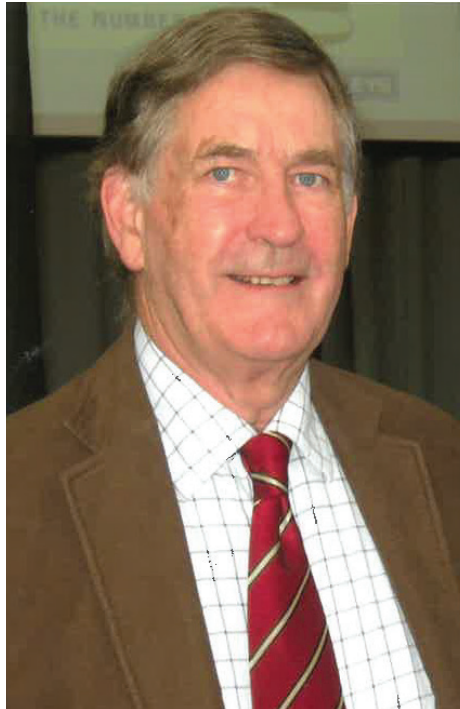


# Kevin Vincent Marriott

8 April 1940–17 May 2018



MB, CHB, Otago 1965

**K**evin Marriott was born in Christchurch, the third child of six, a son of the Four Square grocer in New Brighton. He was a very able youngster, brought up as a good Catholic and for a time expected to join the priesthood although he had other ideas, dux of his school, an able 1<sup>st</sup> fifteen rugby player, and the only person known personally to the writer who was able to break the string used for tying up parcels of groceries in those days with a flick of his hand. He proudly related the story of an early school report which said: place in class, first; achievement, first; comment, could do better.

He chose to go to Medical School in Dunedin, progressed easily through the years but surprisingly failed his final examinations. By the time he sat and passed special exams all the house surgeon positions in New Zealand were taken except for one, and he ended up in Waipukurau in 1965, which he then aptly called the last

place in New Zealand. He did some time in Waipukurau as a junior, moved to Hastings as a medical registrar, developed his skills as a very able internist and anaesthetist, and then took up a position back in Waipukurau as a part-time GP and part-time anaesthetist and physician at Waipukurau Hospital, replacing the late Des Dickson who moved on to Palmerston North as a cardiologist.

He remained in Waipukurau throughout his working life, partly as a GP and partly as a senior medical officer at Waipukurau Hospital to which he was devoted. He was not a born GP and tolerated much of the work and many of his patients because it was necessary to make the system work, but he never suffered fools gladly and to him there were quite a few fools around. He had a self-selected group of patients who liked him and his style and whom he enjoyed in turn, and for these he could never do too much and was always available, and many became firm personal friends. His

particular interest was in the associated hospital work, especially anaesthetics and cardiology, he had a broad and a deep understanding of medicine and he formed and maintained strong positive relationships with consultant colleagues in Hastings to the benefit of all. Having been at times Medical Superintendent, with the closure of Waipukurau Hospital in 2000 he resumed a low key role in general practice until he retired in 2009 much to his own relief and that of his colleagues.

Kevin married early and had five children with his first wife, Margaret. While Margaret probably brought up the family largely single-handed, he was very proud of his children and when he had time he used to tramp with them in the Ruahines and visit farming friends and beaches around Central Hawke's Bay. At the same time he had cultivated tastes and enjoyed the finer things of life, especially classical music and opera, fine wine, spirits of juniper and other drinks sometimes in too much quantity, read widely, remembered what he read and frequently referred to The Department of Useless Information. In particular he had a love of the English language, was rarely

without a dictionary to hand and was an expert in crossword puzzles, especially the one in the Guardian Weekly which he had airmailed to him.

In those days rural medicine was a field of particularly heavy personal commitment by all those involved, he was the long-term backbone of the local hospital services and he was on call continuously for two weeks in three over many years. Inevitably this took a toll on his personal life and his relationships. After his first marriage foundered he had other relationships and later married Diana and later again Harriet with whom he had his sixth child and third son. Harriet stood by him to the end, throughout the ravages of the dementia which afflicted both his parents and which he had feared for many years, until he finally died peacefully in Wellington. He had a small largely family funeral in Wellington and a large memorial service in Waipukurau, which was well attended by friends, colleagues and former patients. He is survived by Margaret and Diana and Harriet, and Catherine, David, Rachael, Jeremy, Abigail and James, and eight grandchildren.

---

**Author information:**

Tim Mason, colleague and friend, former GP in Waipukurau, now retired in Wellington.

**URL:**

<http://www.nzma.org.nz/journal/read-the-journal/all-issues/2010-2019/2019/vol-132-no-1504-25-october-2019/8032>

---