

## MEET MURRAY POWELL:

Murray was the youngest born of 5 children to his parents in Tapanui, Southland in 1954. He had 3 older brothers and a sister but sadly, Murray lost his brother closest in age back in 2017 to brain cancer. Murray's father was a farm manager and his mother was kept busy at home raising the 5 children.

When Murray was 5, the family moved to Homebush, near Darfield, where his father was once again employed as a farm manager. Murray started primary school at Homebush before the family moved to West Eyreton near Oxford and he completed his primary schooling there before moving on to Rangiora High School. At 16, Murray left school to take up a position at Ballantynes as a Window Dresser & Display Artist but at age 17, Murray contracted bone cancer which led to him having his right leg amputated above knee. Murray was told

that he would not return to work for a very long time but he is proud of the fact that he returned to work within 6 months of his amputation. He left Ballantynes in 1974 to join the display team at Farmers Coop in Cashel Street then to a sole charge role at Farmers Rangiora where he happily worked for several years but with the merger to Farmers Haywrights was then told his skills were required in the Cashel Street store. Murray was not happy with this and left Farmers to spend a year as a car groomer for the NZ Motor Corporation before joining Caxton as a display coordinator to build permanent displays in supermarkets all over the South Island. He said he loved his job but after 5 years in the role, he was asked to transfer to continue this work in Auckland which did not sit well with him and left the role to start his own business, Motivation Design, as a signwriter. This Business, based in Rangiora and later in Woodend continued right through until his retirement in 2022. Murray has enjoyed living at Woodend for around 30



years and recently purchased a new house there where he lives with his wife, Valda and beloved pooch, Jazz, who loves being taken for a walk alongside Murray on his E-Scooter. Valda is still working so Murray said he is still "learning the ropes" as chief cook and bottlewasher. Murray has 2 adopted children, a son (43) in Ashburton and a daughter (37) in Rangiora. Because the type of cancer he had was thought to be hereditary, the decision to adopt was an easy one as he did not want to risk passing on any faulty genes. When asked what he found challenging, Murray responded, "One tries to do normal things but as any amputee will testify to, we have to do things a little differently. I've learnt a lot of tricks over the years". Murray enjoys associating with people who have a bubbly and outgoing nature and who have a



## MEET MURRAY POWELL CONT:

positive outlook on life.

**FAVOURITE FOOD:** Home cooking, Anything sweet and meat of any kind.

**FAVOURITE PLACE:** Anywhere the campervan (MUZWUZ) will take us.

**FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES/HOBBIES:** Music and playing in bands. Likes to "potter" around his property and build things in his "man cave"

**FAVOURITE MUSIC:** Country Rock and blues. Artists, Chris Stapleton, Keith Urban, Zac Brown Band, & 70's music including The Eagles, CCR, Bob Segar and Van Morrison to name a few.

**FAVOURITE MOVIES:** Forest Gump & The Blues Brothers.

Murray has a passion for music and remembers all 5 children being taken weekly in the 60's to music lessons in Christchurch where he learnt the piano accordion. Currently, he plays keyboard and sings vocals in his band that performed at the recent Amputees Federation annual conference in April. His wife, Valda, is also in the band as a vocalist. Murray is overjoyed to have recently acquired a 1950's Hammond organ, something that he has always yearned for and he thoroughly enjoys his involvement in the music scene that has been a huge part of his life.

Murray admits that going in to business on his own was the greatest risk he ever took but he said he worked hard throughout his career to make it a successful operation. Failure was NOT an option he said. Murray and Valda get away in their campervan at every opportunity and have seen most of NZ in "MUZWUZ". He has travelled regularly to Australia, often to visit family members but also touring Australia with a Gene Pitney tribute band. Murray admits that he is enjoying life without the constant pressures of running a business and highly recommends retirement and the leisurely life that goes with it. He is currently on a short list for Osseointegration which he feels will make life a lot easier as he has experienced ongoing issues with his stump.

*Murray has been a long time supporter of the society in that he looked after the signs one sees at the Limb Centre for no charge. Many thanks for your kind generosity Murray & we wish you & Valda enjoyment in your well-earnt retirement. (Taking Jazz walkies)*

