

# *Joyce Blok – a name synonymous with leadership in New Zealand Beauty Therapy for over three decades!*

When Dutch beauty therapist Joyce Blok migrated to New Zealand at the end of the '60s, she little realised what a vital role she would play in the establishment of the beauty therapy industry and profession in New Zealand.

Joyce and masseur husband Neil, opened one of New Zealand's first professional clinics in Auckland. Their reputation spread far by word of mouth and in time appointments were hard to get, even weeks ahead.

enquiries from aspiring beauty therapists looking for training, Joyce and Neil recognised both a need and an opportunity for a beauty therapy school in this country.



*The 1975 graduation, with "Robbie" (Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson – middle back row) the Mayor of Auckland*



*The Class of '74 at the Joyce Blok School in Epsom*

By the beginning of 1973 the first fully fledged, professional beauty therapy training school was in operation, with Joyce Blok as principal and director.

Fortunately for the future of the profession and industry here,

pioneer Arthur Hinkel, was added to the training available. Electrolysis became Neil Blok's passion and his research and dedication started New Zealand down the path of the superior blend method long before many overseas countries, especially the United Kingdom.

Many of this country's most successful owners of beauty therapy clinics in years past came through the Joyce Blok School.

After receiving numerous

Joyce was determined to provide training comparable with reputable schools in Europe.

The initial full course took nine months, covering beautician, aesthetician and aesthetic body care modules.

Subsequently electrolysis, using the blend method developed by US



*One of the first New Zealand classes in Electrolysis at the Joyce Blok School*



*1976 Joyce Blok graduation, with Mrs Muldoon, the Prime Minister's wife (later Dame Thea )*

A feature of early students was that most were "mature students"... people looking for a career change, rather than youngsters straight from school.

A typical example was Judy West, an experienced nurse and theatre sister who looked to beauty therapy for a new career challenge.

Judy graduated from the Joyce Blok School in 1982. After working in clinics, she came back to the school to teach and in 1986 was appointed as Principal, a role she has dedicated herself to ever since.



*Judy West (right), our Principal since 1986, graduating in 1982*

## Shift to Henderson

The early school premises were rooms in an old villa. Joyce and Neil had two wishes... to have a building dedicated to the school and to move closer to home and family in West Auckland.

So the old premises and equipment were sold (to be used by the NZ College of Beauty Therapy) and Joyce and Neil converted a whole house in Henderson to a newly fitted out school.

Council hassles caused

some delays, but Joyce's well-known persistence won through.



*"The Yellow House" in Henderson which was the school through the '80s*

Affectionately known as "the yellow house" for its bright colouring, it became a well-known landmark close to the Henderson Town Centre.

It was the Commonwealth Games of 1990 in Auckland which, among other things, prompted another move (the house was demolished for a car-park for the swimming venue)... but more of that later.

## Commitment to Quality

The commitment to quality training by the Joyce Blok School even in those early days helped to establish a favourable reputation not only in New Zealand, but also around the world.

As part of her focus on



*Masseur, electrologist and handyman/ builder Neil Blok*

professionalism, Joyce wanted her students to be able to use quality professional skin care products and equipment during their training.

The requirement for having import licenses for all imported products, coupled with the great difficulty in obtaining such licenses, proved a major obstacle.

However, Joyce's typical Dutch determination and Neil's skill with his hands came up with some solutions.



*Joyce Blok demonstrating a treatment at the Joyce Blok School in Henderson*

Joyce worked with some of Europe's leading suppliers of natural skin care ingredients (such as Carl Richter of Germany), an aromatherapist and a New Zealand cosmetic chemist to develop a range of professional skin care products.

While the containers were standard brown glass medicine bottles (there were few choices), the contents were professional cleansers, toners, moisturisers, masks and massage creams of a quality that rivalled any of the European brands.

In the meantime, Neil developed a range of trolleys, beds and wax-heaters (some of which can still be found in



*Some of the original Joyce & Neil Blok Cosmetics products... the first professional products developed specifically for and in NZ.*

use today!), which gave local therapists an economical access to professional equipment.

His proudest achievement was developing (in conjunction with two electronic engineers) the JB Thermoblend electrolysis machine... which is fundamentally the same one still available today.

By the mid-1980s Joyce and Neil Blok were able to provide prospective beauty therapists not only world-recognised training and qualifications (CIDESCO, Zürich and CIBTAC, UK diplomas), but also professional products and equipment when they later wanted to set up their own clinics.

They were even able to provide employment for some in the two Joyce Blok clinics operating in Glendene and Hamilton.

## **A new era**

The Blok's had spent their early years in Indonesia (the old Dutch East Indies) and loved the warmth of tropical climates, for which they continued to hanker.

Being foresighted, they also recognised that the growth of beauty therapy in New Zealand, and their business, required an injection of new energy, ideas and investment.

It was thus in early 1986 that Joyce and Neil made the decision to sell their business and retire to the warmth of Northern Queensland.

In March 1986 the Self Care Group took over, and the rest, as they say, is history.

The Self Care Group is dedicated to serving beauty and spa therapy in New Zealand and consequently the Joyce Blok school and products both benefited from the additional investment and people resources brought to bear.

The Joyce Blok school was moved into the much larger, new premises of the Joyce Blok Institute at the beginning of 1990.

Under the dedicated guidance of Judy West it has established an unrivalled local and International reputation for the quality of its training and graduates.

Self Care recognised that for the industry to grow and flourish, an ongoing supply of well-trained graduates with a commitment to the industry was essential. Thus not only has the Institute had Self Care's full commitment, but through the leadership, advice and support of the Institute has helped to encourage other providers of training to

become established and commit to quality training.

The Joyce Blok Natural Skin Care Products were repackaged and innovative new products were added to provide a very competitive and effective professional skin care range.

## **Growth in the '90s**

The nineties saw the Self Care Group grow into the leading company dedicated to beauty therapy. This included ongoing development of the Joyce Blok Institute and the Joyce Blok Natural Skin Care Products.

The Institute strengthened its reputation as the leading



*The site of the large, completely new premises specifically established for the Joyce Blok Institute.*

training facility, with Joyce Blok students consistently outperforming in overseas examinations.

The Institute's commitment to quality training was recognised by the NZ Qualifications Authority when they asked Judy West, Principal, to chair the advisory committee charged with establishing a national curriculum and standards.

The growth in Self Care Group's other areas of spa and beauty therapy continues to benefit the Institute and its students.

As the group is the supplier of several of the leading professional skin care brands in the NZ market, the resources of overseas and local trainers are available for seminars. Students are able to access quality skin care at great discount.



Pre 2000 above—New millennium below



The move to larger new head office premises in 1996 provided a training room and large showroom, both of which are used for and by students of the Institute. The showroom provides cash sale facilities for equipment, supplies and skin care products.

volume (over 150 stockists), but a complete repackaging and the launch of innovative new products goes on apace.

A state of the art Vitamin C Serum, at a very competitive price, was quickly followed by the Linden Refining Mask. Both use the powerful properties of exciting new natural skin care ingredients.

The development of the "More Than Skin" group of beauty therapy salons around Auckland has vastly increased the work experience and employment opportunities for students and graduates in a high quality environment.

The repackaging saw new bottles produced especially for Joyce Blok, new cream jars and new tubes. The graphic design and typefaces were given a smart new look, while retaining strong links to the well known packaging of the past.



*More Than Skin is a leading group of four day spas in Auckland which Self Care has used to help set a higher and more visible standard of presentation. It also provides employment and work experience opportunities for nearly thirty therapists.*

## The New Millennium

The Joyce Blok Natural Skin Care Range began the new millennium very strongly... not only is it the brand leader in

