

ABOUT PROFESSOR SIR DONALD WARD BEAVEN, KNZM, CBE

(31 August 1924 – 4 November 2009)

Professor Sir Donald Ward Beaven tragically died while fighting a fire at his bach in Little Akaroa on Banks Peninsula on Wednesday 4 November 2009.

Sir Don was an internationally respected teacher and medical researcher. He was a pioneer in many major developments in diabetes treatment and prevention, and in many initiatives in public health.

Born in Christchurch and educated at Christ's College, Professor Beaven studied medicine at the University of Otago, and had held medical appointments and fellowships all over the world.

He was a foundation member of Diabetes Christchurch, the first society in New Zealand for people with diabetes. He commenced full-time teaching and research at the Christchurch School of Medicine in 1960, and was appointed Foundation Professor in 1971. The Beaven Lecture Theatre at the School bears his name.

Professor Beaven was made a Commander of the British Empire in 1988 for "services to Medicine and the community", and a Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2005 New Year Honours for "services to persons with diabetes". He accepted a knighthood in August 2009 after the restoration of the former honours system.

In March 2009, Professor Beaven was commemorated as one of the Canterbury Local Heroes – a set of twelve bronze busts of important local figures – and a bronze bust of him was unveiled outside the Christchurch Arts Centre.

Professor Beaven was also a pioneer of Canterbury's wine and olive industries. A memorial service for Professor Beaven held in the Christchurch Town Hall on 19 December 2009 was attended by nearly 1000 people.