

# Local connections as South Auckland Macca's change hands

**Macca's is more than part of the community; it's run by locals who care about it as much as you do.**

Retiring south Auckland franchisee Martha Hill's first taste of the golden arches came when her husband Maurie started doing videography for McDonald's in the 1980s. Martha became a franchisee in the 1990s, and ran the Takanini and Papakura restaurants for decades, before adding Karaka in the mid 2010s.

With her long-term connection to the communities in which she operated, it's fitting that the two franchisees taking over the restaurants, Sherilyn Morton and Dan Maas, already have close links to the area.

Sherilyn and her husband Graham are taking over the Karaka restaurant, just a few kilometres down the road from the Clendon restaurant they have operated for five years. Their connection to the area is deeply personal, as they are based locally and are taking over their own community's restaurant.

"Funnily enough, we were both born on the McDonald's site in Invercargill," says Sherilyn. "It used to be a maternity hospital before it was knocked over, so we like to joke that we're McDonald's babies."

The Mortons' journey into Macca's ownership has been one of timing, teamwork and community focus. Sherilyn, a former nurse, took over the Ōamaru restaurant after completing her franchisee training, before moving the family north when the opportunity to run Clendon presented itself.

"We just love it because we love the people, the business, the head office people have been awesome. For us, it's an exciting, fun job," Sherilyn says.

Now, as they prepare to join the



Daniel &amp; Keri Maas

Karaka community, they're looking forward to continuing what Martha Hill has built.

"It's a dream community," Sherilyn says. "We're really excited to work with the team, and we think they're a great crew. We see there's lots of growth around the area, and we really feel there's heaps of potential."

The Mortons are already fixtures in local business and community life through the Manurewa Clendon Business Association, with plans to join the Papakura network as well. Their approach to sponsorship and partnership is hands-on: supporting schools, youth programmes and local initiatives.

"We have had a strong community focus in the past and expect to continue

and replicate that same feeling," says Sherilyn.

Inside their restaurants, that sense of belonging is easy to spot.

"We've had 80-year-olds come in with their reserved seats, young ones after school, and ones like us who love their coffees in the morning," she says.

"McDonald's is just so many things to different people and that's the wonderful thing about this business."

It's also a family affair. Their son, previously restaurant manager, has been promoted to operations manager across both sites, while another son has worked alongside them.

"It's really special seeing the next generation involved," says Sherilyn.

## A South Auckland homecoming

One suburb over, for Dan Maas it is a real homecoming to take over the Papakura and Takanini Macca's.

"I was born in Papakura and my dad worked at the Georgie Pie that's now a McDonald's in Takanini," he says. "I had my first Big Mac in Papakura as a kid, so coming back feels full circle."

After years in Blenheim, Dan, his wife Keri and their kids are returning to their roots with the same spirit of McDonald's founder Ray Kroc.

"He is famous for saying 'we have an obligation to give something back to the community that gives so much to us,'" says Dan.

That philosophy guides Dan's plans for the months ahead.

"We want to be great employers for our 200 staff and play an active part in local life," he says.

His passion for giving back also extends to Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC), an organisation close to his heart after his own family needed neonatal care.

"We also want to continue to support RMHC and will look to have a fundraiser in Auckland to build on the ones we had in the past."

Together, Sherilyn and Dan embody what "That's How We Macca's" means in South Auckland – local ownership that celebrates people, place and pride.

These franchisees aren't just running restaurants; they're building connections, supporting causes, and creating pathways for young Kiwis to grow.

Walk into almost any Macca's in South Auckland, and you'll likely be greeted by a familiar face. That's because over 90% of McDonald's restaurants in Aotearoa are owned and operated by local businesspeople. New Zealanders who are part of the community, employ local crews, and give back locally.

**Want to know more? Stop by your local Macca's and meet the people behind the counter.**



Sherilyn &amp; Graham Morton