



# **First Lady: From Boyhood to Womanhood: The Incredible Story of New Zealand's Sex-Change Pioneer Liz Roberts**

*Liz Roberts, Alison Mau*

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This inspirational memoir tells the story of how, with the help of medical specialists working in previously uncharted territory, the author changed her name, her sex and her legal status in the 1970s, freeing her to live a new life as a woman. The little boy born Gary Roberts in 1950s Christchurch knew from his earliest years that he was different from the other boys. Gary overcame a violent childhood to train first as a florist, then a hairdresser. He moved to England and his talent as a couture clothing designer was spotted and encouraged. He released his own collection, which made headlines back in New Zealand. He also became sure that a permanent change of sexual identity was a real possibility and began treatment. It was Liz Roberts who returned to New Zealand. Ground-breaking surgery, two marriages, and much heartbreak punctuated Liz's official transition from man to woman. Today, she still works as a designer and bespoke dressmaker. Her choices have made her enemies and admirers across the country, but few would doubt her strength and grace in tackling one of the most taboo life changes of all.

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