

Dr Ronald James Kay Grieve (1937-2017)

We say goodbye to Ron Grieve, Wellesley Old Boy from 1945-1949.



It was evident from his written reminiscences that Ron felt a deep belonging to Wellesley. He visited twice in the last few years, travelling from his home in Auckland with his wife Irene. In late February this year, Ron had scheduled a visit but unfortunately despite arriving in Wellington, was too unwell to make the journey to Days Bay and he sadly passed away soon thereafter from cancer.

In 1945 living with his mother following his parent's marriage break up, Ron aged seven, started Wellesley as a dayboy, commuting from the city to Days Bay by bus. The next term he started boarding, and did so until the end of 1949. In his written memories Ron said "I loved boarding and my five years were amongst the happiest of my life." The boarders made the most of the location although he can't recall swimming too much, but the bonfires on the beach at Guy Fawkes and with Roger Holyoake (son of the future Prime Minister) making puppet shows and movies for the boarding boys, charging 1 penny entrance!

Ron unashamedly credited Hoppy Stevens, "the Boss" with much of his love of learning especially his love of English Literature, which he was to excel in later years, gaining top place in a Scholarship nationally. He said "I'm particularly grateful to Hoppy (Stevens) for instilling in me a love of learning which has never left me - that is the greatest gift any teacher can give a pupil." Ron generously engraved an inner quad Foundation brick with THANK YOU HOPPY, in recognition of the positive effect he had on his life. He also felt that Kay Stevens, Hoppy's wife was an amazing figure, "who seemed to work extraordinarily hard behind the scenes," especially during the polio epidemic in 1948 which kept the boys at school for extended period under quarantine, as one of the boys had contracted it and only made a partial recovery.

At the finish of his time at Wellesley, Ron was named Dux in 1949. However, his achievements weren't limited to academia as he was the 100yd champion, plus the Captain of the 1st X1 cricket, plus a capable boxer.

