

**John Colles Burland 1926-2015 - Attended Wellesley from 1931-1940**



John was born in Persia on 27th May 1926 and emigrated with his family when he was four, to Karori, Wellington. He began his primary schooling in 1931 at Wellesley on the Terrace, and secondary schooling at Scots College in Miramar.

Flying aeroplanes captivated him and he was amidst training for the NZ Air Force when WW11 finally ended in 1945. His fascination for planes continued throughout his lifetime as he would visit the Hood Aerodrome in Masterton especially when the Wings over Wairarapa event was held.

On leaving school he initially worked for Shell and General Motors. And took an interest in amateur dramatics featuring in many local productions.

John also spent four months on Palmerston Atoll, Cook Islands in 1960, gathering ethnographic and historical data and where he wrote the family history of one of the founding families now held at the Turnbull Library.



Right- John in the “big house”, on Palmerston Atoll- self portrait.

John then moved in to public relations work and shifted to Gisborne where he became, Gisborne City Council’s Public Relations Officer, responsible for the Cook Bicentennial Celebrations in 1969. He then moved back to Wellington where he joined the staff of PR consultants Hugh Sumpter & Associates. He enjoyed golf and tennis, but his passion was for art and photography. This flourished over the years as he became an accomplished amateur artist working in oils, water colours but particularly pastels, with many successful exhibitions.

John retired to Masterton in the early 1980’s, where he continued painting and playing snooker until ill health forced him into a retirement village where he remained until his death at 89 on 17th September 2015. John has left wonderful legacy of fine art, particularly prominent in Masterton.