

## Peter Thomas Young 1925 - 2021

Attended Wellesley 1935 - 1938



Born 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1925, Peter was the son of Elsie and Alec Young, and had two sisters - Bice Tennyson and Janet Shaw. Peter attended Wellesley from 1935 – 1938 before attending Wanganui Collegiate. He went onto study law and became a lawyer at Kensington Swan (this law firm was founded by Peter's grandfather and was earlier named Young Swan Morison McKay.)

Peter was an exceptional man with many varied interests. Culturally, Peter was an avid collector of music and opera, attending many shows both in NZ and overseas. His incredible memory could recall every performance he had ever seen. Peter was also a great collector of ship models,

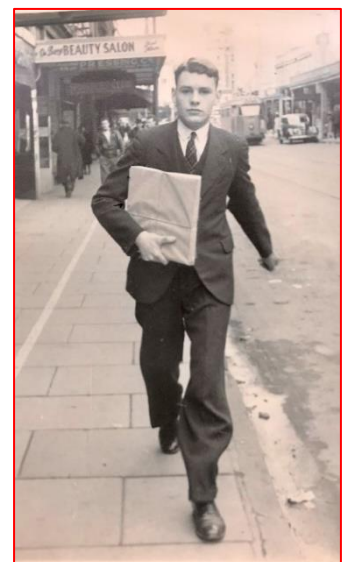
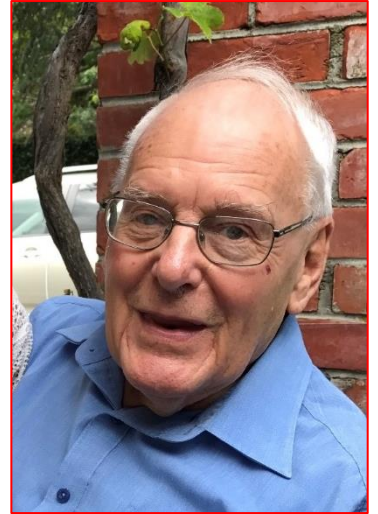
many imported from England. In his later years, he gifted his extensive collection of models and ship books to a museum in Southampton. This love of models flowed through to a passion for international cruises - another great way for him to travel the world and attend more opera performances!

Back home, Peter was known as a real history buff, who loved nothing more than to talk about his fond memories of Wellington, along with so many other historical events. He was a life member of many clubs and associations in the Wellington Region, and of note, he was a founding member of the Katherine Mansfield Birthplace Society in 1986. Soon after purchasing the rundown Mansfield property in Thorndon in 1987, the Society restored the house to its original heritage condition. A truly kind man, with a huge sense of social responsibility, Peter was generously devoted to many other causes and charities, including the Wellesley College Foundation's scholarship programme.

Peter's very close Wellington friends, for over twenty years, were Carleen and Jeff Needham. Peter became an honorary grandfather to the Needham's two daughters, Abby and Holly, playing a key role in their upbringing. Carleen proudly recalls how Peter babysat the girls, reading them countless books and even taught younger daughter Holly to play mah-jong at seven years old! He was a very special and much-loved member of the Needham family and together they shared every birthday (including his own) and Christmas celebration since the girls were born.

Peter was a keen photographer and his immaculate photo album collections were always beautifully notated. Included in his album is the image below - a 17-year-old Peter, captured by the Evening Post newspaper on Manners St, Wellington, looking suitably satisfied as he had just purchased Beethoven's 4th Symphony!

Sadly, Peter passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 and a private funeral ceremony in-line with his wishes was held at the Wellington Cathedral on 12 June 2021. The staff and boys at Wellesley will cherish the wonderful legacy of Peter's beautiful opera and classical music collection which he kindly donated to the school in 2021. Peter's music and memory lives on, and he remains a very cherished old boy of Wellesley.



**Sources:** Carleen and Jeff Needham, memoirs of Peter Young and Wellesley College archives.