

"quiet please".

An authoritative, sonorous "**quiet please**" delivered with a strong Dutch accent - always commanding silence for faltering directors and scaring players into speechlessness.

And for many bridge players this will be an enduring memory of
Mt Bridge Club Life Member

Mike Huymans

who died last Wednesday 6 July aged 91.

Mike, with that resonate voice, arrived in New Zealand from the Netherlands in 1961 with wife Diedre and four children. The family lived in Taupo and Morrinsville before retiring to the Mount in 1984. Mike and Diedre had recently moved to care in Katikati.

Previously Mike had learned to play bridge when serving in the Dutch Army, and had played in Morrinsville, so it was natural for him to join our club where he twice became President in the early nineties. Our recently demolished rooms were enlarged during Mike's tenure, with debentures raised from members. He remembered there being 32 tables at some club sessions! There's lots more about Mike's involvement in the club's history, latterly compiled by Jean Scott. Of course he was a respected director too, especially for teams. Mike's contribution to the Mt Maunganui Bridge Club was recognised in 2010, becoming a Life Member.

But Mike himself recounted that the greatest battle fought in his time as President was around smoking at the table. Each table had two ashtrays and nearly everyone smoked and the room had a blue haze - there was a special appointee to empty ashtrays during tournaments! When the club became smoke free, there were large ashtrays outside chained to the seats. Lots of members sat outside at the tea break "puffing away" said Mike who admitted being one of them.
That's one part of our history we won't miss!

Friend Hanny Hepburn frequently played with Mike, and remembers having to resist 'pulling faces' at the risk of being reprimanded. But a successful partnership nevertheless, Mike was an astute bridge player too. Hanny also recounts how away from bridge, Mike was a strong Dutch Club member and would dress up in the Dutch tradition as St Nicholas every 5th December - not unlike the jolly man in red with whiskers that we know, but rather as a bishop with a mitred hat and large koru shaped staff.

So now it's "**quiet please**" for Mike as the family and our Bridge Club remember our Life Member. Although Mike attended bridge at the 'bowling club', he missed seeing the new structure erected on the footprint of the club Mike helped to fashion. However Mike's Life Member photo will go with us to the new clubrooms and take a permanent spot on the wall designated for Life Members.
Thanks for your help to make the Mt club the successful, thriving friendly place it is today.