

## MEET BOB NEWBY:



Bob and his wife, Tricia, have lived at the Charles Upham Retirement Village in Rangiora since April, 2016. Bob was born in 1937 at the now defunct St Helens Maternity Hospital in Christchurch. He was the second child of four born to his parents who lived in Heathcote. He has an older sister and a younger brother and sister. Bob's father was originally a carpenter but took on a job as the Maintenance Engineer at the Maltworks Factory in Heathcote and the family used to live directly across the road at 55 Port Hills Rd on a ½ acre property that led up to what became the Tunnel Road. Bob recalls many fun times as a child growing up in Heathcote Valley and his early schooling was completed at Heathcote Primary. The family lived there until Bob was 14 and had already started at Ch-Ch Boys High School but they then moved closer to town in Opawa. From Heathcote, Bob used to catch a train to the city then a tram out to school but after the shift to Opawa, he rode a bicycle to school. Bob was heavily involved in cross country running and harriers and it was in 1954 whilst competing in the Takahe to Akaroa race that he first met Tricia and started going out with her a year later. Bob recalled that he ran over the top of a hill and there was Tricia "waiting for me". They married in 1959 and have 5 children, the oldest a daughter (born Greymouth) living in Australia then came identical twin daughters (born Westport) followed by identical twin sons (born Christchurch), all of whom live in New Zealand.

After leaving CBHS, he attended ChCh Teachers Training College for 2 years. His first posting was to Woodend then to Cobden (Greymouth) for 2 ½ years before moving north to Sergeants Hill School near Westport in 1961 where they stayed until 1963. Keen to follow promotions within the education sector, Bob then moved to Port Levy on Banks Peninsula for another 2 years before the family shifted north to Hukanui in the northern Wairarapa in 1965 where they spent 3 years until returning to ChCh to take up a position at Isleworth School. In 1973, Bob made the decision to leave teaching & take a position with Ashton Scholastic who specialised in educational publishing. A promotion to the role of Marketing Manager in 1977 saw the family move to Auckland where they lived in Half Moon Bay. In 1980, Bob made the move back to teaching where he had

positions at Tamaki Intermediate and Flat Bush School, the latter as Deputy Principal until 1984. He then went back to educational publishing for a year before he and a colleague purchased a garage building company in Taupo which they operated until the partnership ceased to exist. Another stint of teaching in Taupo followed before they decided to buy a native plant nursery in Oamaru which they ran until 2004 followed by their last shift to Christchurch to retire. It was around this time that Bob contracted prostate cancer, had surgery to rectify the situation and fortunately the cancer is in remission to this day.

Being an avid outdoorsman, Bob has tramped extensively all over NZ and while on a tramp in the Travis Saddle (Nelson Lakes) in 1999, while guiding a group of young people for their Duke of Edinburgh Award requirements, he suffered a fall which seriously damaged cartilage in his knee which eventually led to a total knee replacement in 2007. He contracted an infection which caused issues and a further replacement was carried out in 2011.

All was well through until 2017 when another infection of the knee caused massive issues and despite the valiant and fantastic efforts of Josh Kempthorne, surgeon, and Sarah Metcalf, Infectious Diseases Consultant, as well as the ChCh Public Hospital staff he ended up having a left AK amputation in May, 2019.

Because of his passion for the outdoors, Bob said that he likes talking and being with people who are active...people who do things or have done things.

Therefore, Bob has enjoyed his time at the Limb Centre talking with one of the prosthetists, Dion Freeman as they have many similar interests regarding outdoor pursuits. Sport of various kinds have always interested Bob and he has personally been involved with many different sports throughout his life.

**FAVOURITE FOOD:** What ever is on the table in front of him!

**FAVOURITE PLACE:** Blue Lake at the head of the Sabine Valley in Nelson Lakes...a 2-day tramp.

**FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES/HOBBIES:** Gardening, fishing, tramping, hiking, climbing, cross country, harriers, sailing, cricket, rugby, table tennis, badminton, volleyball and ANY other sport.

**FAVOURITE MUSIC:** Has an eclectic taste. Sang in a folk band for many years whilst in Taupo, & has also sung in a Barber Shop Quartet, Church Choirs, & leading roles in Stage Shows. Likes jazz artists Louis Armstrong & Duke Ellington.

**FAVOURITE MOVIE:** Five Pennies with Danny Kaye & Louis Armstrong. Les Misérables.

**FAVOURITE BOOKS:** Anything by Lee Child or Clive Cussler.

**TRAVEL:** Most places. Also holidayed in Australia, Fiji, Singapore & Vanuatu. A planned trip to Europe had to be cancelled due to the ill-health which eventually led to his amputation. Bob is still keen to travel to Europe, especially to La Rochelle in southwest France to trace his family ancestry.

Bob has very special memories of spending his childhood growing up in Heathcote Valley...lots of fun. He recalls his mother used to give him a return train fare (sixpence) from Heathcote to Lyttleton to pick up the weekly meat order from the closest butcher. Because Bob saw an opportunity to save money and explore nature on the Bridal Path, he would pocket the spare money and walk back over the hill carrying the meat pack. Growing up as a child living through WW2, Bob said he used to think about the plight of the soldiers fighting in Europe and the possibility of him being involved if the war continued on. When asked to describe what his family meant to him, Bob replied, "Tricia and all the family have been brilliantly supportive of me, in good times and bad. I am a lucky man." The hard times he recalls were living in Westport as a young teacher with three infant children trying to make ends meet. Tricia had a difficult time with the birth of the twin girls and Bob said life was a constant struggle. In general, Bob said that he has had a great life with many steep hills to climb but gentle slopes on the way down all made easier with the wonderful support of Tricia and the family, both nuclear and extended. Bob admitted that he and Tricia have taken some risks in their lives but they both stated that the risks were all calculated and they lived their lives being prepared to accept adversity if things didn't go to plan.

Bob & Tricia have been caravanning since 1972 and a few years ago bought the motorhome which they absolutely love getting away in to explore new and far-flung, remote parts of NZ. Due to his physical challenges, Bob said he misses his gardening and "making things" in his garage and being able to walk New Zealand's magnificent high country. But that latter is now a new challenge that has to be conquered.

*Bob, it was my pleasure and privilege to spend time with you and Tricia recently. Thank you for your friendly nature and warm hospitality. Editor.*