

'Mr Rotary' dies after a remarkable century

Kept sense of humour till end

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The man known as "Mr Rotary" has died at the age of 100.

Stuart Hayton died yesterday morning after living a life which could have been 10 different men's.

His son Nigel said Mr Hayton was an outgoing and community-minded man who lived his life the full.

A justice of the peace for 55 years, when he returned from serving in World War II he took over EC Hayton and Co, a plumbing supply business established in New Plymouth by his father.

Mr Hayton described himself as "basically a Taranaki man, always a great supporter, always an enthusiast for Taranaki".

He spent his early life in Hawera, coming to New Plymouth in 1924 where he was a student at New Plymouth Boys' High School until 1927.

"He loved Taranaki. He was a doer with an outgoing personality and easy nature," Nigel Hayton said.

For 25 years Mr Hayton served on



Taranaki man: Stuart Hayton was still driving at the age of 99.

Photo: ANDY JACKSON

the Taranaki Harbours Board, six years as deputy chairman and nine as chairman.

He was the founder and president of the New Plymouth Toastmaster's Club, and past district governor of Rotary.

Mr Hayton was also the holder of the Queens Jubilee Medal and Commander of the British Empire as well as a gold star member of the RSA.

He was a past president of the Justice of the Peace Association, former president of the Eltham Chamber of Commerce and served on the Stratford Chamber of Commerce.

He also served on the now defunct Eltham Borough Council. In 1995 Mr

Hayton was awarded a degree of service to masonry.

"He made a huge contribution to the community and local business. It was very important to him to be in the community," his son said.

Until moving into the Tainui Village rest home, he was still driving at the age of 99.

"He was using computers and the internet right into his 90s, and when cellphones came out he wanted one of those too. He kept his sense of humour right up until he died."

An avid gardener, Mr Hayton spent his later years painting and crafting woodwork.

A funeral for Mr Hayton will be held later in the week.

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