

Tauranga insurance officer retires

Forty-six years after starting in the insurance business Mr P. W. Wright, manager of the Tauranga branch of the State Insurance Office, has retired.

Mr Wright was farewelled by his staff and associates this week in a function attended by the general manager of the State Insurance Office, Mr J. L. Wright, the managers of Auckland, Otahuhu, Hamilton and Rotorua branches.

Mr B. R. Walker, the Tauranga branch assistant manager, made a presentation to Mr Wright on behalf of the staff.

Mr P. E. Molloy, who has taken over as Tauranga branch manager, also attended the function.

Mr Wright told the Bay of Plenty Times in an interview that his biggest impression in the insurance business was the difference between the pre-1939 era and the post war era.

"Before the war we had to chase business and it required a fair bit of salesmanship," said Mr Wright. "In the post war period there was practically an inflationary period and business now seems to come of its own volition despite the increased number of insurance companies, including some from overseas."

Compensation

Mr Wright said another impressive factor was the effect of the far reaching effect of amendments to the Workers Compensation Act.

"When I started we were governed by the provisions of the 1908 Act wherein a worker got half wages and £1 total for medical expenses.

"Today, under the 1964 Act, a worker gets 80 per cent of his wages, weekly allowances of £1 for a wife, 10s for each child and all medical, hospital or funeral expenses.

"Now it is mandatory for the employer to insure his staff where, before the war, it was left to his own choice."

Mr Wright said that since the war a large number of new insurance contracts had been introduced such as cover for loss of profits, house owners' and householders' covers, covers for loss of rent and for earthquake, storm, tempest and flood damage.

Mr Wright was born in Auckland but spent most of his early life in Taranaki where he was edu-

cated. After seven years with a tariff company Mr Wright joined the New Plymouth branch of the State Insurance Office.

He stayed in New Plymouth until the outbreak of the second world war when he served in the Middle East with the 27th Machine Gun Battalion.

In 1946 Mr Wright returned to New Plymouth as chief clerk and in 1948 moved to Palmerston North as assistant manager.

After eight months he was moved to the Wellington branch as assistant manager and in 1956 took over at Te Kuiti as manager. He served there for five years, then came to Tauranga.

"Having got here I decided to stay," he said.

Mr Wright will be going overseas next year with a party of war veterans to tour the battle fields of Crete, the Middle East, Greece, Italy, Germany and France. He will also visit the United Kingdom during the month tour.

During the tour Mr Wright hopes to see the sites of P.O.W. camps in Italy and Germany where he was imprisoned.

Keen on sport

Mr Wright is a keen follower of rugby, which he played in his youth. He also played golf and tennis but now is more interested in bowling—he is member of the Tauranga South Bowling Club—and fishing. Now he has more spare time he wants to try big game fishing near Mayor Island.

He is vitally interested in RSA affairs and is past member of the Tauranga RSA executive and at present serves on the welfare committee which "looks after Grim Digs" hospital and does work like seeing their lawns kept cut.

In New Plymouth, Mr Wright was president of the RSA.

He is married and has a married daughter farming near Tokoroa.



Mr Wright