



1950-2013

Tributes, p3
Obituary, p4
Looking back, p5
Opinion, p11

ONE OF US: Despite fame and fortune, Sir Paul Holmes, who died early yesterday, never forgot his roots as a Hawke's Bay boy.

PHOTO GLENN TAYLOR

By Amy Shanks
amy.shanks@nzherald.co.nz

Before he found fame, before that powerful voice first boomed into our consciousness and his face beamed into living rooms throughout the country, Sir Paul Holmes was just a boy from Hawke's Bay.

He never forgot those roots — taking the time to appear as a keynote speaker at school events, raise money for local charities and, most importantly, speak with his fans.

Sir Paul passed away peacefully early yesterday morning, surrounded by family at his Poukawa homestead. The 62-year-old had been battling heart problems and the return of prostate cancer.

More than just a broadcaster, Sir Paul

was a loving husband and father, as well as a generous friend.

As those close to him struggled to come to grips with the loss, so too did Hawke's Bay people who felt a close connection with the charismatic figure.

Maira Lindsay fondly remembers the veteran broadcaster's continued support of Haumoana School, where he completed his primary education.

"He came to our 75th jubilee in 1996. He was a lot of fun, entertaining everyone," she said.

"He came back again a few years later to record an episode of *The Way We Were*, we had a wonderful day with him."

His humour shone through and made an impression on Mrs Lindsay, who was tasked with taking care of his wallet and

chequebook for the day.

"He just said 'Here, take these'. The next question was, 'Where is the little boys' room?' I said, 'Same place it has always been, round the back.'"

"He was just very, very easy, comfortable and funny. When the staff come back, we will do something special for him."

She also recalled a young Paul mowing lawns at the local church to earn some pocket money.

"It was my husband's mother who paid him the 10 bob to do it, he was just a teenager. We met him on a ferry once too, my husband said, 'Paul!' He looked a bit sceptical at first but, once he explained he was Ian Lindsay from Haumoana, they nattered away for the rest of the trip."

Sir Paul went on to attend Karamu High

School in Hastings, where he was involved with the debating club and rowing team, alongside younger brother Ken.

He was also a prefect and received his honours blazer pocket in 1967 for rowing and public speaking.

Karamu High School principal Martin O'Grady said: "A lot of people are quite surprised at his involvement in rowing."

Sir Paul attended the school in the 1960s, and had returned on several occasions, including to lecture students on the dangers of methamphetamine in his campaign against "P".

But it was the sacrifice he made to speak at Karamu's golden jubilee on Labour

Continued on p3

'A true Hawke's Bay boy'

Continued from p1

weekend last year that Mr O'Grady remembered most.

"Without hesitation, he said he would be absolutely delighted to speak.

"Then his health deteriorated in the lead-up to the event. I rang and said, 'We totally understand if you can't make it.' He said, 'No, I'll be there.'

"He was very uplifting, speaking about Hastings, New Zealand and Karamu, but I could see it was a big effort. I will always be appreciative of the fact that he did that at the expense of his own comfort."

The school flag was lowered to half mast yesterday morning and will remain there in remembrance of Sir Paul until after his funeral, the plans for which were yet to be announced.

An interest in aviation led to another Hawke's Bay connection, this time at the Bridge Pa Aerodrome, though Sir Paul's relationship with the club was cut short after he crashed his vintage Boeing Stearman in 2004.

Air Hawke's Bay chief executive Kevin England said: "I recall his days as a pilot came to an end when he had a crash landing and his aircraft was written off.

"We will remember him as a colourful aviator and character."

Hastings Mayor Lawrence Yule offered his condolences to the family and friends of "a true Hawke's Bay boy".

"Even though his working life took him away from here, he didn't forget those days growing up. He found time in his busy schedule to support events for local community groups and charities, and was a tireless promoter of the benefits of living and working in the region.

"I know he loved the lifestyle that he fashioned at his home in Poukawa, and there were times when he told me that he couldn't wait to spend time in the tranquility of Mana Lodge."

The influence Sir Paul had on Hawke's Bay should not be underestimated, Mr Yule added.

"He took every opportunity to promote business opportunities, and his venture into the olive oil industry has proven to be a further boost for the region."

It was not just his zest for the region but for life which captured people's hearts and imaginations.

"He was always a delight to be around.



IN MEMORY: Karamu High School principal Martin O'Grady (second from left) and a group of students look on as Reuben Cash lowers the school flag to half mast out of respect for Karamu old boy and veteran broadcaster Sir Paul Holmes, who passed away early yesterday morning.

PHOTO/PAUL TAYLOR HBT130567-03

"His wit and honesty were there for all to see, and he had enormous influence in many walks of life and could get things done," Mr Yule said.

"I will miss Sir Paul as will

everyone who came into contact with him. He will be remembered as one of Hawke's Bay's finest ambassadors."

Broadcasting Minister Craig Foss mourned a remarkable man

and an acclaimed figure in New Zealand broadcasting.

"He will be sorely missed by his media colleagues as well as viewers and listeners around the country.

"For many decades, he changed the face of broadcasting and will be remembered for his passionate, skilled and insightful interviews telling the stories of New Zealand," he said.