

Rolland O'Regan dies at 89

Prominent Wellington surgeon and local politician Rolland O'Regan died yesterday.

Mr O'Regan, son of Supreme Court Judge John O'Regan and father of Ngai Tahu Trust Board chairman Tipene O'Regan, was a Wellington city councillor from 1965-74.

He died aged 89 at Wesley-Ewart Hospital, Wellington, following a stroke-related illness.

Before his involvement in local body politics, Mr O'Regan was a surgeon at the Home of Compassion from 1933-63 and a senior surgeon at Wellington Hospital from 1936-60.

He lectured in surgery from 1950-60. During the Second World War he served as a surgeon on three hospital ships. He was appointed a life member of the Neurological Foundation and served as a member of the Medical Research Council. He was president of the Cancer Society.

Tipene O'Regan said today there were two phases to his father's life; the first devoted to medicine, the second to local government.

Mr O'Regan was a Wellington Harbour Board member for six years, serving as chairman from 1972-74.

Tipene O'Regan counted as one of his father's notable achievements the concentration of the Port of Wellington's commercial



Rolland O'Regan - devoted to medicine and local government

activities westward, opening up the inner harbour to the city.

His father's other passion was local government finance and rating, subjects he spoke about internationally.

His book Rating in New Zealand credits Wellington's "renewal" with the land-based rating system, employed from 1901.

He strongly advocated land-value-based rating because he said high rates on raw land compelled owners to maximise development to make ownership profitable.

Land-based rating in Wellington was replaced with capital value rating in 1988.

Mr O'Regan said his father's great intellect meant he developed a wide range of interests.

He served for a time on the executive of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and was active in a range of Wellington clubs and organisations.

He was at one time vice-president of the Marist St Pat's Cricket Club, the Athletic Cycling Club and the Evans Bay Yacht Club; and he was a member of the Ha-taitai RSA.

In 1966 he stood unsuccessfully for the Wellington Central parliamentary seat against National's Dan Riddiford.

In 1977 he was a member of the Commission of Inquiry into Maori Reserved Land.

Mr O'Regan was national chairman of the Citizens All Black Tour Association from 1960-66, which opposed sending All Black teams to South Africa from which Maoris were excluded.

However, in 1981 he quarrelled with the Catholic Church over a \$1000 donation to the Halt All Racist Tours organisation. He wrote at the time that he believed apartheid would only be destroyed by South Africans in South Africa.

His funeral is on Monday at the Church of St Mary of the Angels, Boulcott Street.