

LEON DU TOIT VLOK

Leon Vlok passed away on 8 November 2015 after a three year battle with liver cancer.

He was born in Pretoria, matriculating in 1947 from Pretoria Boys' High School where he was a prefect and in 1947 received the Old Boys' Prize.

He then furthered his studies at Pretoria University, qualifying as an architect in 1952.

In 1954 he formed an architectural practice known as Vlok & Van der Westhuizen which eventually merged to become Moolman Van der Walt, Vlok & Van der Westhuizen - better known as MV3. Whilst he was there he was responsible for many large projects, such as Mabopane Bus Terminus, nine shopping centres and various country club and leisure resorts.

Sport was an integral part of all these phases in Leon's life.

On the cricket field Leon played first team cricket at Boy's High and at the University of Pretoria. He was selected to play Nuffield cricket for North Eastern Transvaal and went on to play for the senior North Eastern Transvaal team as well as representing South African Universities. He played in the National cricket trials and narrowly missed out on selection for the Springbok team.

He loved engaging about cricket. He could spend hours talking about Don Bradman, Hugh Tayfield, Trevor Bailey and more recently loved debating about which of Graeme Pollock, Barry Richards or Jacques Kallis was our greatest batsman.

He loved watching and talking about rugby. The great All Blacks, Sean Fitzpatrick and Richie McCaw elicited much comment and criticism about what they got away with "biased refs", although he acknowledged their ability. He would talk at length about some of our greats - Frik du Preez, Hansie Brewis, Naas Botha and H O de Villiers amongst others.

As a passionate Blue Bulls supporter he would take their losses so much to heart especially against their old foes Western Province.

At the end of his careers in rugby and cricket, Leon threw all his efforts into golf where he already had success representing Pretoria University in the Inter Varsity golf tournament at Houghton. Playing off a low single figure handicap, Leon became Pretoria Country Club golf captain in 1970, and was awarded golf Honours in 1985. As with most good golfers, Leon could remember so many highlights of his career and reminisced often about all the courses he had played and where he made "eagles" or "triple bogeys" or whatever vivid memories came to mind. It was a very sad day when, due to hip and back problems, Leon had to stop playing golf.

Again, Leon accepted a new challenge - bowls - and within a short while he became a very successful bowler and represented the Pretoria Country Club many times in the league circuit. When he became Club bowls champion within a few years of starting to play, it was again evidence of a man who, when he put his mind to something, there would be no doubt that he would be successful. Up until virtually his dying day, the Bowls Club and its members remained a major part of his life.

Throughout all his sports and his related successes, Leon also contributed to the community at large in so many ways. He served in Jaycee S.A. for ten years and eventually became National President representing his country in that capacity in Australia.

He was an active member of the Brooklyn Methodist Church, was in the choir and ran various fellowship groups.

Leon served on numerous boards and committees, namely the Pretoria Club, Pretoria Country Club, A R P & P (Retired Persons and Pensioners and Problems) and Probus to name a few.

He was also an accomplished artist and many of his paintings were highly acclaimed.

He was the proud father of four children, Gillian, Andre, Tony and Angela and Oupa to twelve grandchildren.

A few days before his passing, Leon had the privilege in hospital of meeting and holding his first great grandchild.

Despite Leon having some set-backs along the way in his life, he was able to rise up above every circumstance and go on to meet new challenges head on and conquer them and as Winston Churchill once said "eagles rise highest against the wind, not with it"

His passing will be yet another challenge wherever he finds himself now and as J K Rowling said "to the well organised mind, death is but the next adventure".

Leon du Toit Vlok indeed had a well organised mind.....

Roy Edge
(Old Boy Class of 1970 – son-in-law)