



## Legal eagle, 90, up with play

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At 90, Bob Boland has yet to lose his dancing shoes or legal nous. The Christchurch World War II veteran is "very likely" to be the oldest practising lawyer in the country, the New Zealand Law Society says.

Boland works five days a week as a conveyancing lawyer at Steel & Co in Bealey Ave and has "never felt the need" to retire.

The sprightly great-grandfather even works through his lunch hour to get home at 4pm to walk his dog.

His boss, Leo Steel, said his eldest employee was still "up with the play all right".

Boland did not feel working into his 90s was a notable feat. "There are a few working 90-year-olds around, but not too many, I guess. I don't feel like I'm 90; it just creeps up on you," he said.

Boland has aged gracefully, his white hair well-groomed and his shirt freshly ironed.

He still runs regularly, mows the lawns and goes camping at Kaiteriteri Beach each year.

Boland was on the dance floor at the Motueka RSA on New Year's Eve and recalled partying equally as hard for his 90th birthday last October, although he said he was slightly dismayed about why anyone would want to celebrate turning 90.

"Time is just starting to catch up with me, I suppose. I still feel about 50, if I can even remember back to 50."

Boland had stories to tell, including serving as a bomb aimer in the World War II and surviving a horrific crash into the Irish Sea on an aircraft that was carrying an 18-pound fused acid-bomb. When he returned home from the war, he worked at the Ministry of Works and processed many of the settlements of Christchurch's major high schools.

To Boland, the past decade had seen the best years of his life. "I have had a very interesting and enjoyable life and I certainly have never been bored."

In an oasis of gardens and fruit trees in Mt Pleasant, Boland and wife Pat, 73, who is still working as a legal executive, are "just getting on with getting on".

They no longer have any neighbours, because the earthquakes red-stickered nearly the entire street and they have to take a long detour to access their house, but they are content with their calm lifestyle.

The palm tree they planted after their wedding now stands more than 10 metres tall on their front lawn.

Boland said he would reluctantly retire this year, but his adventures were far from over.

He is confident he will reach 100 and plans to travel to Europe to explore Rome and London.

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