



Loveable rogue as colourful as his forgeries

Chris Hyde, October 24, 2013

In the final months of Carl Feodor Goldie's life his 93-year-old sister, Margaret Jones, stumbled across a piece of paper among her brother's belongings, inside a dictionary of artists' signatures. It was a list, about 50 names long, of every artist he had ever forged a painting of - maybe. "I asked him about it and he said, 'Margaret, they're just the ones I can remember'." Goldie, New Zealand's most infamous painting forger, died at North Shore Hospital on Monday night after a short battle with illness. He was 89.



GOLDIE: New Zealand's most infamous painting forger, died after a short battle with illness.

The Mangaweka-born man, who lived in Himatangi and then Foxton for most of his life, came to notoriety in the mid-1980s when, known as Karl Sim, he was brought to court for forging the works of C F Goldie and Petrus van der Velden. He was convicted on 40 counts, fined \$1,000, and ordered to paint the Foxton Town Hall and public toilets as part of 200 hours' community service. Sim then changed his name to Carl Feodor Goldie so he could legally sign his Goldie works. He shifted to Orewa and lived in his caravan for a number of years, before shifting to a council flat and then a rest home in his final months. Reminiscing yesterday, Mrs Jones said it was impossible to know just how many fakes and forgeries Goldie had sold to respectable galleries and homes across New Zealand. Before his vision began to fade in the early 2000s and severe arthritis hit his hands and feet, he was prolific, she said. "There's no doubt that he was a very good painter, but he couldn't sell his own works. I'm not making excuses for him but that's the way it happened." He developed a flair for painting at an early age because "he couldn't spell for s....", Mrs Jones said. It was at Palmerston North Technical High School in the early 1930s that he refined his craft. The only boy in a five-child family, Goldie was always cheeky, and made a successful living as a "well diviner" for Manawatu farmers in the 1950s, Mrs Jones said.

At his home in Foxton he worked on the paintings and drawings that were to get him into trouble - works in the style of Rita Angus, Frances Hodgkins, Colin McCahon, even Rembrandt, as well as Goldie and van der Velden. Mrs Jones said Goldie had a communist way of thinking but his kind, gentle demeanour earned him respect in the community. "The magistrate that sentenced him came up from Wellington to Foxton during his trial and went into the four pubs in the town. "He couldn't find anyone that had a bad word to say about him, and I think that was part of the reason he got off it so light. "Everyone in Foxton, they owed him \$50, they said he'd die being owed \$50, and sure enough he has."

Foxton antique shop owner Simon Hill-Hayr said Goldie was an important part of the town's social fabric and his death had come "like a bolt out of the blue". In April 2009 Mr Hill-Hayr and his wife Carla bought Goldie's old flat on Main St in Foxton, saved it from demolition and turned it into an antique shop call Goldie's Junk 'N Disorderly. Mr Hill-Hayr said they did it to keep the memory of the man alive, and they would continue to honour his contribution to the town. "He was a loveable rogue and he really helped put the town of Foxton on the map. "I actually went up and saw him a few years ago because he told me on the phone he had something for me. "I kind of went up there thinking he was going to give me a few paintings to add to the collection at the shop but I ended up heading home \$1000 lighter thinking, what happened there?"