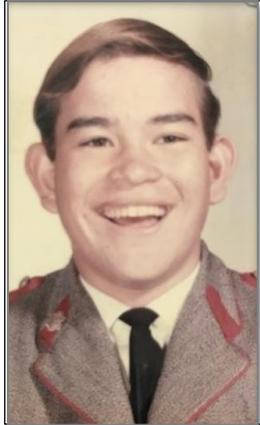


HERBERT DENNIS (BERT) OWEN-SCHWIND



OWEN-SCHWIND Dennis Herbert 8244 (1963–67) B Owen-Schwind Transport Supervisor Sumatra; Tudor, Bro, Dal, W.O.II. Insurance Manager.

Born 7 August 1949 Morati, Indonesia

Died 14 July 2017 Manly, NSW

Bert was born on 7 August 1949 in Morati, Indonesia. His father was Barry Owen-Schwind, a young soldier who fell in love with a local girl, Lily, and chose to go Absent Without Leave from the Australian Army and stay in Indonesia rather than come home when peace was declared in 1945, much to his parents' displeasure. Lily was a beautiful young woman from Manado, a small Indonesian island in the Celebes; she had a young daughter, Eleanor.

Bert 'Herbert' was named after his paternal grandfather, and together as a family of four they continued living in Indonesia until the Sukarno Government exiled all expats in 1957.

Bert had a wonderful early childhood, as the son of an expat working with Shell Oil Company on projects throughout the region. Living on the edge of the jungle, his days were spent hunting with his bow and arrow and flying his precious handmade fighter kites. One of the best stories of this time was when a tiger was caught too close to the compound – the tiger was trapped, shot, stuffed, and shipped to Australia with the family's possessions. In its subsequent place of display in Australia, the tiger generated a lot of fear, panic and entertainment over the years and has remained a permanent fixture in Bert's study.



Bert was educated in Australia, and sent in 1960 to board at Tudor House, Moss Vale, where he loved his time: the freedom it offered the boys to just be boys, climbing trees and playing marbles, although he did find the discipline challenging, particularly having to adapt to wearing the same clothes day after day. Bert then went on to board at The King's School to complete his education - during this time he made some lifelong mates. He loved his rugby and the school band.

Along with Mike Cassidy (1969) and Charles Jennings, he formed a group called 'The Pulse' - Bert was the drummer - they had fun playing at end-of-year parties and the like. Bert completed the HSC in 1967.

Bert's father bought a small bungalow in Avalon in 1957, which remained Bert's home up until 1973. Bert, like all teenagers spent most of his youth cruising the Northern Beaches in his father's treasured FC Holden with his mates, searching for the perfect wave. In 1965, when Bert was 16, he met the love of his life (Jill, who was 15), and they remained forever a tight unit.

After leaving school, he booked passage on a working cargo vessel to Jakarta to spend time with his much-loved Mum. He then returned to Sydney and Jill to start a career.

His first role was a Junior Clerk with Unilever. He then joined Combined Insurance as an Underwriting Clerk in 1970; he remained with Combined until retiring in 2014. During his career he moved from a desk job to join the sales force in 1972, he went back on staff in 2008 heading up the Training Division for Australia and New Zealand. Bert was a loyal, committed employee of Combined Insurance and the Company philosophy of always having a positive mental attitude. PMA remained with him to the very end: Never give up.



Bert married Jill, his one and only girlfriend, in February 1972. His groomsmen were John Lord, Jeff Peake and Brian Meyer. Jill and Bert had two sons: Ben was born in 1975 and Sam in 1978. Bert and Jill had wonderfully happy years as the kids grew up in the area playing rugby and surfing and forging strong lifelong friendships.



Bert covered nearly every inch of NSW and Tasmania during his working career. He loved the adventure and comradery with his work mates, but this life did take him away from home a lot, He always provided for his family and strongly believed this was his role.

His absolute passion was fishing, it didn't matter if it was from a boat or the rocks. Many early mornings saw him and Jeff making the treacherous climb down to the North Head murk, to bring home a bag full of bream and blackfish, the family's staple diet for many years.

Bert always had a dream to make it big, always working on finding an opportunity for this to happen. In the mid '80s he founded the Manly Bodyboarding Club, organising local competitions on the Northern Beaches - this led to the formation of the Australian Bodyboarding Association, which

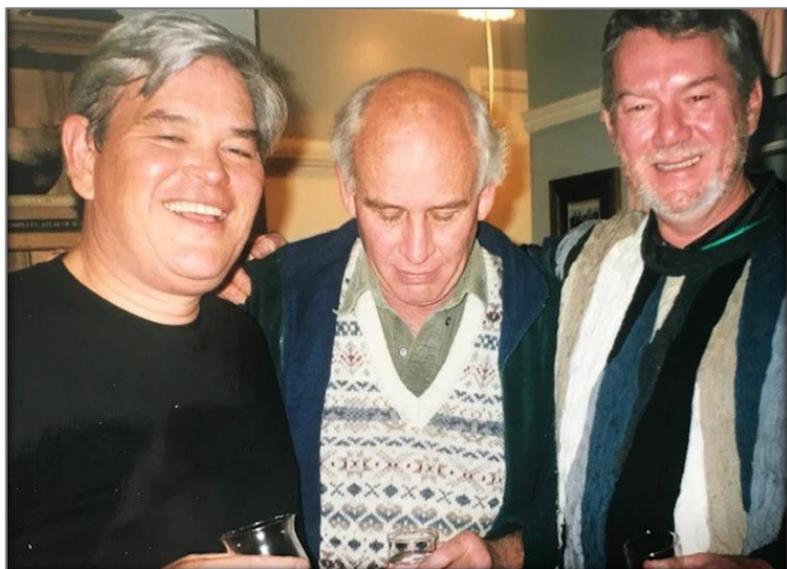
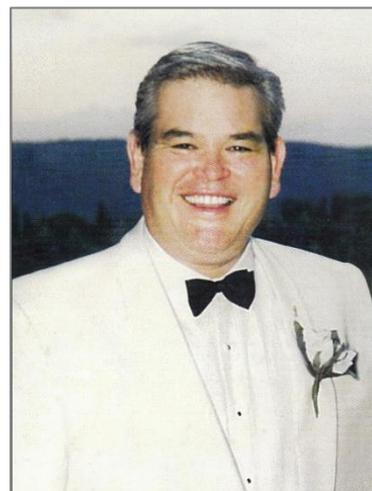
later went on to be the Australian Pro Bodyboarding, which is still going strong today. Bert walked away from the sport in 1992 but his sons Ben and Sam enjoyed and thrived on being part of the International Bodyboarding fraternity.

Jill, Ben, Bert & Sam

Bert was never a moderate man: he never did anything by halves, his love of food, plus being a heavy smoker and enjoying a rum or two contributed to ongoing health issues - he was affectionately known as 'the victim'. He suffered a heart attack while on a work convention in Fiji in 1999; this resulted in his giving up cigarettes, alcohol and coffee – leaving only one vice: food!



Bert retired in 2014 and sold his Condamine Street home of 25 years. He bought a little semi in Fairlight in 2015, which he spent the last two years of his life stressfully extending and renovating, to provide a small, low maintenance home, so he and Jill could just pack up and travel on a whim. Sadly, the wind was completely taken out of his sails in May 2016 when he was hospitalised for emergency surgery - this was the beginning of a 14-month battle with cancer, which he fought fiercely right up until the end of his life on 14 July 2017.



*Bert with life-long mates
Jeff Peake and John Lord*

Bert's last parade, 1967



Contributors:

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