

Think that you have had a 'Full Life'?



"Chakola" is the property up river from Coolana on the other side of the Quaker's property. It was founded, and is still owned, by Warwick Deacock. He showed Dot Butler around the land which we subsequently purchased as Coolana. He continues to this day to assist us in the conservation of Coolana and navigating the Govt. bureaucracy by providing an entree to the Civil Servants that 'make the decisions'. As you can see from the following "He's been around a bit"

WARWICK M M DEACOCK OAM

Few truly realize the wealth of experiences that Warwick has had in his lifetime; and the many "causes" he has tackled, spanning adventure, exploration and environmental concerns.

Born 1926, in London, Warwick was educated at Montessori infant's school and local prep schools until 1939 when he joined Stamford School, Lincolnshire, both his father and mother were mobilized for the emergency. The school was evacuated to Wales in 1941, due to the Blitz. He had worked as a Bicycle Messenger Boy during the early part of the Blitz!



It was here in Wales that he was introduced to and discovered an affinity with wild places. Aged 17, he did a bunk from school and joined the Royal Marines - where he gained his Green Beret and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. Quickly dispatched to the Far East, the atom bomb stopped the war. He was appointed OIC Suspected Japanese War Criminals at Stanley Prison, Hong Kong. He also had a spell in command of small boat anti opium patrols from Cheong Cheow Island before opting for Demobilization in 1947.

Civvy Street did not appeal to Warwick, and unsettled by his service experiences, he spent three years in a variety of ways including Chauffeur Des Camion (heavy truck driver) in France, which paid for sailing and climbing experiences. He missed the comradeship of the Regular Army, so he rejoined with the Middlesex Regiment, known as the 'Die Hards'. He had many interesting appointments including the Command of the British Troops in Austria at the Ski & Mountain School, and a spell seconded to the French Foreign Legion in Indo China.



His sporting involvement included army representative selection at Rugby Union, Athletics & Boxing; additionally he found time to enjoy hockey, basketball, water polo, shooting, botany, photography, filming & writing. He maintained contact with exploration, visiting wild country in Alaska, Arctic Lapland, the Karakorum and Himalaya. As a result, he and a friend were instrumental in establishing "Adventure Training" in all three British Services. Tedium had no chance, as he volunteered for the Parachute Regiment & served with Airborne Selection Company. On return to the UK he carried the Queen's Colors at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth. When he heard that Everest had been summited by Hillary and Tenzing, he decided that 'expeditioning' was the path he should follow. At this time he married Antonia Fransisca Van den Bos, a South African born

architect and was also asked by John Hunt (The Everest Team Leader) to assist in setting up the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

In 1956 he volunteered for the SAS and undertook 3 patrols on deep penetration in Northern Malaya in the 'Ulu', which was then largely unmapped. He was suddenly moved to the Oman where he was made second in command of a Squadron in the Kiplinesque War. When he discovered that he was actually fighting a force of CIA trained Omani Nationalists, trained in the Yemen, he came to the conclusion that he had been put in a stupid situation, and resigned his commission, having just made Major.

He migrated to Australia with Antonia & daughter Kate (3 weeks old) for 10 quid in 1959.

His task in Australia was to establish the Australian Outward Bound School on the Hawkesbury River in NSW and during this period he also established the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Australia. When his 3 year contract expired he went to the Sub Antarctic Heard Island, as an Assistant Scientist with the Australian Antarctic Division. This trip culminated in an attempt to ascend Big Ben but after 5 days marooned in a tent, followed by 3 days in an ice cave, Warwick & his two companions finally got off the mountain. With the leader suffering from frostbite; they then had to traverse 9 glaciers with no equipment and sparse food. when they considered a diet of raw penguin breasts.

On his return to Australia with Antonia, he decided to drive around Australia plus of with Kate & new son Nick. They possessed an 8 square feet of canvas, 2 billy cans and 100 pounds in the bank Warwick had decided to work his way round Australia, also as part of the survey or as he called it 'De pommifying and 'fairdinkumising myself!' During the trip Warwick committed to undertake a Survey of Leisure Interests & Recreation and spoke to anyone who stood still long enough! The report was finally presented to Lord de L'Isle the Governor General ...It was whilst employed as a gravedigger, in Katherine NT, that he decided to go back to Heard Island and organized a private expedition using the Patenela, a 63-foot gaff rigged schooner. He invited Sir Edmund Hillary to be Patron and somehow managed to raise 86,000 pounds in 9 months to finance this 10,500 nautical mile trip. He and four others achieved the first summiting of Mawson's Peak, Big Ben. A book and a BBC TV film gave accounts of the trip. To Warwick this vividly demonstrates that "You can DO things for yourself with drive, initiative & teamwork". Whilst Leader of this expedition (also acting as cook) he reflected on his "Leisure Survey" and on his return he started his own Company.

Marching off the schooner Warwick registered Warwick Deacock Enterprises-with a 30 years plan from Go to Whoa! He built an experimental leisure center named Chakola (aboriginal for the Lyre Bird) later gazetted a Wild Life Refuge in the Kangaroo Valley NSW. And had in fact started Australia's (possibly the worlds) first specific "Adventure Travel" Company called Ausventure. So there was no chance of tunnel vision, he became Founding Secretary of the Australian Conservation Foundation in Canberra and also re-invented himself as a Human Relations Consultant to work with Rupert Murdoch. For 5 years he had a television film/talk segment on ABC, he also wrote articles for money and swept the Spit Bridge Public Bar at 4 am on some days. Warwick organized the first Australian Himalayan treks in 1967 and first climbing Expedition in 1975, after which he dropped that idea as too dangerous for clients. Through his Company he developed close contacts with Nepal, becoming Honorary Consul General for Nepal from 1978-88, covering the Royal Visit from Nepal for the Australian Bicentennial. He also arranged two 'Personal development 10 day courses for business, later Experiential Learning evolved at Chakola created by Derek Lucas, an ex Royal Marine!

In 1980, Warwick organized a private expedition to attempt the ascent of Annapurna 3; Lady Luck was out and an avalanche buried 5 of the 7 climbers, with 3 dying. The expedition was abandoned and on his return delayed shock set in. Wife Antonia suggested a visit to friends in Brisbane and it was these friends who introduced them to Maleny. They purchased a 1-acre block, ultimately building there in 1989. After his retirement in 1992 Warwick found much to keep him active, serving on the Council of the Royal Geographic Society Queensland and introducing a series of "Geo Opinions". Maleny comes to Warwick's mind when reflecting on one study, "To Determine whether SE Queensland Could Manage Growth". The study developed the equation $I = PLOT$ where I = Impact on the Environment, P = Population, L = lifestyle, O = organization and T = technology. In essence rapid economic growth and development are often accompanied by deteriorating quality of life. He also accepted the position of Patron of "Youth Challenge Australia" and work as a volunteer eco-

tourism advisor for AESOP (Australian Expert Overseas Programme), undertaking two projects in Thailand.

A visit to a Maleny Film Society night convinced Warwick and Antonia that there was exciting potential for the Community Centre and hence his tireless work of late furthering the Refurbishment Project and raising funds to that end.

Warwick Deacock has received his share of awards and rates the following three highly. The "Royal Geographic Society J P Thompson Medal for Exploration" awarded in 1992 in recognition of his "Original Botanical Transect of the Gibson Desert" by camel; "The Australian Geographic Society Adventurer of the Year Gold Medal" in 1993 for "A Lifetime of Adventure and the Inspiration Given to Many Others"; "The Order of Australia Medal" for "Service to Conservation and the Environment in particular Chakola Wild Life Refuge, Kangaroo Valley, NSW".

Warwick Deacock is a valuable asset to any community and an inspiration to all to "Give it a Go or You Will Never Know". His achievements are to be saluted; his knowledge and experience should be tapped by as many as possible.

Eddie Van
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