

**Donald Leslie Moffatt** was born at Kingaroy in Queensland on 6 October 1945 and was raised by his grandparents. He went to boarding school at Brisbane Boys College. Although his birthdate was drawn in the National Service Ballot, Don joined the Army on 14 February 1966 as an 'Air Cadet' rather than as a Nasho, commencing officer training at the OTU with Class 1/66 on 18 February with fellow Air Cadets Peter Muir and Kevin Williams. OTUs Directing Staff member Tony Hammett, suggested to the Cadets that the Army was looking for more pilots and Nashos Dave Gerard, Phil Stevens and Bill Frost were selected. The six left OTU early and on 3 July commenced at Basic Flying Training School Course 62 at Point Cook on 3 July 1966. They were flown back to OTU for the Graduation Parade of 21 July.

Completing BFTS, Don was posted to 1 Aviation Regiment and commenced Advance Flying Training – Rotary Wing with Operational Conversion Course 10/66 (RW) at RAAF Amberley on 14 March 1967. Having successfully completed this course, Don remained with 1 Aviation Regiment until he was posted to 161 Independent Reconnaissance Flight in Vietnam on 29 April 1968. Don's first operational mission was supporting the Battle for Coral. He was able to 'nurse' his Sioux helicopter, with a failing engine, back to Nui Dat. While in Vietnam Don was appointed as a Section Commander, Rotary Wing, a posting usually allocated to a Captain. Don returned to Australia and Headquarters 1 Aviation Regiment on 17 December.

Right: Lieutenant Don Moffatt, an Army pilot with the 161st Independent Reconnaissance Flight, explains the safety devices of a Sioux helicopter to a group of 9 RAR soldiers in Vietnam in 1968.



On 14 March 1969 Don began a detachment to RAF Tern Hill

Helicopter School, United Kingdom, where he gained an instructors' qualification, returning to Headquarters 1 Aviation Regiment and the Aviation Training Squadron on 11 August 1969. Don resigned from the ARA and transferred to the Citizen Military Forces on 1 July 1972, serving with the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Queensland Regiment before retiring from the Army with the rank of Captain on 26 September 1972.

Post-Army, Don became a successful businessman, being a project engineer and general manager of Norm Provan's Oasis Resort and a property developer on the Sunshine Coast. He was chairman of Tourism Sunshine Coast for seven years and a board member of the Sunshine Coast Turf Club for 16 years, during which time the club developed into a major racing venue. Don combined his love of flying and his love of the Sunshine Coast by becoming involved in the Sunshine Coast Helicopter Rescue Service (SCHRS) and chairman for 15 years. The SCHRS later became a part of CareFlight, which has now merged with LifeFlight.

Angela Harrison, Don's Assistant, wrote: 'In his younger days Don was titled as an amateur boxer, was an avid Rugby League follower. However, Don was foremost a wonderful family man. With his wonderful wife Bridget, by his side, at the centre of his heart and every conversation were his beautiful girls, Karyn and Jodie, his grandson Ulee and granddaughter Scarlett. The apples of his eye, they were his greatest pride and joy.'

On 26 January 2017, Don, then living in Buderim, was appointed a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to the community of the Sunshine Coast, to aero-medical organisations, and to the horse racing industry.

Angela continued: ‘I was so fortunate to know him and share more than three wonderful decades taking his calls, looking up numbers and reminding him the background to the meeting he was about to take, as he sought to broker a conversation and conduct business. From the Prime Minister to the Janitor, he gave you his undivided attention, the time of day and always made you feel you were the only person who mattered at that moment. Don enriched and deeply touched the lives of all who knew him both near and far, and while he’s taken flight, his long and large legacy will be remembered for many generations to come. ... His life was a banquet, and All were welcome at his table. If you were one of the lucky ones to meet Don Moffatt, he would stand square, look you straight in the eye, shake your hand, his eyes would glisten as he filled the air with “let me tell you a story”. He was a remarkable gentleman with great courage and valour, who shaped and influenced the Sunshine Coast region through his sheer passion and advocacy for tourism, racing and his love of aviation.



Don died on 11 August 2022. His funeral was held at Gregson & Weight, Funeral Directors, Buderim, Qld on 26 August.