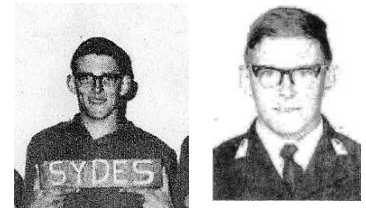


Bob Sydes (3/70) 25 May 1950 - 19 February 2014 (Colin Walker, 3/70)

In the large number of attendees at Bob Sydes' funeral was a couple of his classmates from Class 3/70 Geoff Sampson and George Tuininga. Geoff has put together this summary of the eulogy presented at the funeral.

It is with much sadness we report the passing of Bob Sydes of Launceston, Tasmania. Bob attended Sacred Heart School, Launceston and then St Patrick's College, Prospect. His love of the sea, boating and fishing began at a very young age when the family holidayed and spent any available time at the family shack at Sandy Beach (now Beauty Point). Many happy times were recounted by his brother Peter at Bob's funeral service recalling the escapades and fun growing up in such a healthy family environment. Bob rowed in the Senior Eights Head of the River, played Aussie rules football (as ruckman of course with his height advantage!) and attended the local Cadets. Bob's love of a practical joke shone through in many occasions during these times and many stories could be told of Bob's involvement in one prank or another.

Bob commenced work with the PMG (now Telstra of course) for a few years before being called up for National Service and after marching in to Puckapunyal on 9 July 1970 was selected for the 3/70 intake to Scheyville commencing on 24 July. On graduation he was allocated to the Corp of Signals and posted to the 1RTB Kapooka where he was discharged in December 1971 at the termination of National Service.



Bob returned to his job with the PMG but was soon headhunted for employment with the Commonwealth Employment Service where he progressed to the position of Northern Manager until the CES was disbanded in 1998. He went on to work for Employment National and Mission Australia until he retired in 2005.

Bob joined the Rotary Club of North Launceston in 1978, transferring to Central Launceston ten years later. He was Club President of Central 1996/97, awarded the Paul Harris fellowship and then the Sapphire Pin in recognition of service to the club. Bob's leadership and planning ability, fine-tuned in his OTU days, were put into practice when he went on to be elected District Governor for 2002/03. During this time he was instrumental in hosting a "hands on" catering for the District Conference held at St Helens where the club erected the marquee and supplied ½ a crayfish for each guest (Bob enjoyed catching crays!!) Bob continued to give to the community by serving on the Tasmanian Air Sea Rescue Trust Board for many years and initiated Rotary Tasmania's involvement in the Sailability program providing sailing experiences for people with disabilities as well as many other aspects of Rotary involvement both locally and overseas. One of his greatest pleasures was watching his daughter Tracy grow in her involvement with Rotary. He was respected by all he met and fondly remembered as bringing a fresh and innovative perspective to Rotary club life officially and also informally with his renowned "beer battered flathead fish weekends" at his shack at Swanwick.

Bob's greatest love was his family and, together with his wife Jan whom he met prior to his Army training and married in 1972, lived life to the full. He fitted more into his life than some could do in two lifetimes. The manner in which he lived is characterised by the name of

his trailer-sailer boat, aptly “Syde by Syde”. Bob is survived by 3 children, Chris, Drew and Tracy with their families living to the same core values Bob entrenched in their upbringing. Poppy Bob will be fondly remembered by his 7 grandchildren due to his loving involvement with their lives.



He faced the challenge of being diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer with courage and was an inspiration to friends and medical staff alike as he pushed the boundaries. He continued to live the most of every day to the end until, after a battle of nearly two years, he died at home with family at his side.

His OTU 3/70 classmates had the privilege of his company at the National reunions in 2003 & 2013 as well as our class reunion in 2010. (Photo at left is of

Bob Sydes (centre) at the class Reunion at Coolangatta in 2010, he is flanked by Bob Legg on the left of the photo and Greg Jenkins on the right.

Bob’s outgoing personality and his habit of engaging perfect strangers when out and about will be sadly missed by all who knew him. His modesty is typified by a comment made to his family when planning his funeral in that “he didn’t think there would be many there as he was just a has-been”. However the 600 plus people who came to celebrate the life of this tall man with a heart to match who touched so many was a man who;

“Not how did he die, but how did he live,
Not what did he gain, but what did he give.
These are the units to measure the worth
Of a man as a man, regardless of birth.

Farewell, friend, thank you for the memories.