



ROSS ALLAN PATERSON
"NOZZY"
1953 - 2019

When you've known someone for 45 years...where do you start? The thought prompts a kaleidoscope of images, places, times, smiles, laughter and tears.

"Nozzy" – a name derived from his surname spelt backwards, then abbreviated. (This is what Air Traffic Controllers do with time on their hands while you think they're looking after aeroplanes!) Air Traffic Control is a small community, and contact was maintained despite working often in vastly different areas of the country. With Ray the Chief Controller at New Plymouth, and Nozzy Chief Controller at Gisborne – contact became more regular through conferences, training courses, and most importantly...golf tournaments. A friendship was born, fostered, and flourished all through that time.

During golf tournaments, Ray and Ross mostly stayed in the same motel room, and Ray being the eldest by a few months, always delegated the driving responsibility to Noz. Being a unique individual, who was never seen to bad-mouth anyone – this instruction was taken in stride and complied with each time. Knowing how much Nozzy enjoyed a fine wine (and a cigar!) – that must have been a strain, but he never once complained. And these were the days when large amounts of alcohol were consumed!!

It was Tina's turn to meet up with Nozzy for the first time in person in 2000, when Ray accompanied her on a business trip to Rotorua where he now lived, so the boys could spend the day on the golf course while she worked. She was confronted by a 'very large individual, with slightly wild hair, a full ginga beard'...and the given biggest, loveliest hug in the world. It was true friendship at first hug! And then a couple of years later...came the "Alfa Connection"

Team Turtle was born of a desire by us to go racing after attending our first May Madness. And what good race team doesn't have a pit popsie? Nozzy volunteered to come and help us do our race prep and keep us fed and watered between races...but despite 16 years of trying, we were never able to get him into a Pit Popsie Tutu – or into a race car. (Mind you Nozzy in tights would have been a daunting sight!) He became a regular fixture not only wherever Trofeo and Team Turtle were racing, but we were also responsible for selling him his first Alfa, and he rapidly became passionate about Alfa's, Alfa people, and the BOP AROC chapter. Once his popsie duties were complete, he was well known for wandering off with camera in hand, to strike up conversations all over the scenery...even with (gasp)...BMW drivers! There was always something comforting about seeing this big, happy guy, trundling around the pits making friends wherever he went and helping anyone who needed it with intelligence and knowledge. You felt all was right with the world. Therefore, it was with resounding approval that in the 2014/15 season he was awarded the Trofeo award of the 'Bart von Geldern Best Supporter' cup.

After retirement, Noz and Maree moved to Fordell just out of Whanganui, and he continued his 'popsie' activities from there – along with becoming a gentleman farmer on their 3.5 acres. He immediately joined the Manawatu chapter of AROC...of course. Despite then increasingly poor health, his involvement in things Alfa and Aviation never wavered, and one of his great pleasures was to have Ditch Harding (a local well-known NZ aviator) do fly-by's over their property in his replica Spitfire – often very low, and always, very fast!

During the last few months of his life, we clocked up many Alfa miles going to see him. While very realistic about his illness, he always remained very positive about life, and it was always a pleasure to be with him each time. Helping he and Maree where we could, it was an incredibly emotional but humbling experience to be with him during those last times.

In the very last conversation with Ray – Ray looked up to the ceiling and said, "save a place at your table for me". He gave a thumbs-up, and softly said "WILCO". (Aviation speak for "instructions received, understood, and will be complied with".) The funeral in February (which in typical Nozzy style, he had planned) – was well attended by Aviation and Alfa people alike. A sign of respect for a loving husband, father, grandad – a man of unending gentleness, kindness, with the biggest heart - and friend that we will forever miss deeply - but who will ALWAYS be part of Team Turtle.

The following quote is perfect in many ways. On completion of the job of changing from race wheels to road wheels for the drive home each meeting – Tina and Nozzy would look at each other, and Tina always say - "And that – said Pooh – was THAT!". It always made him laugh, without fail...

Love you Nozzy.

*"We didn't even realise we were making memories...
We just know we were having fun."*

Winnie The Pooh

Tina Glennie & Ray Shanks
Team Turtle