

PROFILE OF A TURNER

Derek Martin member 194

Derek was born in London in February 1930 and grew up in Tottenham North London. His schooling was a bit hazardous because of the war, surviving the blitz, bombs, incendiary bombs, oil bombs, land mines, buzz bombs and rockets. All were dropped close by but only the last of the rockets caused his home to be damaged. Leaving school, he worked as a boy in a tinsmith shop making autoclave bodies for 11 months. He then applied for a job as a laboratory assistant at Thorn Electrics, processing chemicals for fluorescent tubes, which was very much in its infancy. As this laboratory was preparing to move further out of London and expanding production, he decided to apply for a laboratory assistant post at Wright Fleming Institute of Microbiology. The idea of working for a hospital was more in keeping with his ideals. The pay was less, and fares would add to weekly costs! He worked there making vaccines, whooping cough, typhoid, cholera to name a few.

In 1942 he joined the Scout Movement and has been a member ever since, holding many positions from Scout Master to Chief Commissioner of Western Australia, and is now a Life Member. During the war with all the men enlisted the Patrol Leaders ran the troop; they were 15 or 16 years old!

In 1948 he was called up for National Service, two years in the army. Fortunately, after his basic training was complete and because of his experiences he was drafted to a pathology laboratory. This experience opened his eyes to another side of microbiology, diagnostic. Returning to Wright Fleming Institute at the end of his service, it was back to vaccines! In order to qualify it was necessary to expand his horizons. Four years of night school enabled him to become an Associate of the Institute of Medical Technology.

He met Doris at Wright Fleming Institute and they married two years later when they were able to find two rooms with use of bathroom: housing being in short supply.

He came to Australia in 1956 having successfully applied for a position with Public Health Service (W.A.) He worked in the department of microbiology at Royal Perth Hospital for 32 years rising to Chief Technologist for the last ten.

Scouting has taken up most of his spare time and he has had the privilege of being made a member of the Order of Australia for his services to Scouting in 1995. Derek held a licence as a Lay Pastoral Minister in the Anglican Church for many years.

He became a member of the Western Australian Woodturners by joining Melville group at its inception in September 1986. Since joining he served as convenor from 1997 to 1999 and as



a member of the Groups Committee for many periods, contributing to suggestions for improving the groups' function.

Actively demonstrating at club meetings over a long period of time and contributing items to the Annual Silver Chain confectionery bowls for residents of aged care facilities within the Melville area.

Through family connections, providing laser templates/items to assist members in their toy projects for underprivileged children.

Derek was, successively, vice president of WAWA (2006-2008), president (2008-2010), and past president (2010-2012). He has also been returning officer for the Association's annual election of committee members for many years.

Prior to joining WAWA Committee, Derek & Doris were video librarians for five years, attending most of the weekend workshops. All the videos were on tape. When DVDs became available the Martins privately purchased a machine that would transfer the tapes to discs. This enables a more simplified identifying system for the library.

During his time as president, he was instrumental in re-writing the Convenors Handbook which consisted of indexing, collating, re-writing, photocopying and assembly all done at his home with the help of his wife Doris. Another reform that Derek implemented during his period of leadership was the ways groups could access funds for equipment.

WAWA held an Exhibition of Excellence in the Perth Town Hall in Hay Street in 2006. It lasted for 7 days. Jim Stitfall and Derek were there every day. Over 100 exhibits were collected, listed and labelled. Many many hours of work before, during and after the exhibition. The exhibition was a great success, and a DVD is available showing items on display.

In summary, Derek has been a valuable and active member over the years, contributing significantly to the successful and steady progress of the Association. He has been one of WAWA's quiet achievers. 2021