

**BOB SWARBRICK
R.I.P**



**AN EULOGY
From the Heart**

GERALD & VAL ELLOTT

2012

FARE WELL

BOB SWARBRICK

I first wrote to Bob in July 2006, to congratulate him on his recent publication; **THE ROYAL MARINES**. I sent a two page letter, plus six illustrations of complementary covers from or to Royal Marines serving in the Royal Navy.

During 1996, we corresponded pretty regularly, either discussing covers in his book, **Royal Marines during the Maori Wars, Pelorus Jack, an unrecorded One Penny Falmouth Paid marking, and Royal Marine Detachments**.

During 1997, most of the correspondence was about the Geoff Osborne Auction of his Royal Navy covers.

For some reason or other I have no records of our emails during the next three years, but at Christmas 2010, we were discussing his frustration with the R. M. Museum, as well as my own frustrations with the “powers to be”

Having read in the Forces Postal History Society’s “Forum” on the web that Bob had missed a meeting of the Society, we started communicating on a weekly basis, “keeping in touch” with many diverse subjects ranging of course from Postal History to our personal problems and our past activities and adventures.

I found it most rewarding both physically and mentally to have such inter action with someone that I had never met, yet through our emails, we probably knew more about each other than would normally be the case with the ordinary run of stamp collectors, philatelists and postal historians.

Members of our fraternity of collectors pursue an individualist approach to our hobby, and whilst we generally share our time with others, it is basically only if there is common ground. We certainly very seldom get to know each other on a personal basis.

During the 14 months of weekly emails, I was not the only one involved, as my wife Val shared the interesting contents which I received and in fact recently started her own communications with Bob.

To us both, Bob became part of our Family and whilst we knew that he had already confounded the Doctors by seeing Christmas 2011, and celebrating another Birthday, we were still deeply shocked and saddened when there was no email from him this week.

The only consolation which we have at this very sad time is the fact that if it is affecting us both so badly, how much worse it must be for his daughter and the other loved ones at home who knew him so much more.

For me Bob was, as I told him, the inspiration to complete my own book on the Royal Navy Postal History, his work was exactly how my first transcript was prepared in 1996 but rejected on the grounds that it was too social, how times have changed.

Bob, has changed our lives, he has really shown us through his fortitude and endeavors, that life what ever the pitfalls and “Downsides” that there is a “Bright side” and life is worth living to the full.

I realize that it has been said many times that we should not be sad at death, but that we should celebrate life, whilst it is easy to say, nevertheless it is difficult to actually do it when we are overcome by grief, but it is true that we were both privileged to have known Bob and for him to have shared so much with us during the last few years, a very big thank you Bob.

We would certainly have been the losers and can only hope and trust that he received as much pleasure as we have done.

Bob may have closed his album on earth, but as one door closes another door opens, so we are sure that Bob will be opening a new album, somewhere else.

It has been said that death is the cure for all diseases, but let us not think of death as the end, but the beginning of a new life, which will be a reflection of the life we have just enjoyed.

Bob you will be missed but you will never be forgotten, you have been an inspiration to many people including us.

Rest in Peace

Gerald and Val Elliott New Zealand