



Stephen Donald JUDSON

19th April 1945

...

1st January 2018

Friends and colleagues were stunned to hear of the death on New Year's Day of Steve Judson.

Returning via Bali from his brief Christmas holiday at home in Auckland, Steve was suffering from dengue fever when he landed in Dili on New Year's Eve. Friends helped to get him to his home in Aimutin and, shortly after, to Stamford. In the morning he was transferred to HNGV where he succumbed at about noon. He was 72.

Steve was born on 19th April 1945, the third of four children of Kathleen and Sydney Judson, in Whitby, North Yorkshire, England. He went to school in York where he excelled at both studies and sport, representing Yorkshire in athletics and soccer. In later years he was to take up squash, golf and marathon running. He was also a highly proficient self-taught pianist.

At 17 Steve deferred entry to university to spend a year teaching in Nigeria, where a dream was born: for years after he talked of his hope that in retirement he would be able to return to a developing country and make a difference to the lives of people there. Half a century later that dream was to bring him to Timor-Leste.

After studying Physics and Economics at Kings College Cambridge, Steve went to London where he qualified as an accountant. He married Jan and they lived in Kuala Lumpur for 4 years before moving to New Zealand where daughters Helen, Caroline and Suzi were born. A son, Euan, died in infancy.

Steve gained a Distinction in his MBA from the University of Otago and worked as Chief Finance Officer for several of New Zealand's largest companies, embracing the digital revolution that transformed the business world. This work eventually led to his spending much of his time in the USA and India.

On 11th September 2013 Steve arrived in Dili as a VSA volunteer. With characteristic enthusiasm and dedication he set out to learn all he could of the local people, culture and language while applying his vast knowledge of the business world to creating a better future.

Steve worked for two years with Moris Rasik Financial Services as CEO and when that ended he turned his attention to SOLS in Becora where he was inspired by that organisations' support for poor rural youth. He mentored students, teachers and administrators and worked especially on the budget and curriculum development. One of his next projects was to be a course on formal/business self-expression in English. In his 'spare' time he was treasurer to the Board of Directors of Ba Futuru and President-designate of Hearing First Steps – both local NGOs.

Steve was no less diligent on the after-hours aspects of Dili. He brought to Book Club erudite appraisals of his leisure reading and latterly became its scribe and coordinator. He set up the room for every Wednesday's rehearsal of Dili Community Choir. He threw generous and meticulously-planned parties for friends and colleagues, including a 60's-themed bash for what everyone had assumed to be his 60th birthday but was in fact his 70th! He hiked every Saturday morning with friends. And every Tuesday night he was to be found at Rotary, of which he was an excellent President for the last 17 months of his life.

This death has left holes in so many parts of the social fabric of the city.

On his last visit to New Zealand Steve talked with enthusiasm and love of the people here and of his many plans and projects for which he had high hopes. The dream born in Nigeria had come to fruition and deep as the shock and grief is at his sudden and far too early death, the knowledge that he was happy and fulfilled living out that dream is great comfort to family and friends around the world.

Steve is survived by his daughters, grandson Elliot and younger brother, David.

May you Rest In Peace Steve.

Text and details by Tracey Morgan and Jan Judson

Photo by Del Bolvill