

## Profile - Warwick Newton

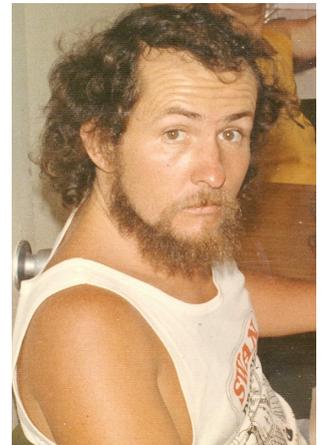
Multi-faceted (as against multi twos), our hero is a great cook, having honed his skills on camp ovens to produce whatever you fancied. He's a gifted mathematician; renovated and ran a boutique accommodation venue in wine country; lectured post-graduates on mining investment; once excited the airport scanners with hand luggage and pockets packed to the brim with gold nuggets; was a geologist and geophysicist; ran a mobile car cleaning service; chaired Seacliff SLSC's junior lifesaving operation for several years - oh we nearly forgot, he's also now a budding author.

He is the principal of a mining exploration and tenement services consultancy, engagingly titled Wazanewt. Yes indeed, ladies and gentlemen, that friendly opponent or partner at the Bridge table Warwick Newton is a creature of many colours.

Starting out his adventurous life in Sydney's Hurstville, Warwick was lucky enough to have a father who owned a few grocery stores; sold them just as supermarkets became the rage, and moved the family to lovely laidback Bermagui when young Waza was about 10 — an idyllic lifestyle for the budding surfer and fisherman.

In high school he boarded on weekdays at Bega High, living at the school's farm, where he learned to feed pigs and milk cows. Unlike the farm's four-footed, he shone at maths, was a good debater, sportsman and all-rounder. Next stop was Sydney University, where the budding scientist chose geology and geophysics without thinking too much about it and ended up with a BSc(Hons).

A Canadian prospecting company was the first to hire the young geophysicist, sending him all over the country on short stints. He complains it was disastrous for the love life : a month in Darwin and then a few weeks in Mount Isa and then off to New Guinea or Kalgoorlie. The musical *HAIR* was all the rage, Young Waza booked to see it three times, with three different girls, but never made it. The mining boom was at its peak, with every man and his aunt investing in rocketing and plummeting shares. At their favourite watering hole, the News Bar at Sydney's Menzies Hotel (often frequented by journalists and stockbrokers) Warwick and his mates would start a rumour about a new prospecting find and watch with delight as the story made the rounds of the bar, and then ended up reflected next day on the Stock Exchange.



Eventually he joined the Northern Territory public service as a geologist and worked there for several years. Life was rather blissful, always carrying a fishing rod in his vehicle, in the days when you could drive right up to the waterfalls at Kakadu. Over several years he estimated he spent at least 100 nights each year sleeping under the stars, and of course showing off his haute cuisine skills with the camp oven.

In 1974 Cyclone Tracy came for Christmas. Fortunately Warwick was on the NSW south coast. He had left his refrigerator empty and turned off. The garden was destroyed, but the house survived. His roofless neighbour

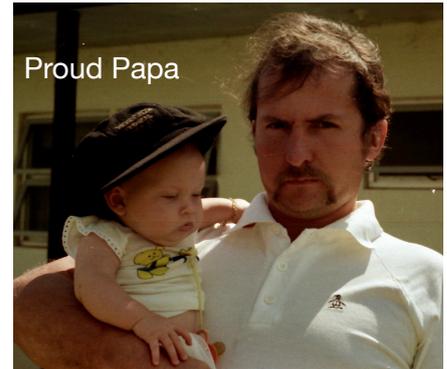


moved in to protect the place from squatters, and when Warwick returned the fridge was turned on, and crammed full of beer. The devastated hotels had been dumping their stock at the local Tip, to the delight of local residents, who liberated what they could find.

The ensuing year was so filled with neighbourly goodwill and community spirit, Warwick loved the experience. Workers would stay at their normal jobs in the morning, and mid-afternoon would join volunteer clean-up operations, and then party on into the evening.



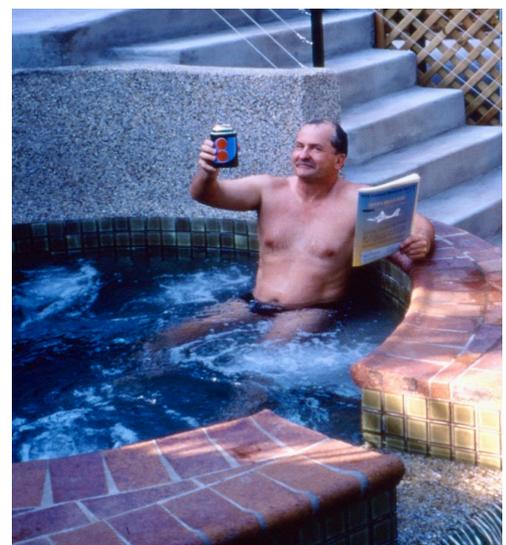
In Darwin he met his first wife, marrying in 1976 in Adelaide, and then treating her to a honeymoon jaunt to Uluru (then called Ayres Rock) and through the Tanami Desert. Looking back, he is not sure she ever forgave him. Their first daughter was



born in Darwin, the second after they moved to Adelaide in 1980. Following the move south they no longer shared the same interests and inevitably drifted apart.

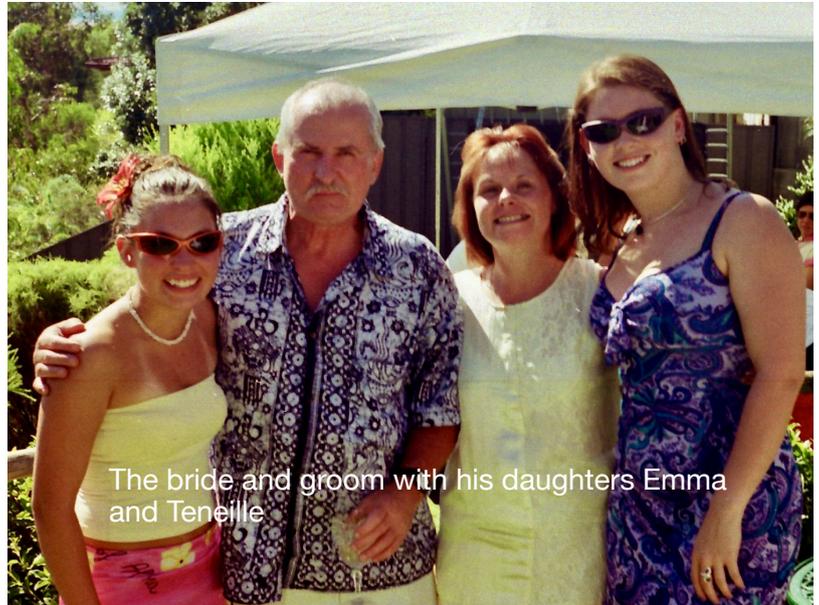
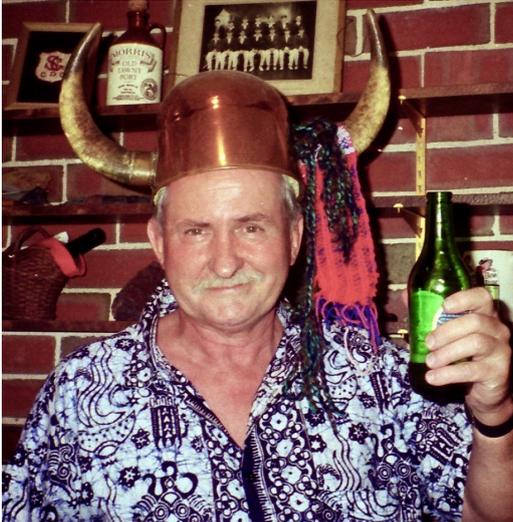
In South Australia he started as a Senior Geologist at the Government's Mineral Resources Branch, ultimately managing the Branch, in charge of 20 professionals, travelling around a lot and monitoring the exploration and development of the huge Olympic Dam copper, gold and uranium deposit, which he estimates will last a couple of hundred years.

Pondering returning to University for a Masters degree in Mineral Economics, instead our chameleon changed colours once more and became the Lead Lecturer on Mining Investment for the Securities Institute of Australia. Retaining his Departmental role, he continued lecturing post graduates for 15 years. The Government was keen to promote South Australia as a place for mineral exploration, Warwick whole-heartedly played his part, to the extent of posing with brochures in a spa pool at a Darwin conference. (Irreverent colleagues later doctored the photograph, placing the image of a female person beside him in the spa, a lady who had unfortunately lost her swimsuit.)



A fascinating sidelight to his career was negotiating with traditional owners, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara, on their 100,000 square kilometre reserve. Difficult negotiations with governments paled in comparison with the rivalries between tribes, and involved figureheads such as the famed Charles Perkins, Bob Hawke's onetime Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Along the way, Warwick's daughters joined Surf Lifesaving's Nippers group. Dad dived in as well, becoming involved with the Nippers for nearly two decades, and serving as Chairman of the Junior group for several years. Nearing his 50th birthday, Warwick had met a teacher now called Babs Newton. They held a house-warming party in Adelaide. All their friends (along with his two daughters and her two sons) attended the backyard barbecue, which suddenly included a wedding ceremony. No presents, minimal fuss.



The bride and groom with his daughters Emma and Tenelle

Finishing with the South Australian Government, Warwick had a few idle months before buying and operating a mobile car cleaning business. Noticing the brochure of a real estate client, he saw that their favourite holiday cottages in the Clare Valley were up for sale. They drove over for a weekend and bought Sevenhill Cottages. After some renovation work they built the business up very successfully and ran it for six happy years.

Soon after completion of renovations at Sevenhill in 2006 one of Waza's mates asked him to join a small mineral exploration company as Tenement Manager, looking after the exploration and mining leases. One small company became three small companies and they had a ball. Starting looking for diamonds, they ended up finding a billion tonnes of iron ore in Western Australia, now acquired by another group.

They explored extensively in the West, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. The biggest thrill of the lot was a small alluvial mine at Sellheim, 100 kilometres south of Charters Towers. Once you scraped the top stuff off, it was full of gold nuggets. Eventually they found the easiest way to sell them was on the Internet. Warwick returned from one trip with his pockets and hand luggage crammed with gold nuggets. He reports they shine beautifully as they go through the airport Xray machine.

On holiday in 2009, Warwick and Babs discovered Peregian Beach. Mrs Newton announced she was moving to the Sunshine Coast, and that Mr Newton would be welcome to join her if he wished. He did. They bought a place at Peregian and moved here in 2011. However, returning from the 2016 Gold Coast Congress, Babs announced she was sick of casual teaching and had decided to do her country service in Mt Isa. The next four years were lived between Peregian and Mt Isa, but in early 2019 they thought the once sleepy village was growing way too fast and moved to beautiful Pomona. Babs still teaches and Warwick happily considers himself a "kept man".



Babs and Warwick

After playing the game casually in Darwin 40 years ago, in 2012 he joined the Bridge Club and took lessons from Lizi French and Bev Salter. He was recently appointed to the Committee.

And apart from cooking up a storm, doing a bit of consultancy work through Wazanewt and playing bridge, he bodysurfs, kayaks and

researches family history. One great-uncle proved a source of immense interest. The Newton family had always believed that Harry Earwaker, the first blacksmith in Alice Springs, had died a bachelor. Not so : marrying a local Aboriginal woman, he fathered two daughters and Warwick has now met up with his very high-achieving First Nations cousins. Two of the women are senior lawyers (one of these the 2021 NT 'Australian of the Year') and another was the Chairman of the Imparja indigenous television broadcaster. Warwick is especially fascinated with the likeness between himself and his newfound cousin Bob Liddle, a liaison officer with an oil company.



Newfound cousins

And then we come to Warwick the author. A fount of hilarious stories about his early mining days, his daughters always urged "Write it all down, Dad!" Sharing a pint with an old friend one day, he asked "Where have all the crazy characters gone ?" His friend answered "We're it mate." Thence began an opus entitled "*Larrikins I have known*", which has now reached chapter six. Like all Newton enterprises, it's sure to be a great success.

by Susie Osmaston