

## **BRIAN LAWRENCE TAVERNER**

**Brian 14/2/1943 – 13/5/2018, eldest son of Lawrence Sydney Taverner and Winifred Edith Taverner** {nee Kinsey} was born in Witbank and spent all his formative years there, prior to the family moving to Northcliff, Johannesburg in December 1963.

He attended Witbank Primary School, together with his sister Melanie, until 1954 when he joined his younger brother, Anthony, at WHPS boarding school in Pretoria. From there he went to Pretoria Boys High School, boarding in Solomon House from 1957 to 1960, as well did his younger brother 3 years later. It is of interest to note that his father and two uncles, Ray and Ron, were all schooled at PBHS as dayboys in Town House in the early 1930s. Not only that, but his three sons, Craig, Neil and Gareth boarded in Solomon House as well in the late 1980s/early 1990s. Following these three generations of Taverners attending PBHS, Brian was most proud to see his two grandsons, Daniel and Ariel, both boarding in Solomon House – four generations of “Tavs” at PBHS and three generations of Tavs at Solomon House; quite a record. At school Brian excelled academically and gained his First Team colours in swimming. On quite a few occasions he nipped out of school to the local golf course and went diving in the water traps for lost golf balls. These rescued gems were then washed and painted white and then sold back to intrepid golfers at discounted prices – budding scholarly entrepreneurship.

Growing up in Witbank, Brian enjoyed the company of both neighbouring kids as well as his cousins, the duSautoys. It was with Shenton duSautoy that Brian had the interest and drive to build and fly many balsawood aeroplanes – it was a case of many balsawood structures, silk paper, paint, EDB engines, liquid propellant and many prangs. Engineering was certainly in his blood from these early days.

After PBHS, Brian went down to Natal University studying engineering and, in July 1961, left on a yearlong scholarship with American Field Service, for Lincoln, Nebraska. He was warmly welcomed by Norma and Perry Miller and their sons Stan, Les and Randy into their home where he had a very fruitful and interesting year in the American way of life and final year schooling. Needless to say, the Miller family became, very much, his second family and the ties with all of them lasted the test of time. Not only were Brian and Patsy in later years able to visit his “American” family, but they were very much welcomed into the South African Taverner family when they were able to attend Brian and Patsy’s wedding in December 1968. Years later Norma and her sister were also able to visit and stay with Brian’s brother in Australia and see much of that part of the antipodes. After the American Field Service period Brian returned to Wits University studying engineering before going down to Port Elizabeth and working in the motor industry for a couple of years.

In December 1968 Brian and his fiancé, Patsy Wulfse, tied the knot at St Columba’s Presbyterian Church in Parkview, Johannesburg. After honeymooning in Rhodesia, they settled firstly in Hillbrow then in Edenvale while Brian worked in the building industry in the quantity surveying field. Patsy continued her very valued service in the nursing profession and over time they had three boys, being Craig, Neil and Gareth. After they moved to Gallo Manor in Johannesburg Brian became very involved in vintage cars, when he restored many an old banger. He finally ended up with a Model T Ford as well as a very gracious white Armstrong Siddeley, which he used in many weddings where couples wanted to be driven in a vintage car. He and Patsy went on many vintage car rallies and Piston Ring Car Club activities over the years.

Over all the years, Brian doted on his grandchildren, of whom he was mighty proud. He would often say that, until one has grandchildren, one could never know such absolute joy in their companionship. On many occasions they would spend weekends and sometimes school holidays in Gallo Manor enjoying Grandpa and Aya’s hospitality, friendship and cooking. Brian was a great conversationist and liked nothing more than discussing politics (*in fact he even stood in 1970 for the United Party against Ben Schoeman – the Minister of Transport nogal; no chance of winning that one*), history and family matters with family and friends alike. He and Patsy were very hospitable to the various family members over the years who came visiting from England, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand as well as those from other parts of SA.

***He will be sorely missed by many of his extended family and by many of his friends around the country.***