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Ronald Kitchener Dempster



by Marina Hoare

There is written an old adage, "That our God dose not deduct from the span of a man's life the hours spent fishing". This would go some way in explaining the long and fruitful life of our friend, our mate, and our mentor – Ron Dempster.

Affectionately known to many as just "Demo".

Fishing was one of Demo's greatest passions and as one of his long time associates and close friend said "Demo was a fisherman's fisherman"

Many within the fishing fraternity were first introduced to the man though his writings and musings in national fishing magazines under the name R.K. Dempster, very formal in those times but back then a statement. His writings, watersheds of the mighty Mitchell and Walsh Rivers with his father and cousin Stanley chasing sooty grunter, barramundi and of course his beloved "spotties" (Archer Fish).

Many of these stories were to later appear in précis form in what came to be known as "Demo's Diaries" a segment in the publication "Queensland Fishing Monthly". This title itself a statement highlighting over time the acceptance and endearment of a man within the broader fishing community.

But Demo not only wrote about fishing experiences, he was in turn written about. Not so much for his fishing skills for as he would freely admit he was "just an average fisherman" but for the principles and beliefs he held regarding the sport of fishing. It is well documented his relationship with the likes of Gerald Cook, Hamar Midgely and Vic McCristal and their successful endeavours in raising both the importance and conservation. However Ron was a statesman and every opportunity he passionately pursued the principles of the pastime he loved.

The dedication plus his wealth of practical fishing knowledge and the ability to express this knowledge in logical terms was to see Ron represent fishers at both club and state level, both within and outside of the Sportfishing movement.

Ron was invited to sit on the committee which overviews the Burns Inquiry into recreation fishing and was known there for logical lines of reasoning for what were quite often complex situations.

Many of today's fishing regulations governing recreational fishing can be attributed to Ron's persistence in his beliefs and the ability he had in demonstrating those principals. He may not have actually written the word, or coined the phrase, but he did influence those at an early age who would later become decision makers of the future.

But everyone had to start somewhere, and Ron's official sportfishing started in 1971 with the Marybrough Sportfishing Club. From details of those early years given by his mates Ron Kinghorn, Bob Colishaw and Don Boneham, Demo made major contribution to the club by bringing both experience and wisdom. He was a steady hand.

Ron and his good mate Col Kinbacher (the BBB) owned an island in the Great Sandy Straits on which they build the now famous "Humpy". Many a Marybrough Sportfishing Club outing and ANSA State Executive Meeting has been held there, and those who were fortunate enough to visit the Humpy with Demo would know just how much he loved the place.

Many ANSA members first met Ron at the State Wide Meeting held in Yepoon. This event was one of Demos strongest wishes and he lobbied hard with fellows like Dave Donald and Bill Sawynok to see such a meeting come to fruition. It did and has been held every year since 1979.

Events

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and a new length
comp!**

**Why not fish in the
ANSA QLD Length
Comp!**

**Runs all year to
30th June 2015**

**Open to all ANSA
QLD members**

**Junior and Senior
Categories**

**The North Queensland
Sportfishing
Championships with be
on 6th & 7th June
Put it in your calander
now**



Of course, there have been some epic challenges of wits at these meetings between Demo and the likes of Porter, O'Sullivan, Theofanes and Nissan.

Demo would always score a point's win with verses from his beloved Omar Khayyam

***"ah, fill the cup:- what boots it to repeat,
How time is slipping underneath our feet
Unborn tomorrow and dead yesterday
Why fret about them, if today be sweet!"***

Ron has been honored by ANSA with a Life Membership to the State Branch. The Ron Dempster Memorial Award, for outstanding contribution to Sportfishing, is named in his honour.

Ron's physical presence has left the rank of ANSA but his principles are ageless, and instilled in everyone with whom he came in contact.

As he wrote in one of his last articles-

***"The moving finger writes and having writ...
The time has come to this old scribe to quit."***