

MEET ALAN DEARDEN:

Profile compiled by Alan's wife, Rose.

Alan is a little different than a lot of amputees in that his below knee amputation was by choice, not the result of an accident.

Born in 1951 with Bi-Lateral club feet he endured callipers and many, many operations during his childhood.

As the third child in a family of six he realised very early in life to stand up for himself or miss out. He was a feisty kid who often found himself in strife with his teachers and parents. Nobody could tell him that he wasn't able to do something that his siblings or classmates did. He enjoyed his childhood growing up in Bromley which was an adventure land for kids with farmland surrounding the area.

Alan went to St Anne's catholic school in Woolston, then to Xavier College until he had a run in with a Marist Brother over something he had not done. He then left Xavier College and did his last year of education at Aranui High school.

He left school at 15 years old and took up a job as a trainee manager at Self Help (the first supermarket chain in NZ). Sales was in his blood and some say he had the gift of the gab. So, he worked in a variety of Sales jobs over the years.

He married Rose one week after his 20th birthday, and they have built a life together and had two children, Gina and Stephen.

Never one to let the grass grow under his feet, Alan bought a Taxi Licence with Blue Star Taxis, this was the first but not the last time Alan of being self-employed. Alan's Dad died young around this time at age 54 sparking an attitude in Alan to live life to the fullest. A few years later Alan sold his taxi and went to work at Wrightcars Toyota in Cashel Street as their Commercial Salesman, a job he loved. When the company was sold to Garry Donnithorne, Alan was promoted to Sales Manager. However, as changes came to the Motor industry, Alan and Rose sought a new adventure, and moved to the Gold Coast in Australia. At this time Alan was having severe arthritis pain in his right foot and thought the warmer weather would be better than the cold of Christchurch. Alan had his own business on the Gold Coast contracting to Australia Post delivering bulk mail and parcels to the numerous Post Offices along the Gold Coast to Tweed Heads.

After 7.5 years they returned to Christchurch and in partnership with another couple, Alan and Rose built a Café Bar in Hoon Hay. However, after a couple of years, Alan's pain in his left ankle was becoming unbearable. So, they sold the Café and Alan, after consulting a couple of surgeons, went ahead and had a below knee amputation of his right leg. The pain relief was instant. Alan's daughter made the comment that he had a personality transplant also. He was back to his happy self. 8 weeks and Alan was back playing golf with his Prosthetic leg on.



ALAN DEARDEN CONT:



On Rose's 60th birthday Alan and Rose retired. Well, that lasted a year, then Alan took up a position with GoBus transporting Special Needs Children to and from school each day. When Cross Country Rentals took over the NZ Education contract, Alan transferred over and was soon made Driver Trainer, a position he still holds. The company employs 130 drivers in Christchurch and another 150 approx. around the country.

Alan has never let his amputation hold him back, if anything it gave him a new lease of life.

FAVOURITE FOOD: Bacon & Eggs every weekend and any seafood.

FAVOURITE PLACE: Ireland because of his love for Guinness.

(Alan beside his home brewing set up in his garage)

FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES: Home brewing, Golf (has played a round at the famous St Andrews course in Scotland), swimming and fishing.

FAVOURITE MUSIC: Country & Western.

FAVOURITE AUTHORS: Is an avid reader. Authors, Lee Child, James Patterson, Michael Connolly & Paul Cleave (who writes fiction about Christchurch)

Alan and Rose like to travel and some of the countries that they have visited are, Australia (numerous times), Japan, China, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Romania, France, Germany, Scotland and England.