

MEET HERB HART:

Herb was born at Greymouth Hospital on September 8th, 1942 and was the 4th born of 7 children to his parents who lived at Rununga. Herb's father was a trained butcher, also a commercial fisherman before working most of his life in the mines and his mother was a stay-at-home housewife. Herb attended Greymouth Technical High School before leaving school in 1957 at 15 years of age and starting work at the Liverpool State Mine at Rewanui. He said that the lure of working in the mines was a big drawcard for the young Rununga lads. In 1960, he transferred to work at the Strongman Coal Mine and was lucky enough to survive the explosion in 1967 that killed 19 of his workmates and friends.



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In 1968, Herb married the love of his life, Anne Crowley and they have been blessed with 2 wonderful sons, Greg in 1968 and Leigh in 1970, both born in Greymouth. The boys now live in Auckland and Herb and Anne are proud grandparents to 2 boys and 2 girls. Their son Leigh is a well-known NZ comedian who features regularly on our TV's and is the frontman for the "Helliers" adverts.

Herb said the greatest risk he ever took in his life was moving from the West Coast to Marton in 1969 to start a tunnelling career that would eventually take the family to many different countries around the world from 1972 for the next 30 plus years.

1960- 1969. Strongman Mine.

1969- Marton.

1970-1972. Taupo to work on the Tongariro Hydro & Kaimai Rail Tunnel.

1972-1975. Worked for a Swedish Co in Hong Kong building a 45km long tunnel.

1975-1976. Melbourne working on the underground rail tunnel.

1977-1982. For the same Swedish Co, in Peru working on one of the longest tunnel jobs ever undertaken. 100 kms of tunnel through the Andes Mountains to bring fresh water to irrigate the Atacama Desert on the west coast of Peru. They lived at 3,600 metres above sea level and Herb was responsible for a 50km long section of the project that consisted of dams, tunnels and canals.

1983-1985. Central Java, Indonesia working on a hydro project.

1987-1989. Hydro project in Sri Lanka. It was on this project that Herb lost his leg when his right foot was crushed between two rail wagons. His company hired a Lear jet that flew Herb to Singapore for treatment and an initial operation to try and save his leg. From Singapore, he was flown back to NZ on an Air NZ flight

HERB HART CONT:

and the amputation of his right leg BK was performed in Ch Ch in February, 1988. After 3 months of rehab, they returned to Sri Lanka, with a spare leg in tow.

1989-1992. Travelled to the UK where he took up a position of Superintendent on the UK side working on the channel tunnel.

1992-1994. Transferred to another hydro project in Malaysia.

1995-1999. Saudi Arabia where he worked on a 10km long oil pipe line tunnel.

2000-2002. Back to Peru to work on yet another hydro project as construction supervisor. It was at this time that Herb decided to retire and in 2003, they purchased the property in Kaiapoi where him and Anne still live. So much for retirement!! In 2010, the Norwegian Government asked Herb if he would go to work on a hydro project in Northern India where they were building a plant in the Himalayas at 3200m above sea level and he worked there until 2011. Herb's FINAL project was in 2012 where he was asked to consult on a huge hydro project in Georgia, a country wedged between the Black and Caspian Seas.

FAVOURITE FOOD; Anne's lamb roast.

FAVOURITE MUSIC; The Shadows, Elvis, The Beatles, Willie Nelson, ELO (Electric Light Orchestra)

FAVOURITE MOVIE; Lawrence of Arabia. World's Fastest Indian. Bond movies.

FAVOURITE SPORTS; Rugby League. Watching the AB's & Americas Cup.

FAVOURITE PLACE; Arequipa, Peru's 2nd largest city located at the foot of the Andes Mountains.

HOBBIES; Keeping the garden tidy. Played drums for a local band on the coast (The Tremors) where they played at dances. Herb still plays the drums with some other old "rocking rollers". Herb also has a passion for old British vintage motorcycles.

TRAVEL; Work has taken Herb and the family all over the world but they have enjoyed 2 bus tours of Europe and a cruise around the Mediterranean.

Herb stated that the hardest times of his working life was the constant 24/7 worry that he had for being responsible for his workforce and their safety on the job. In Herb's own words, "I must say that losing a leg has not really been much of a handicap although my last early morning run was on the day of my accident in Sri Lanka. I have always had great service from the Burwood Limb Centre although over the last couple of years, I've had trouble to get a good fitting leg. Many have tried without much luck and my old 2010 leg that I took to India is (although a bit battered) still hanging in there"

