



Named for

HERBERT ARTHUR READ DOWER

4th April 1921 - 25th August 2003.

Herb was born and raised in the family home in Brown Street, California Gully. He developed a love of cycling as a teenager, perhaps as the bicycle was his only form of transport at the time.

On the 4th of June 1940 he enlisted in the Australian Army as a member of the 2/14th battalion and embarked for the Middle East on the 19th of October. He married Joyce Lillian Salter during his last leave and had their first child in 1941, they would eventually become a family of 10, with eight children Joyce, Herb, Russell, Dorothy, Carol, Bill, Alan & Beverly.

Herb served in many areas of the Middle East, on 24th of June 1941 he was injured in action during the battle of Jezzine near Mt. Kharat in Lebanon, as a result, his left arm was amputated at the shoulder, and he was returned to Australia on the hospital ship Manunda.

On return to Australia, he worked at several jobs including the Bendigo Ordnance factory and shoveling sand at the gold dumps, no mean feat for a man with one arm. He eventually accumulated enough money to setup a poultry farm at the family home where he undertook all aspects of poultry farming including breeding, sexing, and vaccination. He ran this farm for many years.

He also purchased his first ever vehicle at this time, an old manual Chevy ute, by the end of 1943 the Dower's had three children, so Herb built a small caravan, he loved to holiday with his family and this ensured the holidays became more frequent.

In the mid 1940's, early 1950's Herb became a member of the Bendigo Cycling Club, track racing was a little too difficult with one arm as he had to let go of the handlebars to change gears, but he was a keen and successful road cyclist. He spent some time cycling until 1980 when he was severely injured following a fall from his bike.

In 1952 he purchased a small speedboat which he then raced and taught his children to waterski, he also taught others including Rosemary Margan who went on to become a World Class Skier (winner of 6 national titles) and a Radio and Television Personality. Herb was very athletic and eventually learned to waterski himself, he especially enjoyed swimming and skiing in the Murray River.

In later years he became the sole gardener at St Laurence Court in Upper Road, California Gully. He prepared garden beds and singlehandedly (no pun intended 😊) planted all the trees on site, many still stand to this day.

Herb was multitalented and would usually give any task a "red hot go", he was certainly not one to let the loss of an arm stop him from trying anything. He was an untrained mechanic who help family members out with their car issues, could be found replacing the tin on the roof of his shed, with the hammer in his hand and holding the nails between his toes.

Herb was a wonderful husband and father, who achieved more than many with both of their arms, he never saw himself as having a disability, he only saw the challenge. We feel he epitomises what it means in Australia to "give it a go" and was a truly inspirational man.

Goldfields Cycle Sports Club is proud to name HERBIE'S in his honour.