

Eulogy delivered by Polocrosse Association President Peter Crauford at the Memorial Service for the Late Max Walters A.M., M.B.E., H.D.A., M.A.I.E.S., J.P. at Dubbo 27th November 2008.

My name is Peter Crauford and I am the President of the Polocrosse Association of Australia (PAA).

You have heard from the previous speakers some of Max's incredible achievements and the public recognition and honors extended to him over a long period.

Max started his Polocrosse career as a junior playing for the Burradoo Club. He quickly became a player of the highest standard and was the youngest player to play in a winning team at the Australian Championships, in 1953. He represented NSW in the Australian Interstate Championships in 1953, 1954, 1955 and 1956.

He was Australian Chief Umpire for 2 years and then Australian President for no less than 32 years and was a Councillor of the PAA for 42 years. He was the National Coaching Director for 13 years and was responsible for putting the National Coaching Accreditation scheme in place. He had a close working relationship with The Australian Sports Commission long before many sports took this important step forward.

His administration career was very succinctly summarised by his Lieutenant John Thompson, who is here today, when he told me "Max became president when the PAA consisted of only NSW and Queensland, and Queensland was actually on the point of withdrawing. So Max went to Queensland and Queensland remained in the PAA; Max then encouraged the remaining 5 States and the NT to play the sport and join the PAA. Having fixed up Australia he then founded the International Polocrosse Council (IPC) and was its President for 24 years. As a result of his tireless energy Polocrosse is alive, well and growing and is played in 13 countries around the world.

Once, when I was staying with Max and Ros at *Terramungamine* Max was explaining to me how he had chosen to end his playing career when undefeated and at his best. Ros listened quietly and then said "You may have retired at your peak Max but I had a small child to look after and was pregnant with another and could no longer work your horses!" There was no further discussion on the subject!

I am very pleased that Gary (Gary Raymond, head of Volunteer Rescue Association) mentioned Ros. Max was indeed a remarkable and great man but he never could have achieved the things you have heard about without the constant and unfailing support that Ros always gave him. He was away much of the time and it can not have been easy for Ros. When Max was made a Life Member of the Polocrosse Association John Thompson and I agreed that Ros deserved Life Membership alongside Max, and this was done and they both richly deserved the honour.

Max always was very conscious of the big picture, but was one of the few people I have known who also paid enormous attention to the detail, and anything Max did was superbly planned right down to minute items. Of course this meant that he needed full and complete control, which he mostly achieved.

Years ago the Australian Executive met regularly in Sydney and the meetings were held in a Motel at Randwick which became a bit down at heel and the troops were keen for a change. So his faithful Vice Presidents, John Thompson and I broached the subject. Max agreed and gave the task of organizing the next meeting to John Thompson and John made bookings for us at Palm Cove near Cairns. Imagine the

scene, our rooms looking out over the superb palm lined beach and on the other side a beautiful pool surrounded by palms. Absolutely superb. I leaned over my balcony to talk to Max next door. I said "Isn't this wonderful" Max said "no its terrible" I asked him why and he replied that there was only one piece of soap in his room!

Another amusing incident was just prior to an international test series at Warwick in Queensland. Max asked the Warwick Club President Les Fraser, who is also here today, to take him to the motel where Les had booked us in and then asked to see 6 of the rooms. He then bounced on the beds to make sure they were up to standard for us all and then naturally kept the best one for himself. Some attention to detail.

In 1989 and 1990 I was caring for my wife who was terminally ill and Max would call me every 3 or 4 weeks just to touch base and if I live to be 100 I will not forget his kindness to me at that difficult time. He was a true friend and definitely not a 'fair weather friend'

So Max`has gone, we mourn his passing and offer our support to Ros and her wonderful children but when a 'Polocrosse player and team rides out in any part of Australia, or Ireland, or Canada or the UK or the US or anywhere in the world those players are able to enjoy this great sport because of Max. That is his legacy to us all.

I am proud and privileged to have known Max as a true friend and I shall never forget him.