

Gary Norman Judge

Roll No. 163

January 21, 1947 to March 21, 2021



Gary Norman Judge was born in Balmain, NSW, on 21st January 1947 and passed away on 21st March 2021, aged 74 years. He had not been in the best of health in recent years, but his passing was sudden and unexpected.

Back in the day, Balmain was a thriving marine working area, with vessels from all around world plying their cargoes with far fewer restrictions than are applicable now and it was almost inevitable that Gary would find employment in the marine

field once he reached working age. He commenced a marine engineering apprenticeship with Howard Smith Industries in Waterview Street, Balmain at age 17. Gary worked for Howard Smith Industries for 32 years until his retirement when the marine side of Howard Smith was sold off in the late 1990s.

Gary held dual motor and steam Chief Engineer's qualifications and also gained certification as a Boiler Inspector.

A year after Gary commenced his apprenticeship, his father, Norman, passed away suddenly at age 45. This resulted in Gary becoming the sole bread winner for his mother and 10 year old twin brothers, a responsibility that helped make him the man and father he was to become.

Gary was an extremely talented, loyal, hardworking, hard drinking, "old school" style of engineer, and as such was sailing in the Howard Smith Fleet as Chief Engineer before his 24th birthday. He was reputedly the youngest man in the Australian merchant maritime industry, and likely the world, to hold such a position at the time. Like many others of that era, no matter what item was broken, damaged or needing attention, Gary would do all he could to repair it rather than replace it. He was a brilliant engineer and could readily turn his hand to virtually anything and make it work.

Gary was very forward thinking and quickly learned to use computers to expand his engineering skills even further, scouring the internet for hours on end to find information he needed to solve a problem. Armed with an abundance of experience, skill and knowledge, Gary would take on a wide variety of tasks, whether they be main engine overhauls, electronics, electrical, hydraulics or anything at all that was mechanical.

He was a hard taskmaster and would not stop, nor let those around him stop, until the job had been completed, at which time he would invite (demand) that all involved meet him in the bar for a beer or two or three. One of Gary's nick names was Super Chief. He would often joke that drink was his kryptonite, but the reality was that he

was always the first person on the engine room plates the following morning, and it would be a very brave man who failed to appear.

Gary never let anything interfere with his responsibilities as Chief Engineer and was fiercely loyal to his work mates and to the company. He was also known amongst his peers as Gazbo, Gary and the Howard Smith Bull, whilst the Chinese referred to him as "The Big Man". This was quickly modified to "The Big Fella" by his Australian workmates.

In the late 1980's through to his retirement from Howard Smiths, Gary worked for the Technical Division and held many and varied portfolios. Apart from sailing as Chief Engineer, he was also Superintendent during dry dock overhauls in Singapore along with his good friend, the late John McNaught. Gary stood by a number of new constructions in Japan and Korea as well as assuming responsibility for delivery voyages and the initial hard work of commissioning the vessels and their equipment during their first year of operation. Until his permanent retirement, Gary spent time as a New Construction Manager for Tidewater Marine, supervising the construction, trialling, commissioning and delivery of vessels in China, Singapore and Indonesia.

Above all, Gary was a dedicated family man. He married his wife, Elayne, in 1970 and together they had two children, Dearne and Stuart. Gary would often talk of his home life and could not wait to get home on leave so he could be with the family. He spent much of his time at sea designing innovative houses, one of which he eventually built and lived in until early last year. He was an avid Balmain Tigers fan and loved to relive the 1969 and 2005 Grand Finals with his workmates over a beer.

Gary was definitely one of a kind. A truly brilliant engineer and an all round good bloke. You will be sorely missed Gazbo.