



VALE

Peter Jan Duval (Divisek)

MB.BS, FRANZCR, FRCR

5 September, 1940 – 30 November, 2007

Produced with the kind permission of Emma Duval on behalf of the Duval family.

Peter was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia on 5th September, 1940, an only child to Frances and Vincent Divisek. They later moved to Sneznik, north of Prague on the German border, with a plan to escape after the Germans arrived. This plan never eventuated.

The family did finally arrive in Australia in 1949, lived with an Auntie and Uncle in Narrabeen then moved to Kingsgrove. Peter had to learn English quickly but never forgot his Czech. In later life he learnt French and Italian as well. The family moved to Castlecrag around 1950 and he attended North Sydney Boys High School.

After embarking on a prolonged social career at Sydney University (mostly at Manning House) he eventually graduated in Medicine in 1966 and qualified in 1972 as a Radiation Oncologist at the Royal ANZ College of Radiologists.

In 1968 Peter married Gerrie and then had three daughters, Emma, Camille and Ilke in the following years.

Peter obtained a further degree in London in 1975 at the Royal College of Radiologists, returning to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, where he later became Director of the Radiation Oncology Department. In 1993 Peter defected to St Vincent's Hospital where he became Director of the St Vincent's Hospital General Radiotherapy Department. Peter continued in this capacity when he became Director of Radiation Oncology Associates which was started in the mid '90s and was based also on St Vincent's campus in St Vincent's Clinic.

During this time he was a consultant at numerous hospitals and continued to run outreach clinics in Orange for 31 years (which was the longest that any city doctor had served in a regional community). He also did 16 years of clinics in Bathurst.

Peter specialised in Brachytherapy and became an expert in prostate and gynaecological brachytherapy. He was also a member of Can Assist Board for 35 years and, prior to his retirement, held the position of Vice President. He also had a strong relationship with Jean Colvin Hospital over that time.

He thoroughly enjoyed his specialist medical career, had an impressive CV with numerous publications as well as presentations at national and international meetings. However his busy career did not prevent him from enjoying his passion for skiing and he was an active member of the Thredbo Volunteer Ski Patrol for the last 38 years, Vice Captain for 9 years, 20 years ago, and Captain for the last 3 years.

This year was very active for Peter, trying to cram as much in as possible as he knew his time was limited. There was a trip with Gerrie to Spain and France for 5 weeks in April and May, driving as fast as he could on the motorways. He and Gerrie also enjoyed a relaxing holiday on Orpheus Island after celebrating Camille and Michael's wedding in October. Peter also fitted in 31 Ski Patrol days last winter in Thredbo,

more than any other patroller that year, beating his mate Joe by one day.

Peter was recently awarded the National Medal which recognises diligent long service by members of an organisation that protects life and property at risk to those members. He accepted the award in hospital from Nigel Oliver (President) and David O'Dowd (Captain) of the Thredbo Volunteer Ski Patrol. Peter was overwhelmed.

Peter was active right up until his last week, when he was admitted to St Vincent's Hospital, where he passed away peacefully at 8am, Friday, 30th November. He was well looked after by the dedicated doctors, nurses and staff, who were all amazing. Peter also had Gerrie and his three daughters by his side until the end.

He will be greatly missed by Gerrie and his daughters, Emma, Camille and Ilke, and his grandchildren Sonicka, Andrej, Ari and Remy. Peter will never be forgotten.

And we will not forget one of the lighter stories that Emma Duval has kindly provided that says a lot about Peter's pace:

It was one winter night in the mid '80s that my Dad and my 2 sisters (Camille: 13 & Ilke: 11 at the time) were driving home to Sydney from a weekend skiing at Thredbo in the family Tarago van. At about 9.30pm they pulled into a service station at Goulburn for a pit-stop. When Dad was driving he did not like to stop unless he absolutely had to--he didn't like wasting time. Anyway, Ilke was sitting in the front with Dad on that trip & Camille was lying across the back seat under her doona trying to sleep.

When they pulled into the service station they asked Camille if she wanted to go to the toilet but she said no.

So while Ilke & Dad were in the toilet Camille decides that she will go too. Then when Camille came out to the car the others were driving off. Thinking that they were joking, she chased after them. Camille was embarrassed about wearing her PJs & ugh boots at the time & it was quite a cold night too. But they did not stop & Camille was in a bit of a panic so she kept running, on to the next service station. The attendants there called the police.

The police came to collect Camille & they asked her some questions, one of which was: 'How fast does your father drive?' to which Camille cleverly replied: 'As fast as he can!'

So the chase was on. To the police's advantage there was a bit of fog slowing Dad down. So they finally caught up with him and asked him: 'Are you Dr Duval? & Are you missing a child?' Dad's 1st thought apparently was that Camille had fallen out of the door. And Ilke & Dad were feeling pretty bad about the fact that ever since the service station at Goulburn they had been offering Camille chocolate & mandarins & annoyed that she was ignoring them. The police finally caught up with them past Mittagong.

Nigel D Oliver
President
Thredbo Ski Patrol Association Inc