

Duncan Cornwallis



Duncan attributes the beginnings of his service to community to his early childhood and schooling which encouraged benevolent behaviour. Later on, Duncan studied for a degree in mechanical engineering and naval architecture at Portsmouth Polytechnic, before accidentally falling into the start of an engineering career in and around the copper mines of Zambia in central Africa.

Part of the contract involved the education and training of indigenous personnel. Duncan's pre-conditioning to serve ensured his attention to, even enjoyment of, this 'missionary' element of his work. Migration to Australia in 1982 was followed by a number of job shifts leaving him again spending much of his time training the young and inexperienced mostly in the business of process control valving.

Duncan's career successes were interrupted by a stroke in 1996, leaving him at a loose end. As a prolific reader, he decided to make use of his computer skills and travel experiences to write a novel. The 900 page novel is now complete but as yet unpublished. However, the book has led him in another direction and he is now a member of various writers' groups and classes including one at Mundaring Sharing, a not-for-profit learning centre run by a volunteer committee and class

leaders. Duncan was soon on the committee at Mundaring Sharing and has lead the writing group for the past 12 years.

"Mundaring Sharing has been a life saver, especially since my illness, and loss both of my job and family following my stroke and partial disability" says Duncan.

Duncan is always looking for ways to give back some of the 'kindness of strangers' that he believes typifies the Hills community and is currently a member of the school volunteer program at Eastern Hills Senior High School. Duncan has been instrumental in assisting struggling young students to find purpose and meaning during a time which is often confusing to them. He generously shares his life experiences as a way of highlighting the many options available to young people today. He says it gives him enormous and almost instant satisfaction as those young eyes suddenly 'get it.'

If you would like to nominate someone for our 'Inspiration Zone', call 9290 6706 or visit the Shire web site and follow the volunteer links. The Shire thanks Duncan for his hard work and wishes him the best for the future.