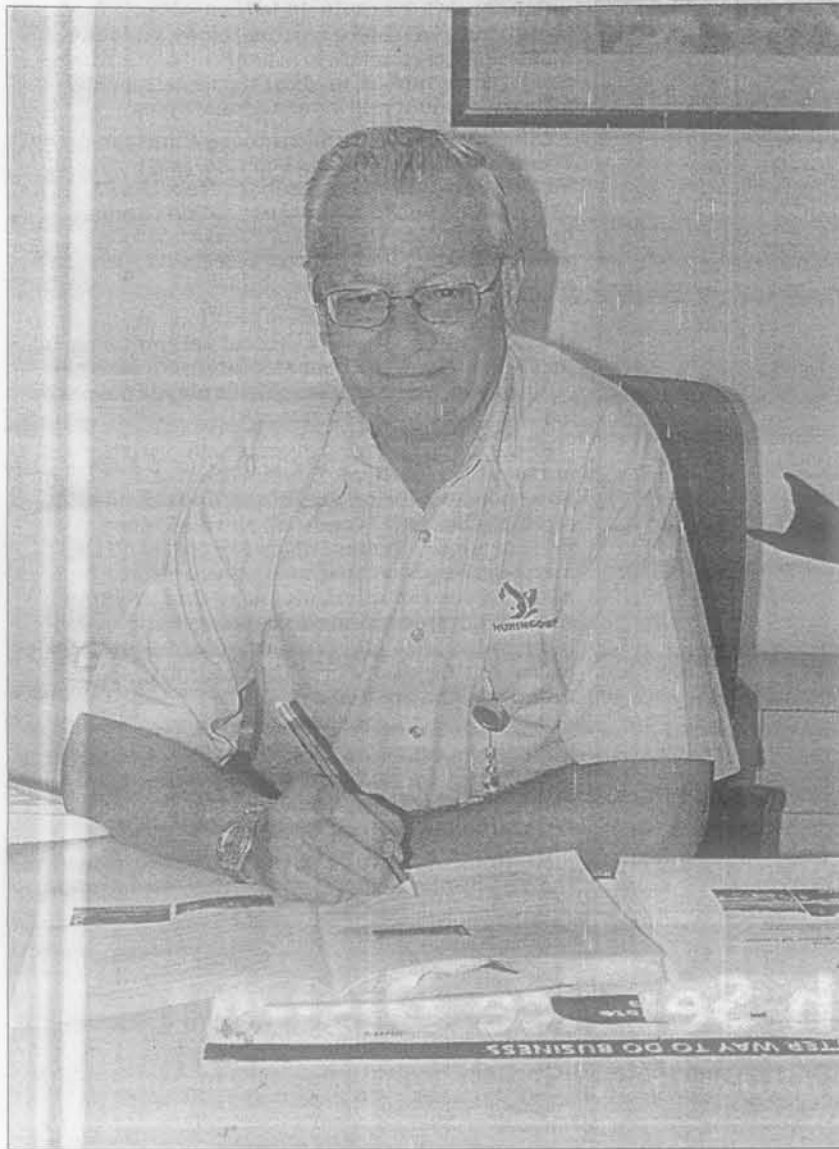


Time to take step back and relax



THURINGOWA City Council Deputy CEO, Allan Lee, has seen many changes in the city during 35 years with council

Photo: CASEY-ANN SEANIGER RIT09427

ALLAN Lee started out catching cows and picking up garbage when he began with the Thuringowa City Council in 1968.

But those early days as a cadet health inspector are now a far cry from his role as Thuringowa City Council's Deputy CEO.

And after a staggering 39 years with the council, Allan is finally hanging up the strict tie for the last time and heading for the thongs and T-shirt when he retires in July.

Allan said by July he would be ready to leave the job so he can spend more time with the family and enjoy relaxing a little more.

"I said I would retire at 55 and I've gone past that by three years so I'm ready to take a good break," he said.

Allan is truly capable to speak on the growth of Thuringowa — when he first started work at the council the population was 1500 people, now it's 65,000 people.

"There's been a lot of positive growth and the changing roles in this work have kept me in the job this long.

"I've been a part of an excellent team that has developed Thuringowa into the thriving place that it is today."

Allan is well known not just amongst council staff but in the twin cities' community. He also is director of the Good Shepherd Home and it's his wise but approachable nature which solidifies people's trust in him.

Allan has taken on many challenges in his work, but his recent trip in December to the jungles of southern Malaysia as part of 'Bosslift Malaysia 06' certainly tested him in more ways than one.

As a guest of the Defence Department's Directorate of Reserve Support (DRS), Allan got to see reservist soldiers from the Australian Army's 11th Brigade train in the jungles at the southern end of the Malaysian peninsular.

Bosslift Malaysia 06 was designed to provide employers with the opportunity to see how military experience enhances their workers' skill sets.

While Allan admits the days were tough on the body, it wasn't all work and no play.



Meet a Local

Casey-Ann Seaniger

"The trip was fairly demanding, we had really long days up at 7am and not getting back to the room until 11pm at night," he said.

"I must admit a lot of that though was holding a cold can in your hand but at the same

time it was full on," he laughed.

He said while he only had vague ideas about the Reserves beforehand, he now had a newfound respect for reservists after the trip.

"It was impressive to see the reservists in actual jungle battle conditions, you couldn't see more than 15 feet into the jungle."

Allan was born in Wales in 1949 but has lived in Townsville since 1960.

Allan is a dedicated family man to wife Janette and three daughters, Katanya, Sherriann and Alison.

From his love of the water come his interests in fishing and scuba diving and he is hoping to get time for all of that along with plenty of travel.

Allan is looking forward to travelling to Wales and also hopes to travel around Australia with Janette.

"My daughter wants me to meet her in Wales so we can go through where I was born and hopefully it will be a big family affair if my other daughters come along too."

Contemplating the future, Allan knows his strong work ethic might come back to bite him.

"Maybe in a few years I might get bored so I will think about putting my hand up for some part-time work or something but I won't know for a while yet."

While much of Allan's work revolves around serious business, it hasn't taken away his sense of humour.

"I don't want to become a complete grey nomad," he said.

"I'll take the next 12 months to settle down but I'll also be busy."