

# NIGEL BRENNAN

## 40 Years of Friends and Fun

By Kelly Brennan, Nigel's 3rd (and favourite) wife

**"OLD FRIENDS, NEW FRIENDS, SKYFRIENDS ARE LIFE FRIENDS."**

SANDY SMEDLEY, JAN 26TH 2020

It was one perfect Facebook post that summed up Nigel Brennan's 40th sky birthday!

At first, he didn't want a fuss. Then he thought about how many people haven't experienced our sport at all, let alone for four decades, from many different angles. It was worth celebrating.

Nigel did his first jump course at Moorooduc in 1980 with a workmate, John 'Chappo' Chapman. They both became addicted. Despite being competitive in other sports, like show jumping, skiing and sailing, Nigel never went down the competition path in skydiving.

In the eighties, he found his niche arranging high profile displays at big public events, like beach or snow festivals. He even jumped from the Bond Airship over Melbourne. Nigel's gift of the gab for those displays kick-started his successful advertising career. His son also had a career start in skydiving, going from DZ kid to jump pilot and now an A380 captain.

Nigel has taught numerous first jumpers, including me (back in the days before the Code of Ethics!) Plus he managed and flew three different aircraft at Pakenham. He's been Area Safety Officer, Jump Pilot Examiner and Deputy Director of Safety. He's still packing reserves and rigging, although he's only had two chops of his own, 39 years apart.

Nigel's jump highlights include last year's Aussie Bigway record 130-Way, as well as Herc jumps in Botswana, and leaps over the Palm in Dubai.

It was a low-key sky birthday at Barwon Heads, with prawns, a BBQ and only a couple of jumps when the weather finally cleared. But what wonderful jumps they were! Another (almost) 40-year veteran, Shane Sparkes, captured the day in pictures (see Back Cover). One highlight was a super relaxed 5-point 10-Way. Another was 11-year-old Liam Murphy's tandem, with his dad, Paul, who was Nigel's 2nd best man.

This year's goals include jumping over the Pyramids in Egypt. And he has even ordered a freely suit!

