

## OBITUARY - Spiro Anthony (9.8.45 – 12.11.24)

Spiro Anthony completed his Leaving Certificate at Newcastle Boys' High School in 1961. Spiro skipped a year at school due to his sharp intellect and was a champion athlete, competing at the highest levels in sprinting, long jump and squash. In Newcastle he held the club record in cricket. He also played first grade Rugby Union for Sydney University and was selected to play professional AFL for Carlton. Spiro had many good friends and happy memories of his time at school. He continued to hold the school song in high regard and attend school reunions, demonstrating his ongoing attachment to Newcastle Boys' High School.



Spiro commenced studying Arts and Psychology at Sydney University at the age of 16. At Sydney University he became politically active and a strong advocate for peace. Although born in Newcastle and regarding himself as a Novocastrian throughout his life, Spiro retained connections to his parents' Greek and Cypriot origins. In Sydney he became involved in the Cypriot and Greek communities and led movements for social justice.



After completing university, Spiro worked as a psychologist for the remainder of his life. He was highly respected by his patients, for whom he never charged out-of-pocket fees and treated with deep compassion. He understood the need to adopt analytic approaches to treatment that accounted holistically for their circumstances. This humanist outlook reflected how Spiro lived his life.

As a psychologist, Spiro played a leading role in Psychologists for Peace, which was a group of the Australian Psychological Society. The group was a response to the threat of nuclear war in the Cold War and worked towards building values of peace and humanity. Spiro continued to campaign for peace in the face of contemporary wars.

Spiro also had a strong connection with nature. He acquired a college Horticulture qualification in the 1990s and worked for free after-hours as a horticulturist and landscape designer.

Spiro had two daughters, Professor Thalia Anthony and Dr Dorothea Anthony, and four grandchildren, Rosemary, Peter, Markus and Katerina. Throughout his life he sought to find connections with his mother who passed away in Newcastle when Spiro was a toddler. His mother was from the famous Greek Island of Ithaca, which was the subject of Homer's epic poem The Odyssey. Cavafy's poem on Ithaca draws on the themes of The Odyssey and reflects Spiro's great sense of adventure and desire to make the most of life.

## ***Ithaca from Constantine P. Cavafy (1911)***

As you set out for Ithaca  
hope that your journey is a long one,  
full of adventure, full of discovery.  
Laestrygonians and Cyclops,  
angry Poseidon - do not be afraid of them:  
you'll never find things like that on your way  
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,  
as long as a rare sensation  
touches your spirit and your body.



*Ithaca, Greece*

Laestrygonians and Cyclops,  
wild Poseidon - you won't encounter them  
unless you bring them along inside your soul,  
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope that your journey is a long one.  
May there be many summer mornings when,  
with what pleasure, what joy,  
you come into harbours seen for the first time;

may you stop at Phoenician trading stations  
to buy fine things,  
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,  
sensual perfume of every kind -  
as many sensual perfumes as you can;  
and may you visit many Egyptian cities  
to learn and learn again from those who know.

Keep Ithaca always in your mind.  
Arriving there is what you're destined for.  
But do not hurry the journey at all.  
Better if it lasts for years,  
so that you are old by the time you reach the  
island,  
wealthy with all you have gained on the way,  
not expecting Ithaca to make you rich.  
Ithaca gave you the marvellous journey.  
Without her you would not have set out.  
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaca won't have fooled  
you.

Wise as you will have become, so full of  
experience,  
you will have understood by then what  
these Ithacas mean.