

VALE

It has been a sad week for relatives and friends with the death of three men with close connections to Norfolk.

The first was the death of James Maurice McDowell in Warkworth, New Zealand.

James Murice McDowell, fondly known as 'Paddy' was born on the 21st April 1920 in Ireland, Lurgan, county of Amagh. Paddy was educated in Belfast at the Royal Institute College and later at the Queen's University. He graduated as a civil engineer in 1941, when he joined the armed forces, and was commissioned captain. Paddy served with the Royal Engineers in Rhine, Germany.

After discharge, he moved to Penang, Malaysia as the Roads, Water and Sewage engineer to the council. In Penang he met and married his wife Jill Croger, daughter of Marge Croger from Norfolk. After his marriage, he was appointed municipal engineer to Malacca, where his two sons were born.

It was the coming of Malaysia's independence and the meeting of some fellow soldiers from the war, which brought the family to New Zealand in 1957.

Paddy suffered ill health for the past eight years and it was this that put an end to his bowls. His last tournament was the "Bounty" Bowls in 1983. Paddy loved Norfolk Island and was in attendance on the night of the Rotary Club Charter.

Paddy passed away on the 28th December, 1991. He had a strong faith and received Holy Communion on Christmas Eve.

The funeral, held on New Year's Day at Christchurch, Warkworth, was a wonderful tribute and thanksgiving to a man who had given so much to his family and community.

His ashes were buried during a small service on the 4th January, in the Norfolk Island cemetery, conducted by the Reverend Les Thompson.

Our sympathies go out to Jill and other members of the family at this time of sadness.

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Then on Monday, 6th January, we heard of the death of Mr. Wilfred Arthur Mawson affectionately known to all as "Art." who died on Saturday, 4th January - his 91st birthday.

Art was born at Lithgow, one of a family of 5 and had an interesting life - as a painter and decorator - he eventually became the decorator for both Union and Hoyts Theatres. He and the late Scotty Neagle worked together in creating all the wonderful scenes for Grace Bros. Christmas pantomimes for some years.

He started promoting boxing at the Newtown Stadium - and was in that field for 14 years. During that time he developed vaudeville in conjunction with boxing and big open-air fights - running 5 stadiums at at Leichhardt, Wollongong, Goulburn, Penrith and Katoomba. He often told



The late Art Mawson, pictured with his wife Jean on the occasion of their 69th wedding anniversary in July 1991.

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the story of how the famous Australian tenor, Peter Dawson used to sing for the vaudeville at £10 per night. Art also brought the Ink Spots to Australia. These promotions went so far as the Philippines and Western Samoa and he and his wife Jean bought their own ship to trade in those areas.

He spent into the building game and from there into the coal industry and he and his wife once owned 8 coal mines - 6 underground and 2 open cut.

Art came to Norfolk after meeting the late Ray Fitzgerald of Hotel Kingfisher fame. He thought that Norfolk would be an ideal place to build a home for the aged - but was turned down. He and Jean came to live in 1968 and Jean purchased the Hotel Norfolk while Art purchased the then old broken down Brancker House which has become the renowned restaurant Branka House.

They were allowed and did build the Mawson Units in the hospital grounds for ageing but mobile patients.

Apart from these projects, Art was a generous supporter of sporting and community groups on the island.

At his funeral service held at the Swansea Baptist Church on Monday, 6th January Art was hailed as "a man ahead of his time."

Many of us who knew him on Norfolk would agree with these sentiments and we all pass on our since sympathies to his wife Jean, daughters Rea and Diana, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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