

## John Marsden Nankervis (MNZM) 1946 - 2022

Attended Wellesley 1956 - 1959



John was born 2 August 1946 and attended Wellesley from 1956 – 1959. In 1959, he was awarded DUX at Wellesley. After Wellesley, John attended Nelson Boys College. He graduated in law and commerce from Victoria University, Wellington in 1969.

John, affectionately known as 'Nank' was the son of the late Mary and Richard (Dick) Nankervis, brother of Christine Harrison and the late Margaret Finch. He was the grandson of the late Ernest Marsden a prominent professor of physics whose work led to the discovery of the structure of the atom.

John's climbing record both in New Zealand and overseas extended over a 50-year period. He climbed all New Zealand's 3,000m peaks and over 50 first ascents in the Southern Alps. His first climbing expedition was to the Northern Patagonian Icecap (1969 – 1970), followed by climbing trips throughout South America. His first trip to the Himalaya was in 1981 and he also climbed throughout Africa, Antarctica, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, and Europe with many of his expeditions including new routes on mountains across remote ranges.

In 2010, John was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to mountaineering. His contributions were immense, serving as President of the NZ Alpine Club, on the Tongariro-Taupo Conservation Board, NZ Conservation Authority, and for ten years, he represented NZ at the UIAA (International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation). By profession, John was a lawyer with Wellington firm Buddle Findlay, but his real passion was for the great outdoors, exploration, mountain clubs and conservation.

In 2013, John tragically broke his back whilst climbing Mt Awful, in the Mt Aspiring National Park. The accident left him in a wheelchair, which was a cruel blow for such an adventurous man. After suffering a serious stroke in November 2021, John's health deteriorated and sadly, he passed away on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2022.

Wellesley enjoyed staying in touch with John over the years, and the Foundation is immensely appreciative of the incredibly generous bequest of \$10,000 that it has been received from his estate in May 2022. The Foundation would also like to acknowledge John's generosity in 2015 when he purchased a Wellesley Foundation Centenary Black Brick with the proceeds (\$2160) supporting the Foundation's Scholarship Programme. We are proud to have John's name etched into the brickwork of our unique school.

John - what an outstanding man, with a tireless commitment to conservation and the great outdoors. Our most heartfelt sympathies go out to John's family, friends, and mountaineering companions - from the staff and boys at Wellesley.

**Sources:** Wellesley Archives; Stuff Media; [vimeo.com/681101103/4d47f73079](https://www.vimeo.com/681101103/4d47f73079); Dave Bamford.

