

2 MINUTES WITH Peter Bowers

Pete Bowers is the full-time manager of the Tawa Squash Club (the only full-time squash club manager in Wellington) which, according to its website, "has a reputation as one of the most friendly, welcoming, family-oriented and competitive squash clubs in the Wellington region."

He is also on the Tawa Residents' Association committee, on which he enjoys the role of treasurer.



Where were you born and brought up? Motueka

Where were you educated?

Motueka High School, Wellington Polytechnic

How long have you lived in Tawa? 39 years

What do you like about Tawa?

Proximity – brilliant train service with 5 stations – how many suburbs in NZ have that?

Eateries – so many choices

People – so many top people doing great work (includes Tawa born and bred Dr Ashley Bloomfield!)

Relatively quiet and safe although the pace is picking up as we grow.

What would you like to see improved in Tawa?

Tawa Valley Pathway (Ara Tawa) – great asset already but it could/should be an absolute feature of Tawa. Appearance of roundabouts – many are bland and the first two off the motorway are relatively unkempt giving the first impression of Tawa as being shabby.

What about family?

Married to Pam for almost 40 years (poor thing!). We first went out at high school. Pam's an experienced oncology nurse at Kenepuru Hospital – a nurse that the patients just love.

38 year old daughter Leanne married to Alistair Sutton with three lovable girls who all live in Tawa.

30 year old son Nathan who, with partner Alex, have a rugby-loving son and a newly born daughter who all live in Titahi Bay.

Work experience over the years

Worked for the Post Office/Telecom for 25 years as a technician and later an Account Manager. Then five years managing 12 sales staff of a successful Telecom Dealership, Blue Sky Wireless, until we got bought out. Latterly 10 years and still going as Club Manager of Tawa Squash Club.

What are your interests and hobbies?

Rugby and Cricket – both in my blood, galvanised by my folks and siblings.

Golf and Squash both picked up later in life.

Favourite sports team and/or sports person?

Team – Black Caps, especially the teamwork and humbleness they show. And wouldn't you be proud if Kane Williamson was your son?

Player – Trevor Morris, All Black fullback 1972/3 who taught at Motueka High School and coached the 1st XV. He had such balance and poise (ala Christian Cullen) and could drop goals from the halfway (with the old leather balls!) And he was my favourite-ever coach. In my first year in the 1st XV we had 13 players turn up for the trial (many school kids thought it cool to play for their clubs instead), we lost our first competition match 6-36 then won the competition, beating that same team in the final of the

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the second round, 43-3! To make up the numbers he recruited the headmaster's son, the school dux, an American field scholar, and the school hockey team's captain all filling in on the wing! He certainly got the best out of everyone.

Favourite musical group and/or individual singer?

Group – Queen

Singer – Neil Diamond

What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?

New Plymouth with kids. So many wholesome things to do – Pukekura Park is second to none, especially when lit up over Xmas, brilliant indoor/outdoor swimming facility, 7km coastal paved walkway, great golf courses, an imposing mountain, a brilliant squash facility, The Bowl of Brooklyn concert venue If you haven't been, go!

What accomplishments/achievements in your life give you the most satisfaction/pride?

Providing palliative care in our own home for mum for the last six months of her life. I left my full-time job to manage the Squash Club so I could tend to mum during the day and work in the evening when Pam would look after her. I had to perform some "medical chores" which mum said "I bet you never thought you'd have to do that" – ahhh, the circle of life!

Helping Tawa Squash Club to attain NZ Squash Club of the Year and Wellington Sports Club of the Year – the first Wellington Squash Club to ever win either award.

Captained the Nelson Schoolboy Cricket team to win the South Island Tournament in 1970 which included beating Canterbury (gee, that last bit felt good to write!)

What are two or three interesting things about you that local people may not know?

In my first year out of school I was selected to play a pre-season festival game of rugby in Nelson for Buccaneers against an Alex Wylie-led Saracens team but dad talked me out of playing as I was waiting for an operation to repair a cut tendon in my little finger (it wasn't sore, it just wouldn't bend and I could have taped it to the next finger.) It would have been the biggest game of my life. Don't you hate it when parents give the right advice! I subsequently had the little finger amputated, so now when you give me a high five you get a 20% discount from me!

As a young family we went to Australia for a year in the mid 1980s to experience life abroad with the view to staying if we liked it (the Post Office allowed a year's leave of absence in those days.) Can you believe it – Australia was full of Aussies! Who would have thought? While away I even got a promotion at the Post Office for when I returned! Those were the days – do nothing and get a pay rise!

What are three things you would like to do before you die?

Get a hole-in-one in golf (dad got two!)

See Tawa Squash flourish with an extra court (resource consent is already approved.)

Help create the Tawa Valley Pathway (Ara Tawa) to become an iconic attraction becoming ever-changing including regularly added street art, funky lighting etc.

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