

vale, piano man: Gordon Brinsmead

16th August 1937 - 8th October 2021

Joseph Ierano

Gordon Brinsmead was a 1960s Palmer College graduate whom I had known since 1984, when I was 20. He was one of my first chiropractors and, along with Alan Wigg, an early mentor. He died on 9 October, 2021 aged 84 while crossing the road at the mercy of a hit and run driver who was later apprehended.



After the initial shock of hearing such a thing, and if you imagined Gordon's response to such bizarre things in life ... some time elapsed, not much, before I laughed. It was as if he tickled me into thinking non-morose thoughts. He would have brought on that impish bloody chuckle that he always had up his oft rolled-up sleeves.

Gordon introduced me to Palmer ways of seeing, and at the time I didn't know I would end up there too, in 1997, in Iowa, USA. He took care of my family members, including my mother who at the time slipped into dementia. No, it wasn't Gordons's fault – his discourse and flowery way of getting points across could wake the still-warm dead. Some he dropped into a coma occasionally but hey, you can't please all, and he never set out to. He liked to confront. I know. He introduced me to eastern philosophy of Krishnamurti and Yogananda. He indirectly introduced me to my first wife Lyn, or was it visa versa?

He could cook, play piano (no less than a Brinsmead piano), dressed impeccably, lived rather independently, and had no children. Gordon went off on tangents of effeminate behavioural expression that he was oft mistook for being ... like me? No, I am not a loner. But there was so much about Gordon made you love him for his absolute happiness in being in his own space. And what a space his garden on the Bargo River in Tahmoor NSW where he transformed a rolling bush block to a Botanic tranquil hideaway. I visited many times. Nobody would forget the strength in his hands who had his healing; not only that - he was a farmer at heart, always on tractor or digging some hole in the bush for some reason.

Generosity? There is much I would not have known. That is true philanthropy ... when my brother died in 1996, I came back from USA for two weeks to bury him, and Gordon invited my entire family to his property for a gathering of solace and peace. He fought with some and loved others unbound, but never without being who he was.

He only recently retired after a life of service and was in his early 80s. Talk about a flawed human being? I could only aspire to such a life lived to the fullest.

His chiropractic force was only fortified further in his family of chiropractors: brothers Doug, Kelvin and sister Shirley Blackman all survive him.



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