

HAMILTON BARRY

Ham (born Alfred Hamilton Barry in 1923) was the second son of Duncan Barry Snr. He studied civil engineering for 2 years at UCT before he was allowed to enlist. He played rugby for Western Province whilst at university. He served in the artillery 6th division which was sent straight to Italy. Before returning home after WW11 he took part in the South African 6th Armoured Division Rugby side that toured England and France, raising morale in post war Europe.

On his return he completed his B.Sc. Engineering degree at UCT and resumed playing Rugby for WP. On the 11th May 1946 he played in the Intervarsity (vs Matie) match for UCT's first team which won 11-0.

The Varsity team that day contained ex-servicemen and SA Sixth Division players Piet Duvenhage, Nelles Vincent, Ham Barry and Billy Griffiths as well as Dennis and Stephen Fry who were later to become Springboks. (Stephen Fry captained the Springboks against the British Lions in 1955) As were Tjol Lategan who ran on for Maties and Cecil Moss who played for UCT's second team! The starting Varsity 15 that day read as follows:

Fanie van der Spuy, B.Butler, S.Smith, D.Fry, N.Beyers, W.Griffiths, D.Lonsdale, H.Barry, P.Duvenage (Capt), B.Gelfand, E.Marais, N.Vincent, S.Fry, F.Stephen, L.Steytler



Upon graduation he joined the Water Affairs Department as a junior engineer on the extensive Vaal-Hartz dam and irrigation scheme. He was picked to play for the Sprinkboks, but Water Affairs would unfortunately not allow him leave to do so. Ham met Christine Mary Leyden (only child of Robert Leyden, Head of the Royal Navy ammunition depot) whilst she was out from England visiting her parents. They married in October 1949 in Pretoria. While Hamilton was on construction in Groot Marico, the family were on

their way to Riverton for Christmas when Christine had to be taken off the train at Vryburg. Their 2nd child, Mark, was the first baby to be born in the new Maternity wing of the hospital! Ham later became Head of Planning & Design in the Department in Pretoria. Hamilton also surveyed the site of the Theewaterskloof Dam in the Western Cape that only required a dam wall of a few meters across to capture 480,200 Mega liters. The dam was eventually commissioned by the government in 1978.

Ham was tragically killed in a helicopter crash whilst surveying for dam sites in Natal in 1967. He left behind his wife, Christine and 5 children - Mary Hamilton, Mark Hamilton, Robert Deneys, Helen Margaret and Catherine Innes "Kate" aged 3. Mary built up a successful Nursery, Mark qualified as a medical doctor and obstetrician. He is married to Katrina Reinecke, also a doctor. Deneys, a civil engineer, married nursing sister, Irene Visser. Nursing sister and organizer extraordinaire, Helen, married Laertes Melidonis a cost accountant turned marine mining & salvage specialist. Kate is a script writer / producer for SABC TV & Mnet amongst others. Her portfolio includes Carte Blanche.



*Photo above taken in Italy 1945:
Hamilton Barry standing on the right.*

