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Former Cat's difficult journey

DANNY LANNEN

'I know it's terminal and I've come to terms with it, I don't get bitter about it. There are people worse off than me, young children have it don't they?'

FORMER Geelong Football Club winger Clive Brown is pursuing new life goals as he battles terminal asbestos poisoning.

The genteel 72-game player of the 1950s hopes to see his 75th birthday in May.

He hopes to spread the word to as many people as possible that asbestos poisoning remains a real and present danger, and he hopes to see out legal claims he has lodged against three former employers and an asbestos manufacturer.

Mr. Brown's type one mesothelioma was diagnosed in November.

He said yesterday he was 'jogging along all right at the moment' and he smiled often as he looked at the road ahead and at the path travelled.

"It's not a good scene and there's more to go," he said.

"I know it's terminal and I've come to terms with it, I don't get bitter about it.

"There are people worse off than me, young children have it don't they?"

Mr. Brown, father of five and grandfather of 11, lived in Geelong for more than 30 years before shifting to Corowa for warm weather and golf in 1995.

He had always kept himself fit but found last year that he was battling the physical demands on the course.

Medical tests revealed something he had suspected for years might come his way.

"I always knew I'd be a candidate," he said. "I was a maintenance fitter by trade, so I was in amongst it.

"I remember seeing asbestos needles floating in the air, I was gleefully drawing it in with each breath."

Lawyer Tracy Madden is handling Mr. Brown's claims for Slater and Gordon.

She said yesterday his case was a jarring reminder that asbestos poisoning did not discriminate.

"It has no respect for age, gender, health or occupation," Ms Madden said.

Mr. Brown urged people to be aware, particularly unsuspecting handymen who might tackle renovating an old shed or beach shack. One fibre might become a sentence.

Mr. Brown might have been in his footballing prime when the damage was inflicted.

Clive Brown played with Geelong for six seasons from 1955 with contemporaries including his old Eaglehawk mate Peter Pianto before shifting to coach Port Fairy for three seasons, Cressy for one season and Torquay for six.

He and devoted wife Patricia returned to Geelong after his diagnosis to be close to their family brood as he undergoes chemotherapy in the hands of the experts he so admires at St John of God Hospital.

And he's sharing quality time.

"I get a bit of time to have a yarn to the family and drop those little gems of wisdom," he smiled.

"I'd just like somebody to leap up and grab one or two of them, though."

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