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Friday January 17 - Thursday January 23, 2014

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TRIBUTES FLOW FOR DJ DORIS

Paul 'DJ Doris' Norris in full flow.
Photo: Andy A. Heibing Photography

Phuket's expat community is in mourning following the death of popular radio DJ Paul 'DJ Doris' Norris, who was killed in a motorbike crash early on Sunday morning (January 12).

Police said that taxi driver Jongsak Bussarakam told them that Mr Norris was driving his motorbike from Rawai when he reached the

Naka Market traffic light intersection. He turned right, heading toward Naka Market, and was hit by Mr Jongsak, who was driving toward Chalong.

Confusion remains over whether the traffic lights were working at the time and whose right of way it was. However, Mr Jongsak has been charged with careless driving

causing death.

Li Ekkarat Chaitthni of Wichit Police confirmed to *The Phuket News* on Wednesday that police were continuing to gather evidence and were waiting for the result of an autopsy. Mr Norris' body was repatriated to Scotland on Wednesday (January 15).

Mr Norris first moved to Thai-

land from his native Scotland around 17 years ago. After one year in Bangkok he arrived in Phuket to become the resident DJ at a new club called Chicago's Fun Bar, where he remained for three years.

After another two years working at a variety of places around Phuket, Mr Norris headed home to Scotland for five years.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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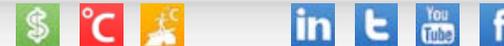
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Paul Norris Tribute: To a great friend

PHUKET: Trevor Fisher, who was a close friend of Paul Norris for 16 years, wrote this for The Phuket News. Not an obituary, it is more a pen portrait of the man, his life, his out-there sense of humour and the ferocious loyalty he engendered in all those who knew him well.

Friday 17 January 2014, 12:14PM

I have lost my oldest and closest Phuket friend, Paul Norris, who died in a road accident in the wee hours of Sunday morning.

Paul and I first met some 16 years ago at Chicago's Fun Pub on the corner of Soi Sansabai. I was employed to design the events and promotions and Paul was in "the pulpit" playing the tunes.

We often did a double act, me with a mic on the floor and him overlooking it all from the booth above the dance floor, taking the mickey, starting and modifying the in-jokes, and generally being mental.

How mental? During a bad storm season, Paul once turned up for work and deejayed the entire night in Wellies, a Sou'wester hat made from newspaper, a bright yellow poncho, a rubber ring, a mask and snorkel.

We also co-hosted the Sunday Wet T-shirt competitions at the legendary Valhalla – an enduring memory for many long-term expats.

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I left Chicago's to take over Margarita Bar across the road but our friendship remained tight. I consulted with him on almost every decision I made about the place.

I had wanted to bring a few guys who were former Chicago's customers to run that (and another) place in Patong and Paul wholeheartedly agreed. Steve Whiting and Darren Mulqueen had the right stuff and became big successes on the island as well as very popular figures. A lot of that was down to sound advice from Paul.

But that was Paul – always generous with his time and always totally coherent when talking about what he knew best. I have met none better. He had an uncanny perception of what made people party. Dammit, he even made me dance on the dance floor sometimes.

He was really something special; he shook up the island's then resident DJs with both his tunes and his fabulous personality. He became a mentor to many young Thai DJs who are still working at the better and more fun clubs such as Tai Pan.

Recently he had just started the Sunday Night Old Record Club at Tai Pan, a dream project for him. The DJs there still referred to him as "Ajarn DJ" – Teacher DJ.

He had a break from the island for a few years and eventually returned when I invited him to come back and become a radio DJ. He was nervous but after a few weeks doing my show with me he was ready to fly. He was always great in the club on the mic and over the years he developed into a top-notch radio jock too.

But while he was good on the radio, it was always live where he shone and where he felt most at home, and in the last few months he was on fire.

We were planning some themed events to launch later in the year and on the night of the accident he rang me excitedly, asking me to register a new internet domain name for this purpose.

I put it as a note on my desktop to do first thing. I was looking at that note when the first message about his awful accident arrived.

Paul was loved by everyone who met him. His humour was quick and always on the mark and infectious too. I never spent a bad minute in his company and you can't say that about many people.

Few people can make me cry with laughter but he did. He was physically funny; his impression of a certain Italian restaurant owner in Patong and another of the difference between Italian and Scottish footballers coming out of the tunnel would fold me over every time.

I loved him like a brother and will miss him perpetually.

We are compelled to survive his loss and thus must take comfort where we find it. There's comfort in the knowledge that, while his portion of life was short, he drank from its cup to the maximum and lived life on his own terms, a life many would envy.

At 9.30pm, the night of his accident, we ended our phone call with the usual parting insults.

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Phuket community

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Paul: "Right, f**k off, I'm bored with talking to you."

Me: "Alright Big Nose do one."

Only true friends can speak to each other like this. And neither he nor I would have wanted our final farewell to be any other way, with laughter on both sides as we ended the call.

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