

Obituary – Alan Jeffrey Breslau 1926-2020



Alan Jeffrey Breslau was born in New York on 18th March 1926. He graduated from university with a Masters in Chemical Engineering and was a Technical Director of two companies, one in New York and the other in Hong Kong. He also had a love of music and was an accomplished musician.

In 1963 Alan was on a business trip when the Mohawk Airlines plane he was on crashed at Rochester-Monroe County airport. Four passengers and three crew perished in the crash and Alan was amongst the 36 passengers that survived. He received full thickness burns to 45% of his body, losing the top part of his head, nose, an ear, an eye, a thumb and several fingers. Alan was hospitalised for five years in total.

After his discharge he was dismayed to find there was a lack of support for those who had suffered a serious burn

trauma. Being a forward thinking person Alan started an organization to help burn survivors deal with their new life. He called the organization “The Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors.” An excellent choice, the Phoenix being the mythical bird that ignites its own nest, is consumed by flames, and rises again to be even more beautiful than before.

In 1988 Alan hosted the first World Burn Congress, the first of its kind catering specifically to burn survivors. The congress has been a great success and has helped burn survivors from around the world. The annual congress is usually held in the USA but was hosted in Edmonton, Alberta in 1998 and Vancouver British Columbia in 2007.

It was at the first conference Alan met Delwyn, a New Zealand mother of a burn survivor. Five years later they were married. Alan also wrote two books, the last one being “The Beauty of Disfigurement” and he co-authored several others.

Alan had an incredible impact on the burns community and made a personal difference to many lives.



**Alan Jeffrey Breslau's courage, determination, and love had an influence on the burn community that will never be equalled.
RIP Alan.**