

High flyer's modest goal

REAL estate investor Rob Williams has a portfolio of seven properties and says his investment goal is financial freedom, "which is a year or so away".

The IT infrastructure analyst says his major life goal is to help others achieve financial independence.

What was your first investment and how did it go?

It was gold and silver bullion during the late 1970s, just before the oil crisis pushed gold to record highs and Nelson Bunker Hunt tried to corner the world silver market, pumping the silver price from \$US5 an ounce to \$US54 an ounce. I took my profits before the bubble burst. Nelson Bunker Hunt declared bankruptcy.

What is your favourite type of investment?

Real estate. I buy residential properties within 7km of the CBD that are well serviced by transport, shops, schools, cafes and lifestyle facilities.

What is the best investment advice you have received and who was it from?

My father taught me that even the most profitable business can fail if it experiences cash flow problems.

How do you approach investment risk?

MY INVESTMENTS

I invest in quality properties in or near blue-chip suburbs that have shown consistent and strong growth over many years.

What has been your best performing investment?

A two-bedroom unit in Leabrook bought eight years ago. It has shown compound annual growth of 18 per cent.

And the worst?

A 1970s muscle car I bought 20 years ago. I fooled myself into thinking I could enjoy a fast, cool car and justify it by calling it an investment. If you can drive it, if it floats or if you have to feed it, then it's not an investment.

Where do you get your investing information?

Investment magazines, investor forums on the internet, sharing ideas with like-minded investors at investment group meetings and books.

How would you invest \$25,000 if it were given to you tomorrow?

Five thousand dollars would

go to one of the charities I already support. Giving to charity is one of the pillars of my investment strategy. The other \$20,000 would be parked in my loan offset account until I found a property deal that met my investment criteria. It would then be combined with equity in my other properties and used to fund the purchase.

Do you make extra payments off your mortgage?

I don't have a mortgage. I rent my home so that all my debt is 100 per cent tax-deductible.

Do you have a personal finance budget and do you stick to it?

I love my budget spreadsheets! I have highly detailed budgets for my personal expenses and I stick to them without compromise. I measure my performance and reward myself when I come in under budget. I need to get out more, don't I?

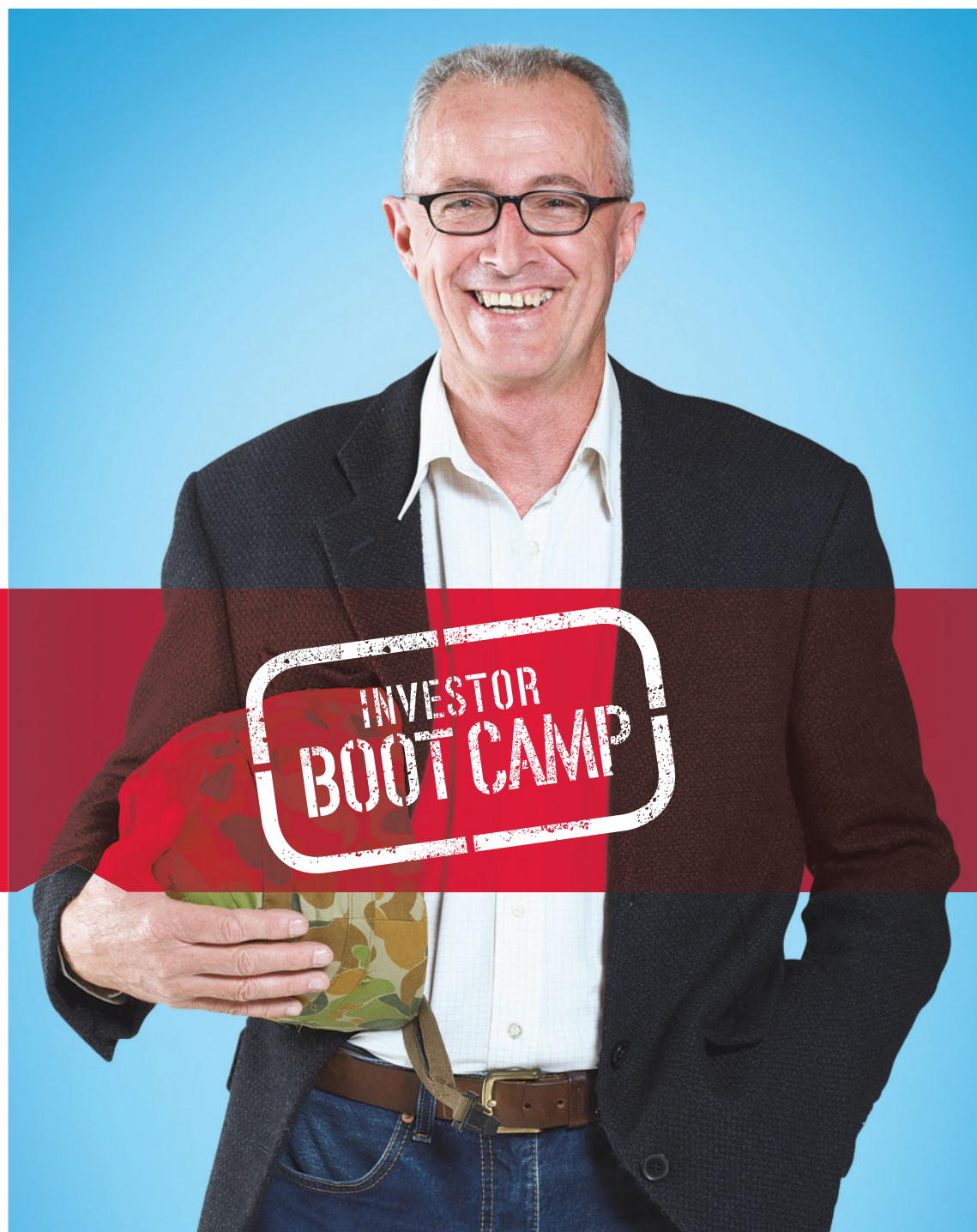
What's your most extravagant purchase?

Extravagant purchase? I don't even know how to do that. I spend a few dollars on myself from time to time, but I'm not extravagant by any definition. I guess I'm a little too focused on my goals.



EASY DOES IT: Rob Williams has a simple wealth plan.

Picture: TAIT SCHMAAL



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WHEN: Tuesday 3 February 2009

WHERE: Mawson Lakes Hotel
Lvl 1, 10 Main St, Mawson Lakes

TIME: 6.30pm

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