



LIFE Is For PURPOSEFUL LIVING!

Peter Consandine's Wattle Day Newsletter #14

August, 2019

To: Friends, Colleagues, Supporters, Rellies & Customers (as addressed)

Would anyone disagree with that Statement? I mean one has gotta have purpose in life and, in my case, someone has gotta do what I do [see later Report]. So, subjectively, I'm purposeful. "Every day is a gift, particularly now" said **Olivia Newton-John** in her interview with **Liz Hayes** on the TCN9 television network's '60 Minutes' program on Sunday night, 4th August this year. **Livvy**, who has now relaxed in to Stage 4 of her breast cancer treatment which she has been suffering from and partly conquering since 1992, remains a woman of the world with awe-inspiring positivity, strength and courage. And her achievements in life to date reflect purposefulness-to-the-max. I noted from the said television interview that she is crediting medicinal marijuana as being a key component of her treatment – assisting her with sleep disorder, general anxiety and pain management. But, irrespective of the dreaded cancer metastasizing and spreading throughout her entire body, she has not as yet applied for opting out of life by way of voluntary euthanasia. It may come to that – if indeed she returns from California, America to Victoria, Australia to live out the remainder of her days on Planet Earth. Separately, around about the 4th August one other Australian woman I observed on MSN – **Kerry Robertson** in regional Bendigo – exercised her newly-legal right to do so [evidently, the very first in her progressive State], saying to her gathered family members in her dying moments: "Always look for dragonflies because they represent change, transformation, understanding and the deeper meaning of life". How poignant?!

Life and Death, two integral topics, are my joint themes this time around. I have broached this combined subject because I too am still recovering from being murderously attacked in late May of 2018. My balance is so out-of-whack and the pain I particularly experience every night in my upper right and left biceps is quite excruciating. The severe whiplash I incurred in 'The Incident' has morphed in to a new affliction called labyrinthitis. And, I still have the occasional neck muscle spasm. So far, medicinal marijuana has been something of a pain-mitigator for me. Psychological and physiotherapy sessions for pain relief, notwithstanding, in to the bargain, prostate cancer has revisited my nether regions and exploratory surgery known procedurally as 'nanoknife' has been performed which, scans show, hasn't killed off the Big 'C'. *First time around (in 2006) I had so-called 'brachy-therapy' combined with a limited program of radiography which stopped cancer in its tracks for 12 years. But the sheer number of CAT and MRI scans plus PSA blood tests and biopsies I have had done in the past year and a bit is flabbergasting – very costly too. To cope, I have read lotsa books and otherwise kept myself busy – Yes, purposefully busy [see later Report]. One book: 'OLD, OLD AGE' by **Ian Hansen**, a retired education and English teacher and, ultimately, academic was comforting. Hansen's book has some very quotable quotes therein and I have selected some to share with you...

"The most intimate thing we can do for ourselves is to learn to live 'in the present'"; "death can't afford to be proud because death isn't the end"; "death isn't a loss – a transition maybe but NOT a loss...death is like a birth"; "it's strange how our lives in old age come full circle – we drift into being children again". You would understand that my WellBeing Plan has had to be modified somewhat.

On the self-managed healthy lifestyle front I, perpetually, seek out new tips. I was pleasantly interested to learn that 19C classic novelist, **Jane Austen**, was herself a dietician and an exercise advocate amongst her contemporary British network of the times. Then, too, **Peter Jones** in the 18th May edition of "the Speccie" reminded me that **Aristotle** (ex-4th Century BC) (a) concluded, holistically, that exercise was vital for all-round harmonious mental and physical capacity; (b) explained that soundness of mind depended on applying one's energies to something of interest since strength of mind not of the body was what counted and (c) advocated learning something new every day entailing conversation and companionship which were equally vital.

Most people inform me that I don't look my age – which is *always* flattering. I am often asked what keeps me young OR 'young-looking'. I usually always answer that my purposeful calling has a fair bit to do with it. I mean, I am an UNpaid CEO of a micro-minority, registered political party [The RPA] and pro bono Facilitator of a republican umbrella group which has lobbying + product marketing + social education wings. I encourage or prompt commentators to tell me how they sum me UP. I get mostly positive criticisms and, sometimes, names. Hey! Names e.g. 'trailblazer' (courtesy of **Greg Blaxell**) + 'prophet without portfolio' (courtesy of **Ian Robinson**) + 'machine man' (courtesy of **Don Shields**) + 'master bureaucrat' (courtesy of **Peter Crawford**) + 'honourable radical' (courtesy of **Jennifer Gwen**). Jennifer, who is my bride, my soulmate and partner-for-life of going on 33 years to date lives life to the full – so much so that she's a genuine time maximiser and she literally lives every day as if it's her last day on Planet Earth. Two words vividly describe her: 'elegant urger'! Indubitably, Jen *is* purposeful. Personally, I am quite chuffed with Robinson's appellation.

Death has overcome, as usual, a steady flow of friends & associates over this past 12 or so months: Vale to **Zillah Scott, Ron Casey, Ian Kiernan, Ted Mack, Larry Pickering, Tom Thompson, Eric Pyatt, Graham Lucas, Robert "King" Crawford, Jimmy Hannan, Carmen Duncan, Rex Law, Ray Brown, Yvonne Barnett, Joanna Barnes, Irene Stevens, Jenny Brown, Kerry Keighran, Ron Austin, Les Murray, Bob Hawke, Patricia Brennan, Graham Freudenberg** and **(Noel) Scott Engel Walker**. Boo Hoo and Fond Memories all around. Lamentably also, Jen and I lost our little male black & white pussycat, **Dewey**, to a crazy-dangerous SUV driver at the bottom of our driveway. Sob Sob. None ever to be forgotten. I mean: Life is so short and Death is (seemingly) so permanent – contradicting (or re-enforcing) for only a moment what **Ian Hansen** [above] was asserting.

My overall staggered calendar year commenced in mid-late August last – on the 23rd thereof, actually – when Jen and I put in to place, after much deliberation, our new/next 5 year LifeStyle plan.

Thenafter, on the following day i.e. 24th August – came the end of the **Chairman Mal** Prime Ministership. Yep, **Malcolm Turnbull** was tipped out of the federal Liberal Party leadership. Very lacking in political wisdom was 'The Turnbully'.

A week later – on 31st August – the second Wattle Day Luncheon was held at Le Village restaurant, Hunters Hill in Inner-Suburban Sydney. The RPA's sister umbrella group: Wattle Day Events (WDE) had the pleasure, there & then, of introducing the 13th Annual Guest Speaker, **Greg Blaxell**, who addressed his Talk Topic of 'The Importance of Local History'. Blaxell, literally, gave the gathering an *almost complete* history of the 'home' suburb (Hunters Hill) itself – which was engrossing.

Then, on the 3rd of September, I joined the Three Quarters of a Century Club by turning 75. What's that? Three Score and Fifteen, hmmm? Hey!

On 24th September, I continued what I allude to as 'Associational Links' with other prominent Australian Republicans by meeting the appointed Labor Party Shadow Minister for Australian Heads of State viz: **Matt Thistlethwaite**, the MHR for Kingsford-Smith at his Maroubra (South Eastern Sydney coastal suburb) office.

*I, subsequently, carried on liaising with him.

On 29th September my beloved Collingwood AFL team lost a gruelling Grand Final at the 'G' – by 5 points i.e. less than a kick – to the West Coast Eagles which flummoxed me for 2-3 days to follow. So close and yet so far, eh?!

On 2nd October, of necessity, I varied my WellBeing Plan...I agreed (again) with Jennifer that we both needed to cut down on our liquor intake and to *further* improve our diet. The UPshot: 2 days per week alcohol-free and 2 nights per week vegetarian fare...The 5½ : 1½ day ratio for fasting is maintained along with some refinement of my exercise regime. In more ways than one: purposeful! One supposes that one's health guru – mine being world-famous Dr. **Michael Mosley** – might be "tickled pink"? OR suitably impressed – probably the latter but with Mosley's inclination to salaciousness, the former might be the case.

On the day of 3rd October, by leave of my monarchist friend, **David Flint**, the National Convenor of Australians for Constitutional Monarchy (ACM), I attended the 19th Annual General Meeting of ACM at the Theatre of the NSW Parliament in Macquarie Street, Sydney. *Following this extraordinary gig, I was able to begin "currying favour" with fellow-Australians who are pro the Status Quo by attaching to emails copies of The RPAs model for a *directly-elected* Australian Presidency.

On the night of 13th October Jen and I ventured over to Lidcombe (Central Western suburb of Sydney) to watch my former Musical Director (1975-1978), **Graham Cox**, perform several brackets of popular (MOR) music. Cox is *still* a Master Guitarist.

On 26th October Jen bought her first hybrid car and with some leftover money bequeathed in her father Keith's estate, on 5th November she bought a much-needed new amplifier for our Lounge Room surround-sound system.

On 11th November the Republican Wine Club (RWC) celebrated a 25th Anniversary. Jen & I popped the cork of a very quaffable Yarra Valley bubbly and drank to that milestone 'cos the RWC has proved its longevity and its considerable contribution to The RPAs consolidated revenue base!

On 29th November my Justice of the Peace (JP) accreditation was reconfirmed by the NSW Justice Department – meaning I have enjoyed now some 35 years as an obliging JP. Not to be scoffed at!

On 2nd December I pieced together 2 (no less) Aussie Mens Business circulars...**Bettina Arndt's** contemporaneous new book: '#Men Too' – countermanding the pernicious Identity Politics issue – was the 'clincher'.

On 21st December I put the proverbial kybosh on proceeding with a further addition to the range of 'REPUBLICAN-branded' Aussie products – that of backyard, purely natural, UNheated honey ex-Melbourne. This product option may yet come into its own, as it were.

On 27th December Jen and I – continuing the 'tradition' enacted last Christmas (2017) of pooling our spare disposable income to buy a welcome item of household infrastructure instead of giving each other xmas presents...we bought together a Weber barbeque. A fantastic appliance, as it turned out!

Jen and I holidayed again together 23rd January – 3rd February in SE Asia: We re-visited Laos (Luang Prabang); Malaysia (Malacca) and Singapore. *Our stay at the Majestic Hotel in Malacca was, indeed, 'majestic' and UNforgettable. Jen and I would recommend this wonderful place for stopping over to everyone who takes suggestions on international travel destinations, seriously.

On 13th February I sat for my portrait to be painted for an Archibald Prize entry by Ingleburn artist, **Katie Reid**. Though a monarchist, as a British-Australian Reid deems me to be a 'Man of my Times' and she entered a profile-composite painting with the attaching words: '**Peter Consandine...from within himself**'. Most exciting to have one's portrait 'done'! The work and the artist can be found on the last page.

On 7th March I heard internationally acclaimed pop-scientist, **Brian Cox**, on **Richard Glover's** ABC Radio 'Drive' program say and I quote: "Climate evolves and changes and it always has". Like many of my contemporaries, I have had to come to grips with the 'Climate' issue in-the-broad. I'm a natural-born questioner [de omnibus dubitandum, in Latin] and I, frankly, don't believe there is any such thing as 'settled science'. I, therefore, identify with Cox's rationale as a fellow 'Climate Realist'. This issue, I reckon, will stay a beltway subject for at least the next decade.

On 11th March Jen and I thought we had 'secured' a second shorthair ginger – male – tabby cat who we named "**Meggsie**"...he was a timid but highly aware stray feline who came and went after 10 days or so. Jen paid to the local vets \$475 to have him neutered + de-fleaed + vaccinated against cat flu + micro-chipped. *UNexpectedly, I "found" him several blocks away whilst on a round-the-block early morning walk on Anzac Day morning, 25th April, but he was NOT for reclaiming! Truly lamentable, that.

On 12th March we had to sadly farewell our long-time, elderly, next door neighbours **Tom & Norma Klinder** who, like many others in this era, have downsized and moved to a retirement home at nearby Glenhaven...not too far away but *away*, nonetheless. **The Klinders** were the best *next door* neighbours, ever.

On 26th April, my former musical arranger [1975-1978] **Miles Harris** who had been The RPAs WebMaster from 2010 – 2017 inclusive, officially declared *himself* "retired". Harris, who's had more than his fair share of health difficulties in the immediate past 5 years or so, continues to be an inspiration to me.

We're best friends you see...Harris, for as long as I've known him – some 44 years, has been 100% positive, 100% of the time. Harris has certainly been purposeful in his professional, adult life until very recently – moving on, time and again, once he technically “mastered” each new challenge which was presented him.

On 18th May **Sco-Mo (Scott Morrison)** and his Conservative Coalition were “miraculously” re-elected in something of a shock result – and with a slightly increased majority in the House of Representatives. Jen tipped them to win. Insightful! The **Bull Shittin' (Bill Shorten)** led Labor Party Opposition – supremely cocky they couldn't lose – “over-reached” both on the policy and ideology fronts. Labor under new leader, the UNinspiring, UNcharismatic and hapless **Albo (Anthony Albanese)** may be 2 more terms in Opposition given how generally distraught and sullen his troops appear to collectively be. Time will Tell...3 years is a very long time in democratic politics. *For some fellow Australians politics gets irrevocably in to the bloodstream and forking out lotsa ‘hard-earned’ for nomination fees is ‘par for the course’ Moreover, I wasn't surprised to see Old Stagers ‘go around again’. For example: **Brian Buckley Clare** stood for **Fraser Anning's** Conservatives in **Tony Abbott's** threatened Seat of Warringah; **Arthur Chesterfield-Evans** stood as an Independent in North Sydney; **Andrew Bartlett** stood for The Greens in the SEQ CBD Seat of Brisbane and **Thor Prohaska** stood as an Independent in **Peter Dutton's** threatened Seat of Dickson. ALL failed in their bids – disastrously.

On 24th May I met, post Federal Election 2019, per phone conversation one **Renato Montibeller**, an Italo-Australian, self-made builder millionaire from suburban Melbourne. I had 3 one-to-one meetings with him in Melbourne over 11th June + 13th June + 17th June and my overall impression of him is positive insofar as his probable being part of the ‘succession plan’ that is now well in train. As ever, Time will Tell. Over 37½ years I have met many would-bes and gunna-bes who have ALL failed in the ‘Dedication Stakes’. Montibeller is (from the song of the same name) ‘Something Else’. He's an ALL get out Enthusiast for the Oz Republican Quest and – after the EGM to be held in Melbourne in early December later this year – may devote himself full-time to advancing the Oz Republic. Victoria will continue to be a key focus State for The Quest in question and the intention is to streamline The Party's electoral presence commencing – in Victoria – with a federal branch there [see later Report].

From 24th June – 30th June Jen and I went on together a Hunter Valley/ Greater Hunter Regional holiday staying at &/or exploring Pokolbin + Maitland + Port Stephens + Bob's Farm + Morpeth + Lorn + Paterson – the latter township being where we stayed with fabulous friends: **Maria & Andrew Katelaris**. Over the 2 nights on the Katelaris's farm we played Scrabble for the first time since we were both children and it was, truly, fun. Many terrific HV reds & whites were consumed in the week away, that's for sure. Oh, and Jen & I would both, UNhesitatingly, recommend (a) the Murray's Brewery at Bob's Farm for a value-for money experience – both eating & drinking; (b) the Icky Sticky bakery in the main street of Lorn which has excellent, delicious pastries and they also serve great coffee.

14th July saw Jen & I visit a largely secret location in Western Sydney, namely: The Newington Armoury. If you're from interstate, overseas or wherever and have never heard of the place... this is a fantastic Sydney tourist attraction and the restaurant on site which comes with the territory is first-class.

On 15th July [Reference: “The Incident” of 27th May, 2018] the Victorian government agency, VOCAT, paid in to my personal bank account a second compensation sum (i.e. the second of two). Acknowledgement of her valiant efforts for redress made on my behalf – in Melbourne – by South Melbourne lawyer, **Kim Sweeney**, is hereby made. Sweeney's professional advocacy and remarkable competency has, astonishingly, yielded 5 more at least, psychological sessions with my retained psychologist, **Susan Stephenson**, if they are needed in the coming year or two.

On 6th August I had a long but important phone conference with my Real Republic (Brisbane-based) counterpart, **David Muir**, about generally, the ‘State of Play’ in the Oz Republican Scheme of Things prior to “going to press”. Immediately afterwards, I wrote to Muir expressing my concerns with RR's conflated program and clarified The RPA's position on the dual-referendum idea.

On 6th August, also, former Lord Mayor of Brisbane and Founder of the Real Republic Limited organisation, **Clem Jones**, was proclaimed 2019 Australian Republican of The Year. Better late than never, in these things.

In the 2 sitdown sessions I had with my urologist, **Phillip Stricker**, and new medical oncologist, **Andrew Kneebone**, over the two afternoons of 8th & 10th August, Jen & I were re-assured that my residual disease [prostate cancer] won't kill me in the next 5-6 Years. This is fabulous news and I hope and trust that they both are ‘spot ON’ ‘cos my medium-range goal is to live to be 81 and thus outlive both my parents – **John & Vene** – who (both) lived to be 80. I've got a helluva lot of Purposeful Living to do!

On 11th August, I informed my darling bride, Jennifer, that if she predeceased me (if and then) I would dedicate the **Justin Hayward and the Moody Blues** classic love song for the lonely – ‘FOREVER AUTUMN’ – to her. She was touched.

Now, whereas I earlier-on remembered deceased associates over the 2018-2019 jagged year I want to give ‘Special Mention’ to several Achievers I know – people who *indirectly* adhere to the **Mama Cass Elliot** maxim: ‘Just Don't Let the Good Life Pass You By’ – and who turned 80 and thus became Octogenarians in the same period...ladies first: **Barbara Stannard + Katie Reid + Gerry Weingarh + Greg Blaxell + Reg Livermore + Phillip Adams + Hugh Mackay + Brian Spencer**. Readers might recall that **Mama Cass Elliot** had a Billboard Top 100 #1 Hit Record in 1970 with ‘Good Life’?

In last year's Wattle Day Newsletter #13, I revealed that I was persuaded by South Melbourne friend & Sinophile, **Paul Dahan**, to join the Australia-China Friendship Society. Whilst I have no regrets – yet – about this *personal* decision, I must inform everybody who's interested that, over the past year I have become much more of a ‘China Watcher’ and I have red just so many negative or doubting articles on Communist China by the likes of **David Archibald + Peter Hartcher + Henry Ergas + Andrew Bolt + Greg Sheridan + Hugh White + Bevan Shields + Chris Rahman + Rowan Dean + Angus Grigg + Jonathan Pearlman + Charles Moore + Kirsty Needham + Rebecca Weisser** amongst many others. At this juncture, having additionally red a number of alarming books on this geopolitical topic, I gotta frankly admit that I am becoming by-the-day more and moreso apprehensive about that country's belt & road initiative [I echo WA-resident but Canberra Parliamentarian, **Andrew Hastie's** assessment and studied analysis, but with a few reservations]. On the books front, historian and social critic **Clive Hamilton's** masterpiece ‘Silent Invasion: Chinese Influence in Australia’ set the proverbial hares running. Then, there was **Philip Bell's** tome ‘The Water Kingdom: a Secret History of China’ followed closely by joint authors **Peter Navarro & Greg Autry's** powerful set of summaries: ‘Death By China’. One of my next books on the subject shall be **Richard McGregor's** ‘Xi Jinping: The Backlash’. There's no doubting... it is time to write UP a blog or even write an essay on this outlier state.

The Republic...a brief bulletin on what is happening and where it's AT on the Oz Republic Front:

The Australian newspaper columnist and Sky News anchorman, **Graham Richardson**, in an article headed: 'Appeal Flags for Republican Cause' and published on Friday, 14th June posed the query: "Whatever happened to the (Oz) republican movement"? Well, I can roughly answer for him and others of course that the Australian Republic Movement [ARM], Chaired by big-noting, elitist, red bandanna-wearing **Peter FitzSimons**, would appear to be in an UNhappy phase of disrepair, pro tem. Two of the ARM Senior Executives viz **Dave McGregor** and **Michael Cooney** have resigned during 2019 leaving just **Sandy Biar** to carry the administrative can. More worrying – in cohesion terms – I have been given proof that several ARM Members are angry with the Bolshevik Cabal's now-position which is to champion the so-called first Australians' recognition in the Preamble of the Australian Constitution *as a Priority* over the republic! *That* or a conflation of the 'recognition' idea jointly with a second campaign for an Oz Republic. A skewed policy which I reckon would be doomed to fail (i.e. *both* questions in any dual-issue referendum). The Real Republic organisation may well side with the ARM in this seemingly reckless adventure as that organisation's now-retired from law practice Chairman, **David Muir**, enunciated to me in our last, protracted conversation. Facing the Music, alas: the **Sco-Mo** Coalition government won't be in any hurry to advance the 'recognition' concept. And, besides, as an avowed monarchist, our incumbent PM won't countenance any pragmatic or (heaven forbid) disruptive moves to re-consider Australia's federal structures unless something major and catalytic occurs like the queen's death or abdication.

Meanwhile, The RPA keeps the proverbial flame burning and the green & gold flag (figuratively) flying as The Quest needs constant nurturing. In 2018-2019 The RPA did ALL of the following (apart from the bits & pieces already mentioned):

- (a) Conducted Stalls at Expos in Melbourne (South Melbourne) over the 8th- 9th December weekend
Sydney (Rose Hill Gardens) over the 18th-19th May weekend
Adelaide (Wayville) on Saturday 22nd June;
- (b) Appointed a new WebMistress in Ms **Tara Whitie** (pronounced 'witty') on 17th July;
- (c) Held a 33rd Annual General Meeting at Ipswich, SEQ on Saturday 23rd March;
- (d) Ran a Ticket of 2 Candidates for the Senate to represent the State of Victoria in the 18 May federal election to, primarily, maintain The RPAs registered and not-for-profit statuses;
- (e) Compiled a comprehensive 28 point Policies Manifesto for both the federal election and general distribution & discussion topics on my pastoral rounds. It is intended that The RPA will go to federal election [in 2022, probably] with at least a 35 plank platform;
- (f) Conducted a 'Celebratory Event' in Canberra for 2018 Australian Republican of the Year, **Kelvin Fahey**;
- (g) Formed a 5-person Management Committee comprising key RPA personnel: **Miles Harris + Murray Gough + Kelvin Fahey + Scott Kitto** and **Self** to oversee the continuance of The RPA 2019-2022 Strategic Plan and the necessary near-future agenda-setting(s) including the 'federalising' of The Party's structures with first cab off the rank instigation of a Victorian State Chapter;
- (h) Built the RPA Membership Base right UP to 2840* in round figures...**some 237 established RPA Members since September, 2018 UPgraded their Membership to a higher category, which boosted annual revenue and, indeed, helped keep The Party 'in the black' where it has stubbornly remained since December, 2017;
- (i) Organised and Staged the 13th annual Wattle Day Luncheon at (Sydney suburban) Hunters Hill on Friday, 30th August [see earlier Report];
- (j) Produced and widely disseminated Republican Campaign Bulletin #46 during March 2019 and beyond;
- (k) Produced and widely distributed annual Wattle Day Newsletter #13 in and during August 2018 – a massive labour-of-love in that 2200+ postal mailer packages were shipped &/or hand-delivered;
- (l) Prepared for much more Wattle Day promotional activity by having minted 2000 Wattle Day badges – 1000 each of two colour schemes (see the very bottom of this page);
- (m) Oversaw the rise in overall profits of The Republican Umbrella Group's 3 Premier ALL-Aussie product lines: 'REPUBLICAN-branded' premium wine + coffee + super-tangy olive oil;
- (n) Switched from IINET ADSL internet to Telstra NBN.

From my perspective, I think The RPA UNceasingly remains purposeful and its best days are ahead of it.

I'll Sum UP by quoting SMH First Person columnist, **Diane Armstrong**, who in an article headed 'Writing Though Grief' on 10th August, 2019 and paraphrasing her ancient idol **Ovid** said this: "Ovid once advised people who were suffering from grief and loss to be patient because one day their pain would be useful"...Ovid, went one step further to stress that "Nothing in life is ever wasted – not even pain and grief". Perhaps, cynically, **John Lennon** presciently back at the height of his fame asserted: "Life is what happens while you're busy making other plans". Ahem, if one is busy – making *other* plans let alone *new* plans – then one is being purposeful, is one NOT? Yes, Sirree!

