



TERRITORY NEWS, VIEWS & BLUES

Peter Consandine's Wattle Day Newsletter #13

August, 2018

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

You've heard the term "It goes with the territory"? Of course you have. Well, an incident in South Melbourne on the night of Sunday, 27 May last might well be a case of a violent, near-murderous experience that "went" with the territory but Wattle Day Newsletter #12 of August last came close to being the final in a series. Setting the Scene: At the end of a day pastoral republicanising, as usual – in and around suburban Melbourne – I was relaxing watching ABC television in the front room of my republican friend Paul's home when there was a tapping on the front window with what appeared to be a car ignition key. There were two men of Middle-Eastern appearance seeking admittance to the house. It was not my domain to let them in and after they knocked on the front door someone else in the house did so. They were ushered in to the front room where I was minding my own business – watching Sunday night ABC television, as I said. They were waiting for my friend Paul to finish his early evening sleep upstairs and conversed in *another* language than English. I politely let these gents know that I was intending to fold down the bed in the room and get myself off to sleep when the second of two ABC programs was concluded and this seemed to be OK with them. Well, 8.30pm rolled around and I again, politely reminded the men I was going to prepare for bed. They were escorted to the hallway leading to the front-of-house and the doors closed behind them. No sooner did this happen when one of the men – 'George' – barged back through the door and viciously attacked me and *very nearly* killed me. I was kned in the chest and head and bitten in three places; my assailant tried to strangle me and to gouge my eyes and, into the bargain, shook me so hard I incurred a painful whiplash that will trouble me for some time in the future. Fortunately, I was able to wriggle out from under my assailant and with yelling at the top of my voice for help (from Paul) and a little assistance from George's accomplice, I kept my assailant at bay until Paul eventually arrived on the scene. The UPshot: I was taken by ambulance to the Alfred Trauma hospital at nearby Prahran in a neck brace and on a trolley where I remained until discharged myself circa 6am on the Monday morning, 28 May. In the trauma hospital I had multifarious tests, x-rays, a tetanus shot, pain relief capsules, anti-inflammatory tablets and endless questionnaire sessions with orderlies and nurses and, eventually, a doctor. A horrible experience but I survived, eh?

Those contacts of mine who did NOT get out of life alive in the past year were: **Tessa Mallos, Michelle Borrell, Peter Luck, Ralph Bennett, George Young, Ninian Stephen, Peter Sumner, Brute Mansfield, Rae Jones, Anne Lodwick, Sybil Edwards, Paddy Weaver, Beryl Evans, Kerry McNally, Dorothy Ambrose, Martyn Webb, Mary Gale, Iris Stegemann, David Powys, Reg Seagrave, Ian Sloan, Margaret Gidley-Kiŋg, Jeff Johnson, Lionel McKenzie, Bogey Musidlak, Michael Winner, Phil Emmanuel, Alex Eremin, Mitch Pry, Jose De Koster, Kay Boland, Tasso Scott, Jill Ker Conway, Liz Jackson, Harry M Miller, Michael Braham, Evan Whitton & Mary E White.** Vale, writ large. Sadness ALL around.

Enclosed herewith is the final version of The Republican Party's 'Snapshot' – the Strategic Plan for the three years 2018-2021 which was created by The Party's man in Bungendore, **Murray Gough**. You will note in the 2018 Initiatives section the (recognised) need for a refashioned website – already under way with the appointment of **Steve Ollis**, The IT Juggler, and the imperative of a succession plan...because I am NOT getting any younger and **The Republican Quest** needs more enthusiastic nature and fit er key personnel. Additionally, there is a formal, *personalised* invitation to *this year's* Wattle Day Luncheon plus a Republican Wine Club reply-paid envelope which will suffice for ANY correspondence or luncheon payment or donation you might like to make to The Party, indeed The Quest.

My overALL calendar year extended from 1 September last when The Republican Party's sister organisation – Wattle Day Events – staged its initial luncheon at Hunters Hill where our Guest Speaker was the renowned 'Wattle Day' herself: **Maria Hitchcock**. Maria's topic was 'National Wattle Day – the next 20 Years'. Amongst other salient things, Maria expressed the passionate view that 1st September – as the promulgated date – must remain the *official* day and that ALL stops must be made to resist a growing push for 1st August to be revived.

On 8 September last I attended the **Dr Michael Mosley** presentation at Sydney's State Theatre. Of course, Mosley is my Health Hero, indeed my Life Coach and his performance was instructive – if a little bit risqué!

Over the Long Weekend of October, I celebrated my 31st Wedding Anniversary at both Mudgee and Rylstone with my bride Jennifer. The Mudgee wine region is 'special' in our opinion. And we don't get UP there often enough!

In late November, mutual friend **Sue Chaplin** came UP from Melbourne to stay for a week and in that time she helped Jennifer set UP a n functioning worm farm. It's been fun since – being involved with 'Garden Lady' Jennifer – developing this adjunct to our leafy backyard at Castle Hill. Our compost worms are very productive.

A very threatening overture came my way in February last when the NSW government's Office of State Revenue claimed nearly \$1000 from me in unpaid traffic fines going back to 2012! I negotiated with the department to settle on the total amount by doing charity work at the Parramatta Mission: 6 sessions @ \$30 per hour over 6 days 9 & 10 + 19 & 20 + 26 & 27 April. A sobering experience.

On the first day of the two-day gig at the 3rd Sydney Expo, Rosehill Gardens on the Saturday, 12 May – there was an incident that was something of a precursor to what happened a fortnight later in South Melbourne...a crazy, rude man of 'Middle Eastern' appearance ALL but attacked me going about my republican stall activity! There being no such thing as 100% security – even when security guards are constantly patrolling.

Friday, 25 May last will be a night, in Melbourne, to remember in to the future because in the early evening of this day I attended the Annual General Meeting of the Australia-China Friendship Society – and joined same – and a little later I taxied to the Hamer Hall to be an audience member at the supposed final public appearance of **Barry Humphries** – which turned out to be a 'con' anyway. Humphries' one-man show: 'The Man Behind the Mask' was stand-out because it amounted to a history of his stage/entertainment career and I am glad that I did NOT miss it. Still a great talent, our Barry.

Daytime on 6 June last – at the prestigious Wentworth Hotel here in Sydney – was, too, a momentous occasion...Professor **Kevin Donnelly's** book: 'HOW POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IS DESTROYING AUSTRALIA' was launched following which – from the floor – I asked a pertinent question. This prompted the ABC's 'TONIGHTLY' crew to pounce on me for a 'Vox Pop'. A bit daunting, really. Especially, when you are NOT briefed let alone (NOT) expect such an approach.

On 7 July it was well worth the sojourn – in freezing, typical Winter conditions in the Blue Mountains – going to Blackheath to listen to **Professor John Keane** deliver a lecture: 'ONE WORLD – TWO EMPIRES'. America and China, naturally enough, are the two empires alluded to.

On 23 July I had some non-life threatening exploratory/pioneering surgery which, in fact, will probably prolong my life and afford my wellbeing personal health plan – as enunciated in last year's **Wattle Daily Newsletter (#12)**.

On 28 July though, Jennifer advised me that she could no longer remain my banker. Jennifer's financial position had radically changed in no time flat and has caused consternation on my part because, whereas I can and will maintain my financial independence of the grassroots activity of The Republican Party to the best of my ability, it shall have to be on the 'No Frills' basis as there will henceforth be a lot less cashflow. Jennifer re-invented herself when she left Library Services Management earlier this century and founded a quite successful tour-guide business. She earnestly believes that after going-on 37 years spearheading a micro-minority, registered political party – and raising more than an audited \$AUD1.34 million in that time for The Quest – I have gotta re-invent myself. Reluctantly, I have come to agree with her. Thus: the 'succession plan' which is already in train.

Notwithstanding Jennifer's bad news advice, a few days later we went together for a short, recuperative break to the NSW South Coast township of Broulee. Here, we stayed at The Bower – and quite literally "recharged together in style" and, to further quote the luxury resort's brochure: "regain our senses in the elegance of the (pristine Australian) bush". Jen and I would wholeheartedly recommend The Bower as a place to get away from it ALL! To Sydneyites, Melbourneans or Canberraans et al.

Nowhere near the whole story of the past year. But, I trust, an indication of what is going on in my Territory.

Puttin' YOU, The Reader, In the Picture:

1. The incident – as outlined in the first paragraph on Page One – is (now) subject to a Victorian Police investigation. I have also appointed South Melbourne-based lawyers to handle a Victim of Crime compensation case for me.
2. The Republican Party of Australia [The RPA] is embarked on a total re-set. Costs is Costs and The Party must be more economical and strategic in its agenda setting given that another federal election is looming; also further Expos in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide are scheduled as well as the usual annual involvements.
3. The Australian Republic's prospects – in the broad – will be dealt with in the next (8th) State of the Republican Nation Report which will go UP on the refashioned Party [new, virtually] website in due course. Suffice it to say that The RPA has got to be around to (a) keep its UN-cooperative rivals – the Australian Republic Movement [The ARM] – honest; (b) maintain the paramountcy of a Directly-Elected Australian Presidency and (c) for me to keep writing the definitive history of grassroots Australian Republicanism.

ALL Good Getting * Happy Wattle Day!
Peter C.