



Graham Roper

Rotary Job Talk 16th April 2019

I was born in 1949 in Launceston, Tasmania and at an early age (about 3) I moved to Adelaide with my mother and father. When I was about 5, we moved to Melbourne and lived in East Malvern. I started my school life at Toranga Road Primary School in East Malvern.

In 1959 my mother and father decided to split up and Mum and I returned to live in Launceston. I continued my primary school education at Invermay Primary School and later attended G.V. Brooks High School. I left school at the end of 1964.



I considered myself a good kid and did not get into much trouble. I remember one night a couple of my friends and myself were firing sling shots at the light bulbs on the street light poles. We were also knocking on people's doors and running off but unfortunately, I knocked on the local sergeant's door and was collared. He told me that I could either take a kick in the back side or be charged with damage to property. Not wanting to be charged I decided to take the kick in the backside.

I went home and went to bed a very sore and sorry kid. Next morning whilst having breakfast my mother noticed that I was sitting on one side of the chair and she asked me what was wrong. As I had never lied to Mum, I told her the truth and for my trouble I got a clip around the ears to balance me up.

Working Life

- D & W Murray
- John Selwyn Cox
- G.J.Coles (with my mother)
- Textile Mill
- Tasmania Police Force 1972 to 1975 (general Uniform Duties)
Stationed in Launceston, Hobart, Burnie and Devonport.



Interesting Work Experiences

- Worked at MCG from 1995 to 2007, last 5 years as a Senior Security Officer. Was in charge of match day security for football and cricket (rotation).
- Involved in Olympic Games in 2000, soccer
- Heavily involved in the Commonwealth Games. Night Shift Security Manager worked 21 nights straight.
- Was selected by the MCG Security Manager to be responsible for the Queens safety on the opening night.
- Had to plan a route of escape in case of a terrorist threat.
- Went through several meetings with the British and Victoria Police and had to get an ASIO Clearance.
- Worked for the MCC on match days mainly in the Corporate Area.
- 2007 to 2019 in charge of MSS Security at the Melbourne Showgrounds.

Life Changing Experiences

- My mother passing away in 1968 from lung cancer
- Met my wife Wendy in 1983 whilst working as a security reliever at the State Bank Data Centre in Spencer Street. We were married in March 1985 in a roof top wedding at Southland Shopping Centre.
- In October 1988 finding out that I had a sister who was living in Brisbane. All of a sudden, I had a sister, brother in law, niece and another niece or nephew on the way. My sister now has 4 children, Amy who is a Doctor, Mia who is a Nurse, Jake, who works in the Telecommunications Industry and Joel (24).



- In February 1996 my twin sons (Andrew and Christopher) were born. They are now 23, Andrew is a Police Officer and Christopher works for Tas Freights in Laverton North.



- Just recently I found out some very interesting facts about my father. He led a colourful life. He was born Ernest Hilton Leonard **Raper** and not Leonard Hilton **Roper** as I had known him. He apparently was married at least 2 times before marrying my mother and had 5 other children (all boys). Unfortunately, 4 of them are deceased but one brother (Melton) is alive and lives in WA. He has been over a couple of times and came to my changeover in June last year. I now have several nieces and nephews. From being an only child to now having an extended family was quite a shock to me. My father was in the Australian Navy from 1943 to 1947 where I am led to believe he had a colourful career. I am also advised that he had spent time in gaol in NSW and Queensland. It just goes to show that you learn something new every day.



Sporting and other Interests

- Played cricket, football, basketball, badminton and table tennis whilst at school.
- I played District Cricket Firsts with South Launceston in the NTCA (10yrs) and with Sheffield in the NWCA (2yrs).
- I played in 2 premierships 1966/67 and 1967/68. I was an opening batsman and medium pace and spin bowler. I played with and against Graham Ponting (father of Ricky)



- I played football for North Launceston Football Club (NTFA) mainly in the under 19's and reserves. Played 1 senior game (same day debut with Ray Biffin who went on to play about 180 games with Melbourne). He kicked 6 goals and was signed up that day by Jim Caldwell (famous football administrator). I had 1 kick and was dropped for the following match.
- I also played senior country football for Bridgenorth (West Tamar F.A.) and played in the 1967 premiership side with Bridgenorth. I also played in the amateur league with Rocherlea.



- Back in Melbourne I played cricket in the Mercantile Cricket Association with Fawkner Colts, Melbourne Park and Yarra Park Cricket Clubs. My best score with the bat was 170 for Fawkner Colts and my best bowling was 7 for 10 with Yarra Park.

Administration

- Secretary of Mercantile Cricket Association for 6 yrs and President for 3 yrs. Wendy was treasurer for 3 years and along with myself helped to get the association back in the black and save it from folding. I am a life member of the Mercantile Cricket Association
- Secretary of the Cricket Union of Victoria for 6 yrs and also a delegate to the Victorian Cricket Association for 6 yrs.



Golf

- Joined Werribee Park Golf Club in 1995. Elected to the golf committee in 2001 in charge of Junior Golf (on golf committee for 7 years).
- Elected to the Board of Directors in 2004 for a 3 year term.
- I have been Club Captain of the Werribee Park Golf Club for the past 4 ½ years.



School

I was a member of the school council at my sons' school (Thomas Chirside Primary School) for 4 years and had been their medical officer on school camps in years 3, 4 and 5.

In 2007 I was looking for something to do and Wendy suggested I join her at the Werribee Rotary Club. Kim Deneys and Russell Brooks were kind enough to nominate me for membership of the Werribee Rotary Club which I am very grateful for.

In my 11 ½ years at the Werribee Rotary Club I have been on the Board for the first 9 of those years. I was very honoured to be asked to be Club President in 2011-2012. I have been Club Secretary on 3 occasions and a Director on several occasions. I was very honoured to again be asked to be President in the club's 50th year.



I am very proud to be a member of this great Rotary Club.

