Clem Jones Oral History Project

<u>Part 1 of 2</u>

Interviewee: David Muir

Interviewer: Lindsay Marshall

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LM: This is an interview David Muir, chair of the Clem Jones group for the Clem Jones Oral History Project. The interviewer is myself, Lindsay Marshall, and the interview is taking place at Clem Jone's house, Wellington Road, East Brisbane, on Tuesday the 24th of October, 2023. David, thanks for doing this as part of the Oral History Project.

DM: My pleasure, Lindsay.

LM: Now just a little bit about yourself, first of all. You were born into a family out at Longreach in Queensland. What was your connection to Longreach?

DM: Well apart from the fact that I was born there, my parents ran a sheep property called Glennferrie. Back in the day it was Glennferrie Dartmouth, east of Ilfracombe. The Dartmouth railway siding no longer exists. But the railway line between Longreach and Barcaldine was our southern boundary. That was my home, basically, until 1978. I went away to boarding school in the University [of Queensland] during that period as well. In fact, I had one year at the Ilfracombe State School, and that was in 1965. I was at the Ilfracombe State School in grade five. In those days, the main road between Longreach and Barcaldine had been bituminised, but the bitumen hadn't reach Ilfracombe so we'd sometimes get home early if there was a threatening storm because of the dirt roads.

LM: You had a brother, he went to the Ilfracombe school too, with you?

DM: Yes. My brother, Ian. He also went to the Ilfracombe State School and then ultimately followed me to the Church of England Grammar School, to board there for the balance of our schooling.

LM: And you were born in 1955. In 1965, what was that little school like? It was a one teacher school or more than one teacher?

DM: There was more than one teacher. There was the principal and a couple of other teachers. It was really the heyday of Ilfracombe State School because the population was boosted significantly by the main road construction family children. There were quite a number of students there. I can't remember how many exactly, but there was probably the heyday of that school. Once the bitumen road went through, of course, the population dropped back. I was at Churchie at that time.

LM: Going to Churchie as a boarder, what was that like? You would have only been 10 or 11 by then?

DM: I was 10 years of age. To me, people sometimes reflect on that, and it just seemed normal to me. That was the only life I knew, of course. I'd always lived out there at Glennferrie. So going to Brisbane for school, it was quite an adventure in some ways, because it was a different world in the city to out there. My memories of it are happy. Although, I think it must have been a wrench for my parents. I can remember one episode where my brother and I were being sent off at Barcaldine at the airport to fly back to Brisbane and I can remember seeing the tears in my mother's eye. She inadvertently didn't turn away quick enough and I guess I was a bit surprised. As a young child, 10 or 11 years of age, to me, it was a grand adventure, really. Going to another world and having the opportunity to come back on holidays, school holidays.

LM: I guess it's a bit of a balance, isn't it? For parents, making that decision. Because if you're in boarding school in Brisbane, you're living with a greater variety of people your own age than you would at the Ilfracombe, I'm guessing. Would you?

DM: Absolutely. I think one of the things I cherish is having friends both in the central west and in the city. In fact, when I celebrated my 21st birthday, I took a cavalcade of my city friends out to Glennferrie and we were accommodated in the shearers' s quarters, in the homestead, and it was an opportunity to mix some of my friends from the bush with my friends from the city.

The education was a big thing. I think my parents recognised the importance of education. I think sending me away and my brother away gave us a platform for later life, in terms of education, which certainly wouldn't have been available if we hadn't left the district.

LM: On that note of education, you told me you completed Year 12 in 1972 and then went on to the University of Queensland to study economics and law. What drove those choices for you?

DM: Funnily enough, I had no great aspiration to be a lawyer as such. I was always interested in politics and current affairs. At Churchie, in my last year, an elective subject, which was to do with Australian government politics. I had a lecturer there

who, funnily enough, was a friend of Peter Beattie. I remember on one occasion there, he arranged for another classmate of mine to go out to a function at Senator [Neville] Bonner's house in Ipswich. Then later back at St John's College where I found myself in Peter Beattie's room with a whole stack of other people, I guess that kind of indicates that I had an interest in politics, in current affairs. And I knew that if I was going to make a career in that area that I'd need both economics and law to do it. Economics and law, I think, if you're making laws you need to know a bit about law and if you're going into federal politics, which I was interested in in particular, you would need to understand the economy.

LM: You graduated from University of Queensland with an economics degree in 1976?

DM: No, 1975, economics degree. And ultimately in 1979, with the law degree, I was over in the United States at the time, teaching tennis in the Catskills when I got my final result, which meant that I was successful in obtaining my law degree.

LM: That time in the United States, that was a gap year?

DM: Yes, it was. I spent the first six months of 1978 working in the state public service at the police headquarters here in Brisbane. That was to earn enough money to fund my travel overseas for the following six months. After working there for six months, I then picked up the position that I'd been successful for as a tennis coach and swimming coach in the Catskill Mountains at a summer camp. Camp Kennybrook was the name of the camp up in the Catskills, near a town called Monticello. That's where I spent the summer of '78, there in the Catskill Mountains. Then drove around the United States with some friends I'd met at the camp, from Wales and England, and we took a car from Trenton, New Jersey, across to Pasadena and California, which was a grand adventure. Then I took a bus back and then flew back from New York to London, and spent the balance of that year in the UK and Europe.

LM: And ultimately you were admitted as a solicitor, and then you spent 40 years in the law, ending up with HWL Ebsworth in Brisbane as a partner in that national law firm. But as happens in the law, before that, there was a lot of different law firms you worked for. Without going into all those details, there was one particular individual that seems to have provided your connection with Clem Jones, and that's Brian Halligan. Can you just explain who Brian was and how that connection with you came about?

DM: After 12 months in the law with a firm called Chambers McNab at the time, I was then headhunted into a firm called Walsh, Fitzgerald and Halligan. Of course, Brian Halligan was the Halligan in that firm. Paul Paxton-Hall recruited me into that firm. Brian Halligan was doing Clem Jones's property work and he wanted me to do his litigation work. Brian Halligan introduced me to Clem and I promptly became involved in some very interesting cases on behalf of Clem Jones and his colleagues.

LM: How did the connection between Brian and Clem start?

DM: I think they went way back. Brian Halligan, he was shot down over Europe during World War II. He was a tail gunner in a Wellington bomber, so the fact that he survived that experience is miraculous. He was a cricketer and a tennis player. My understanding is that many years prior to when I met Clem, Brian had been playing tennis and cricket with Clem Jones at the University of Queensland.

LM: At the UQ Cricket Club?

DM: Yes.

LM: Can you recall your first interaction with Clem?

DM: I hadn't previously met Clem, this was the first time I'd met him. Clem was the person that, from my first recollection, was somebody that, obviously, people knew a lot of him and had a lot of respect for him. I can remember in particular, one episode when one court case, Clem was giving evidence in the witness box, and I remember the District Court judge looking down, somewhat with awe, that he had the great Clem Jones in his court room. Clem was somebody who was larger than life. To me, he seemed to be a very generous person. A person with a very generous spirit. He was charismatic and energetic. I guess it's, on my first meeting with him, it was his charisma, his energy, his positive nature. Those are things that I remember from then and obviously on many other occasions following.

LM: And your work as handling the litigation for the property side of his business, what sort of cases did you get involved in?

DM: It was an interesting variety of cases. One case, I remember, it was a trespass case, which I don't think we did very well in, ultimately. It was involving a case where Clem had instructed a grader driver to level a particular block of land and unfortunately the driver levelled the next door block. I think we had a rather artful defence that Clem wanted us run, is that we'd actually improved his land. I don't know whether that went down so well. There was a defamation case, which was one that was really interesting. It was a lawsuit against *The Age* Newspaper, who'd run a scurrilous article about Clem Jones and some of the trade union leaders here in Queensland. Something under a headline of the Brekkie [Breakfast] Creek mob. It was a caricature of each of these people in a rather derogatory way, so we sued *The Age* newspaper.

I can remember, we settled our case the day before the trial was to begin and our first witness was to be the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia. I can remember, I was instructed to brief two Labor lawyers, Geoff Spender and Julie Dick. Their briefs were pro bono and always seemed to, I guess, in the nature of things, be at the bottom of the pile to do and I had to continually agitate to get things done that had to be done to get us to trial. I can remember Geoff Spender giving me the compliment afterwards to say that they would never have got the result that they'd got without my, I guess, being a burr in the saddle, trying to get things done.

LM: That defamation case, the Brekkie Creek mob, as you mentioned, the headline in *The Age* newspaper, that was at the time of part of the activities around the federal intervention in the Queensland branch of the Labor Party.

DM: Yes.

LM: And Clem was on the side of what was known as the old guard, those in power at the time, and then there were others on the reform movement, the new guard so to speak.

DM: Yeah.

LM: Your and Brian Halligan's involvement in Clem's legal activities there, neither of you are or were Labor Party people were you?

DM: No. In fact, the interesting thing, when I received the instructions through Clem and Brian to act for the old guard of the Labor Party, I was the president of the Liberal Party branch at The Gap. So I was obviously involved as a member of the Liberal Party. Across the table, at our meetings, would be Peter Beattie and Peter Channel, and Peter Beattie and I both went to St John's College together and we'd be there with our soup-stained ties because we were both poor in those days. I just found it intriguing that a university college friend of mine, Peter Beattie, was against me. I had Clem Jones, of course, on our side of the table. We were trying to negotiate a settlement between the old guard who had all the money and the new guard who had all the aspiration in the Labor Party, and I was the president of the Liberal Party branch at the time. So, it was a bit of a Forrest Gump experience.

LM: And the Peter Channel you mentioned there, or the late Peter Channel, was the Labor Party's solicitor.

DM: He was, absolutely.

LM: Do you think Clem looked for the best people rather than party people to do that sort of work?

DM: Well I know that Clem had a lot of friends in both sides of the political spectrum. I think Clem, intuitively, would relate to people who he had some respect for and he understood their ability to make some contribution. I think that's the case. He certainly knew from the very beginning that I was involved in the Liberal Party and my role there, so that was no barrier to Clem. There are people like John Moore who he was friendly with, who was in the Liberal Party, had a federal ministry. There was also Jim Killen of course, who was a good friend of Clem's. Obviously being in another political persuasion was no barrier to any communication with Clem.

LM: That all happened in the early '80s, that intervention issue. Now, you still stayed in Clem's orbit for many decades after that, up until his death in December 2007. What kept you in his orbit?

DM: I remember one of the first things that Clem arranged was for me to attend Lions Club meetings. He and Harold Davies proposed that I join the Lions Club of Brisbane Metropolitan, and I remain a member of that club to this day.

LM: Harold Davies, what was his position?

DM: Harold Davies, he was an engineer. He was a founder of Cardno and Davies. In fact, he was an engineer who worked on the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Harold had an illustrious career in engineering. He and Clem would often work together and it was certainly in the Lions Club of Brisbane Metropolitan.

LM: What sort of other activities did he get you involved in? You mentioned to me previously the establishment of Foodbank.

DM: Yes. Clem asked me to help establish Foodbank. What we did was, at Paul Paxton-Hall was in a firm then called Kinsey, Bennet and Gill had become Dunhill Madden Butler. I arranged with Paul Paxton-Hall to do the legals on the setting up of the company. Clem and I became founding directors for that company with others. It's interesting that in the setting up with Foodbank, Clem always had this idea that you had to have people there from across the political persuasions to ensure its security for the future. Mike Evans, who was a very senior person in the Country Party at the time, he came in on the board. Obviously Clem, Ian Brusasco who went on to become chairman of Foodbank, they were obviously Labor people. They had the Mike Evans – Country Party – and had me as the Liberal person, basically, the Liberal Party. That was another instance where Clem had a big picture view of the world and wanted to make sure that things would work well into the future. Foodbank was obviously… and today, we're giving away 14 million kilograms of food every year here in Queensland alone, 300 schools receiving school breakfast programs. That is a wonderful legacy of Clem, Foodbank, and it continues on, and I remain on the board of Foodbank, Queensland.

LM: At the same time, in that area, you had your own community activities in terms of your work with Amnesty International and the establishment of Crime Stoppers.

DM: During all that period, and when I met Clem, of course, I was also president of Amnesty International in Queensland. I had my Liberal Party involvement. I was president of Amnesty International Queensland. Then some years later I went to, I was asked to help to establish Crime Stoppers Queensland, and I became a founding director of Crime Stoppers Queensland. They were things, I guess, that Clem was well aware of, my involvement in those organisations as well. It's something that I felt very important, ultimately, most of my career I was an insurance lawyer. so I was acting for insurance company clients and Lloyds of London and over a number of decades. I had this alter ego life, in a way, where I

was involved with everything from Foodbank to Crime Stoppers to Amnesty International and so forth. That's always been important to me. Maybe Clem realised that those social engagements… and it gave me an opportunity to be involved in advocacy in public. I remember doing many media conferences on behalf of Amnesty International about human rights abuses in different parts of the world. I helped, during my term as president, I helped establish a parliamentary group when Joh [Bjelke-Petersen] was Premier here in Queensland, which didn't make Joh very happy, but we set up an Amnesty International parliamentary group here in Queensland as well.

LM: Did Clem ever express any view on that sort of activity?

DM: Clem would tease me occasionally about Amnesty International and suggest that I might be out there saving the whales or something at some stage. I think it was his gentle sense of humour, really. I think Clem, I think he respected the work I did in those organisations. The work I did in those organisations helped me a lot in terms of what Clem ultimately got me involved in as well with the republic. I remember coming home from a holiday in New Zealand and Clem rang me up at home one Sunday and said: "David, would you like to be on my ticket for the republic convention?" And I said: "Well, is it going to take much time, Clem?" And he said: "Oh, no, it won't take any time at all." So, I turn up at the office at Dunhill Madden Butler on the Monday, and Michael Lavarch was working for our law firm at the time. I'd go up to Michael and I said to Michael: "Clem's asked me to be on his ticket." And he said: "Oh, you bastard Muir." I went through a fairly rapid learning curve about what this republic was all about and what the Constitution Convention was going to be all about. As it turned out, three of us on Clem's ticket were elected. There was Anne Bunnell, the deputy mayor of Townsville, myself, and Clem number one on the ticket. The three of us ended up being sent off to Canberra for two weeks in the old parliament house debating the republic at the Constitution Convention in '98.

LM: Yes, we'll come back to the republic in another interview. Watching Clem, you mentioned his style of recruiting people. I've been told by others during this project that he was a very difficult person to say "no" to. Did he strike you like that?

DM: I think so. Clem always was one who wouldn't ask you to do something he wouldn't do himself. I think that's a fairly powerful persuasion. But you always knew that whatever Clem was involved in was worthwhile as well. You had Clem in his charismatic manner doing things that you would know that were worthwhile and important, and he would be involved and leading from the front as well. I think he was persuasive in that way, there's no doubt about that.

LM: He had a reputation, when he was Lord Mayor – of course your dealings with him were after he was Lord Mayor – but looking back through the newspaper clippings and other people I've spoken to, his time as Lord Mayor, his style in City Hall drew criticism not just from the opposition who tended to label him as a dictator, a one-

man-band, but he also got the backs of his own ALP caucus up on occasions. Did you see that side of it? Not so much the Whitlam "crash through or crash", but that sort of forceful "this must happen" type of approach?

DM: I think that's a fair comment. The thing about, Clem loved an argument as well. I can remember having lots of arguments with Clem. Good-natured arguments, but they'd be full on arguments about the merits of a particular case or whatever. One thing about Clem is you're never left guessing about what his views were. I like that in a sense, I think it's really important that people do be honest and frank with their views and you're not left guessing about what they really mean or what their agenda might be. With Clem you always knew what he was on about and why. I think I very much appreciated that way in Clem.

LM: I mentioned earlier the way he recruited people to help with a particular project or a cause. As you say, he wouldn't ask anyone to do anything he wouldn't do himself. But other people who I've spoken to mention the activities like his Wednesday afternoon tennis sessions at his Camp Hill home, and also what became known as his famous Christmas parties he'd have where people wouldn't get invited but there tended to be a condition on the invitation that if you were invited you may be asked to do something the following year. Was that the way he operated?

DM: Oh yeah, absolutely. I can remember first of all on the tennis days on a Wednesday afternoon, he'd ask me up to play there, and of course, as a busy lawyer, and having to count for every six minutes of the day, there were quite a few occasions over the years where I had to say no to Clem. "No, I can't get away, Clem. I've got this client, this and that, whatever." But one day he rang up and said: "Look, David I've got Ashley Cooper out here, former Wimbledon champion." And I really couldn't say no to not playing with Ashley Cooper. Clem could be very persuasive in that way. The Wednesday afternoons was a good example of that and Clem found a way to get me out there to get along a Wimbledon champion tennis player. In terms of others, I can remember, the Crackerjack [Carnival]… well first of all before I get to Crackajack, there was his Christmas party functions.

He would ask people there as both a thank-you and a please do this as well. It would be kind of, they'd be there as a, he'd invite people that had done things for him in the past, but he'll also invite people who hadn't done things in the past but he would like them to do things for him in the past. They were invariably of a charitable nature. People knew that they were there for the common good, as it were, and for the benefit of the community. That's the way Clem operated. I think that when you have somebody asking you to contribute in that way, it is hard to say no, because you know it's for a good cause, you know it's nothing to do with self-aggrandisement or nothing to do with self-interest but all to do with finding a way to enhance the community.

Another episode I can remember, it was a story, I wasn't there at the time, but the Crackajack Carnival… there was an episode there where it was pouring rain under

the canvas of the tents the ground was getting soggy. Clem was digging ditches around the edges of the marquee to avoid the ladies getting their shoes wet, as he said, and he saw a fellow called Kevin Rudd coming up and he promptly gave Kevin the shovel and said: "Get to work, son." That's an example of Clem doing the shovelling and then handing the shovel over to somebody else to give a hand.

LM: Throughout his career, he had at his side, his wife Sylvia Jones. What sort of interactions did you have with Sylvia and what was she like to deal with?

DM: Sylvia was very gracious. In some ways, she was the perfect foil for Clem. Because Clem would be very robust, energetic, sometimes he'd be confrontational in terms of what he wanted to do. But Sylvia was always gracious. She'd be there to smooth things over with relationships with people that Clem engaged with. She was a real lady. She was the perfect foil for Clem and she was a wonderful Lady Mayoress who obviously had an interest in art through her family connections and was instrumental in gathering together the art collection of the City Hall.

LM: When he retired as Lord Mayor he set up his office, or he kept using his office at his home at Camp Hill and had personal staff there. That seems to me to be a bit of a unique workplace. Did you ever get out there and experience the goings on there?

DM: Oh yes. Clem was unique in many ways. It's interesting, and I experience that with his various court cases too, where he would demand that the barristers or the Queen's Counsel would actually attend him at his office rather than go into the city. It was kind of, it was his fiefdom there in a way. He had staff and all the technology of the time there on tap. Clem would host a lot of people at his place rather than him going to them. He had a good set-up there with his office upstairs and some staff downstairs. And of course, the tennis court was just outside the door.

LM: One of the connections he made around the world was with a place in Scotland called Largs. Can you explain the connection there?

DM: Yes. Clem had a great appreciation of history and historical links. I think that was interesting in a lot of ways in a sense that it contributed to his perspective as a visionary. If you understand history and you have a love of history, I think that you recognise moments in history. One of the things that Clem recognised about Largs was that's where Governor [Thomas Makdougall] Brisbane was born and is now buried in the family mausoleum there. He struck up with a descendant of Governor Brisbane who was, in fact, in the House of Lords, at the time. And he struck up a relationship with him. And there used to be an annual Largs beauty queen contest in Scotland and Largs of course, is just down the road from Glasgow. It's a seaside town about 45 minutes down the road from Glasgow.

Clem, as Mayor, would host here the successful entrant in that contest. That was another way of keeping the connection going between the two places. When you go to Largs you've got the Brisbane Hotel, the Brisbane Bridge, the Brisbane taxi company, the Brisbane Valley. The thing is that a lot of people here in Brisbane, a

lot of people in Largs don't know or aren't aware of that historical connection between Governor Brisbane, who came to Australia in 1822 as Governor of New South Wales, set up Australia's first astronomical observatory in Parramatta, sent a fellow called [John] Oxley up to Queensland to find a place to establish a convict colony, found the river with the help from Indigenous [people] and some escaped convicts, I understand, named the river promptly, the Brisbane River, and then ultimately Brisbane became named Brisbane after Governor Brisbane.

This all happened because governor Brisbane had a fascination with the stars and the planets. He'd navigated his way around the northern hemisphere because he didn't trust the ship captains to getting to battle safely. After he and the Duke of Wellington prevailed against a fellow called Napolean, he then decided he wanted to turn his attention to the southern hemisphere. And with the Duke of Wellington's reference, was able to get that job in 1822 here in Australia. So that was that, you had a person there who, there was a philanthropist, a military man, and an astronomer. Very widely talented. Those connections between Largs and Scotland and Brisbane are important and of course there's Brisbane in California which completes the connection between Governor Brisbane here.

LM: And we have the Sir Thomas Brisbane Planetarium here at the Mt Coot-tha Gardens too. It seems to me, that's a bit indicative of Clem's attitude or his personality that a lot of people would find out about or know about that connection with Largs and say "oh that's very interesting" but then move on. But he seemed to devote a lot of energy to building those connections.

DM: He did. That's because he saw the importance of it. He saw the importance of maintaining that history and that connection. Hopefully that will come to fruition with the Olympic Games here in Brisbane 2032, because, as it turns out, by somewhat of a fluke, the opening day of the Olympic Games in Brisbane, 23rd of July, will be the anniversary of the birth of Governor Brisbane. So that, once again, adds an extra dimension to the historical connection.

LM: Sylvia Jones died in 1999, and Clem died in December 2007. That must have been a shock when that happened.

DM: When both of them died?

LM: When Clem left. Knowing your connections with him over many years.

DM: Yes, yes, I mean Clem, I mean, bear in mind that Clem was 80 years of age when he and I were elected to the constitution convention in '98. I can remember, at 80 years of age, Clem, quite frankly, had more energy and stamina than I did. I can remember, we'd often be there well after midnight writing speeches for the next day to give those speeches in the Old Parliament House. I can remember one episode when I think… "Clem have mercy". He seemed to be immortal in some ways in the sense that he had, at 80 years of age, had incredible energy. In his latter years, in the year or two before he died, his knees were giving him awful

trouble. He had knee surgery. He was getting more frail. After the Constitutional Convention in '98, he and I travelled around the country doing things for the republic. We went to a couple of gatherings in Canberra and other places. It became evident to me that he needed assistance to getting through airports and things of that nature. Physically, he was slowing down. But mentally, he was sharp as a tack.

I can remember, in the week that he died, Clem basically gave me an edict to do three things effectively from his bedside. One was to – and effectively, he was giving me some pointers for his eulogy – and the first thing he said, he wanted me to congratulate Kevin Rudd on becoming Prime Minister of Australia. He wanted me to encourage Kevin Rudd to come and visit the Foodbank premises. And the third thing, because the Foodbank premises was in his electorate, the federal electorate of Kevin Rudd, and he hadn't been there previously. The third thing was that he wanted me to advance the cause of the republic and urge the prime minister Kevin Rudd to take up the republic as a cause. I incorporated those three asks of Clem in my eulogy at the state funeral at the City Hall.

I remember after saying the third point about the republic, the City Hall erupted in applause. I was taken aback by that. That just shows you that Clem was always thinking over the horizon. That he had this vision. The other thing is, as far as Clem was concerned, you can never say "job done." There was always something else to do. So he was giving me, in his last days, a to-do list. Things that needed to be done that hadn't yet been done. That was the thing about Clem, is that he'd always have work to be done. It's always a work in progress.

LM: It also left directions in his will to undertake certain activities. How did you go about implementing that?

DM: There were certain things in his will, bear in mind it was a homemade will, mind you. Clem was always that way, he always had his own way of doing things. One of the issues that I had to think about and do some research about was in terms of voluntary assisted dying. That was a provision in his will about… requiring law reform in Australia to assist people in end of life. That's something I didn't know much about, to be frank. We spent, myself and fellow trustees, spent some time researching the issue of voluntary assisted dying. Eventually we worked out a way, a focus that we knew that we wanted a central point here in Australia to advance the cause. We came upon Marshall Perron, who was the architect of the laws originally in the Northern Territory all those years ago. So he became our connecting point with Dying with Dignity around Australia. So we worked with him.

We took the view that we needed to focus initially on South Australia and Victoria in particular because those states had many debates on the subject. I can remember in years later, copping some criticisms from people up here, that we didn't focus immediately on Queensland. The reality was that we had to get, and we had better opportunity of getting law reform in those other states before Queensland. Once we were approached by Andrew Denton, to fund his campaign

in Victoria, and the ultimate success of that campaign meant that we then had a template that we could take to Queensland and we could advocate for Queensland, which we did successfully ultimately. So that was one subject that was in his will that I had to know and research more about.

LM: Had he raised that issue with you before?

DM: No, he hadn't, actually. He gave me an advanced copy of his will before he died so I knew that was in there. But we hadn't really had a conversation about that topic while he was alive, so hence the need to do the research. The other thing in his will, which is interesting, he had a great view of the future. He was thinking about stem cell work in medical research many many years before it became a popular thought. That was another issue where we had to do some research in terms of how best to use Clem's money, where to get the best leverage for medical research, and ultimately we chose three projects. One at the Brain Institute, the Queensland Brain Institute at UQ [University of Queensland]. One at Griffith University and one at Bond University, in relation to initially Alzheimer's research at UQ and stem cell repair work on the spine at Griffith and curing blindness and macular degeneration at Bond. We were fortunate we had at least one of our trustees is Dr Maurice Heiner. He had input obviously into some of the science that was going on at the time. It took us a number of years to work out where to put Clem's money. It's the same with voluntary assisted dying. We took our time to make sure that the money was going to get the most leverage.

LM: You mentioned about taking your time, the timing was pretty positive for you, wasn't it? Peter Beattie had kicked off the whole Smart State program, so there was an appetite for that sort of investment into research locally. Chuck Feeney of course, another philanthropist, played a big role in that. In terms of the work at the brain institute on dementia, what drove his interest in that?

DM: Well I think Clem was always fascinated by the brain. It's one of those things, it's a bit like the unexplored universe. We're still learning, every day, new things about the brain. But also the fact that the brain could be regrown and how plastic it was. It wasn't just a static organ in the body. As I said, Clem was fascinated by the science and with stem cells. [Professor] Perry Bartlett was the head of the Queensland Brain Institute at the time and he told a compelling story about what they were doing at the Queensland Brain Institute. You're right, timing was really good for us because one of those words in the English language I like is the word called "serendipity". It was serendipitous that Chuck Feeney with Peter Beattie had constructed the premises of the Queensland Brain Institute, and that provided a house for the Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research.

There was serendipity in that and there was an infrastructure in place. Griffith University also has been a leading researcher for many years. We now have the head there of that Clem centre, James St John, following Alan Mackay-Sim who was the previous Australian of the year. There were impressive individuals in charge of those centres. Jurgen Gotz of course, is the head of the Clem Jones Ageing

Dementia Research Centre at Brain Institute. These are very exceptional scientists, and we're now getting some of the best scientists in the world in these places. You need an infrastructure to get the best in the world here, and that infrastructure was in place by the time we came along.

LM: Other legacies of Clem, particularly through his will or through the activities of the trustees since, support for people like the Brisbane Strikers, that carried on for a little while, he loved football, or soccer, as some people still call it. That was another instruction?

DM: Yes, it was. In his will he instructed us to provide funding for a decade to the Strikers. That was something that Clem had a real focus for youth and sport. One of Clem's sayings was that "You engage youth with sport and you keep them out of court." That's one aspect of it. But he had a genuine love of sport anyway, and everything from billiards and snooker to cricket to soccer. All these great range of sports that Clem had life memberships in through his generosity over the years. The Strikers was another provision in Clem's world, another bequest. So that was something… in a lot of ways, Clem, in his will, left some really clear guideposts for us as trustees and executors to navigate the things that we had to do to fulfill his wishes and philosophies. We were fortunate in that his will was very detailed in terms of the things that he supported in the past, and the things that he wanted us to support in the future.

LM: On his support for cricket you mentioned, after he died, you carried out or you finalised a gift that he made to Warehouse Cricket.

DM: Yes, Marchant Park, the clubhouse there burnt down. While Clem was alive, and Phil Cook was a St John's College friend of mine, in fact, was very much involved in Warehouse Cricket at time. They approached Clem for some ideas about funding a new clubhouse. They didn't actually come to Clem to directly ask him for money but by the time they'd finished their entreaties to Clem out at Camp Hill at his house, he just wrote a check for $100,000. The work of the clubhouse was completed after Clem died. I was called upon to officiate at the opening of the Warehouse Cricket new clubhouse that was funded by Clem Jones.

LM: He did make a lot of money in his career as a surveyor and turned surveying into a business. He was obviously a very canny investor in shares and property and other things. But his attitude to money doesn't seem to be to spend it on himself, as people have told me, he was always looking for someone else to spend it on. Is that the way you saw it?

DM: Yes. Clem was one of those philanthropists who lived a modest life himself. Didn't see the need to drive a flash motorcar, certainly didn't see the need to have a jet aircraft or a boat. The money that he made was used for the benefit of the community and for his causes. There's no doubt about that. Clem could have bought the flashest car in the street. He could have bought a jet aircraft if he wanted to. He could have bought a boat. All these things that sometimes the

flashy, wealthy people buy. The toys. But Clem didn't have interest in the toys, he was more interested in society and the benefit of society. He lived his life .. and that's another reason why people find it hard to say no to Clem, because he lived a modest life, and he lived a life where he was devoting his wealth for the community and for good causes.

LM: The YMCA was another beneficiary of his decisions outlined in his will?

DM: Yes. YMCA was important for, Clem saw the YMCA as doing an important role in society, that they provide education for those who would otherwise miss out. There's a Clem Jones [school] campus down in the Logan area there. That's under the auspices of the YMCA. They provide education to those who wouldn't qualify for tertiary education, would ordinarily fall between the cracks. That's the other thing about, Clem was always looking to give help to those who would fall between the cracks. Those who didn't have big professional fundraisers to help them. Those who were doing things to help people that no one otherwise would help. He'd be seeking out those things. Clem saw education as being really, really important.

He valued his education and the opportunity he had for education at Church of England Grammar School, which would not have happened for him but for his father's role at the school. I can remember Clem saying how grateful he was, too, that the University of Queensland gave him some fee relief there as a young student. Bearing in mind that Clem came from quite working class and quite stringent financial background, and so the registrar at the University he felt was kind to him. That's the other reason why Clem is so generous towards universities in funding, because he recognised the importance that they played in his life to give him an opportunity to create the life he did with surveying initially and then of course all the other things leading up to Lord Mayor and many other things after that.

LM: And that's born out in the number of scholarships that are funded in his name.

DM: Absolutely right. Those scholarships are needs-based which really goes really into the DNA of Clem Jones. He wanted those scholarships to be needs-based to pick up those people to give them opportunities that otherwise they may not have. He also had a great interest in regional Queensland, regional Australia, because the people in the regions miss out. With his surveying business, gave me intimate knowledge of regional Australia, regional Queensland in particular. He had a great affinity for the regions and local government. It was one of those things that he saw as a vital part of the structure of our democracy, is local government and people in the regions.

LM: On the issue of those scholarships, they're sporting scholarships in his name at University of Queensland and Griffith Uni, but the most recent one at University of Southern Queensland helps people in his original profession, surveying.

DM: Yes, and that was a really nice endowment that was able to be initiated by the Clem Jones Group. It involved a collaboration with Maha Sinnathamby and Bob Sharpless of Springfield City [Group], who founded the city. Geoff Wright, it was a nice way to, basically onto the memory of Geoff Wright, and when we were at endowment ceremony the other day, his widow, Jackie, was there with family. To recognise the role that people like Geoff Wright played in the Clem Jones Group and all things, Clem, over many years, as a volunteer as well as a surveyor. Geoff was the one that probably knew more about the dirt at Springfield city than Maha and Bob Sharpless and he actually planted the pegs in the remote corners of that city.

LM: That's when he and Clem had a firm together.

DM: They had a firm together and a surveying business. This is well after the previous surveying business that Clem had established and after Clem had served his time as Lord Mayor from '61 to '75. It's a nice way to honour both Geoff, and Geoff was a driving force as a volunteer with the Strikers, for many years, unheralded. The work that he did there at the Strikers was enormous. It was nice that Geoff could be acknowledged with Clem with a common interest in surveying, a common interest in volunteering and in community generally.

LM: Speaking of acknowledgement, the other prize that the trustees have decided upon is honouring Sylvia Jones.

DM: Yes. Sylvia, once again, I think that not enough can be said about Sylvia Jones. She was the person that was the backstop to Clem in many ways as Lord Mayor, but also, in her own right, was a driving force in the art collection. We now have this annual endowment in Sylvia's name at the Brisbane Portrait Prize, which gives an award to the best female painter each year at the Brisbane Portrait Prize. Sylvia Jones also has her name on a boardroom at Customs House, the Sylvia Jones Boardroom, which is a beautiful boardroom there in her memory. So it's really important, we believe, to acknowledge those who helped Clem achieve his ambitions in life.

LM: Looking back, do you think that you've adopted some of Clem's characteristics or approaches in your, first of all, in your professional life before you retired, but just in the way you get things done?

DM: I'd like to think so. I think that Clem was unique in what he was. I think the best way of putting this is, Clem was inspiring in what he did. One aspires to do some of the things that Clem did. I think Clem was really unique and I'd like to think that Clem would give me some approval for some of the things… Clem was a hard marker, and a hard marker against himself too. I think he would give the trustees a tick for the work that we've done on voluntary assisted dying, with every state in Australia now having those laws and the territories are following up close behind, hopefully. I think Clem would be, at least, satisfied with that. But as Clem was always… it's always a work in progress.

LM: Thanks very much for that. As I mentioned earlier, we'll come back to the republic in a separate interview. Thanks for doing that interview this morning.

DM: Thank you, Lindsay.

[end of recording]