

## **DAVID JOHN CLAPPISON (“CLAPPO”)**

1940 – 2013

### ***A Most Congenial Geologist***

David was born in Brisbane to Reg and Phyllis Clappison on 31 October 1940. Reg was a Senior Geologist and later Chief Geologist with WMC (and also renowned for the “Clappison Wedge”) so, common to many families connected to this profession, David’s family moved regularly, residing in Norseman, Boulder and Kalgoorlie before relocating from the Goldfields to Stawell in 1950.

In 1953 David enrolled at Ballarat Grammar as a boarder and entered enthusiastically into a very full range of activities there. These included participating in all sports including rowing in the first crew, as well as singing in the school choir and acting in the annual school play. His status amongst his peers at Ballarat Grammar was recognised when he was made the School Captain in his final year (1959).

He was awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship and from 1960 to 1965 he undertook Bachelor of Science with Honours and Master of Science degrees at the University of Melbourne, majoring in Geology. His Master’s thesis, which was awarded Honours, was entitled “A Study of the Petrology, Mineralogy and Geochemistry of the Stawell Goldfield, Victoria”. For a number of his university years he was resident at Trinity College where he pursued a wide range of activities with the same zest he had shown at school, including representing and then coaching the College in rowing. He also consolidated his love of Australian Rules football and was a lifetime follower of the game, converting subsequently as a resident of Sydney from being a Melbourne Demons supporter to being a loyal follower of the Sydney Swans. It is also worth recording that his final undergraduate year at Melbourne University had a fearsome reputation for drinking, helping establish a benchmark that he was clearly determined not to disgrace over the succeeding decades.

In May 1965 David joined Chapman, Wood, Griswold and Evans Pty Ltd whose sole client was Austminex and which in time morphed into Mineral Engineers Pty Ltd consulting to CSR Limited. In turn Minerals Engineers was absorbed into CSR and was the forerunner of Pacminex and subsequently the CSR Minerals Division. David stayed as a geologist with CSR until CSR divested its mineral resources businesses in 1988. As would be expected over such an extended period, David worked in a variety of geological roles on a very large range of projects spread across Australia, making and keeping many friendships amongst his colleagues for the rest of his life.

From 1988 to 1992 David worked as a consultant/contract geologist, from 1993 to 1997 as an internal geological consultant to Niugini Mining Limited and from 1997 as an investor and a geological consultant, including six years with International Base Metals Limited. He was a Member of The Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy for 52 years and a staunch supporter of both the Sydney Mineral Exploration and Discussion Group (SMEDG) and the Sydney Mining Club.

David will best be remembered in the geological fraternity for his equable and convivial nature. With a keenly developed sense of humour, often self-deprecating, and apt

comments on life, mining and sports he was excellent company be it in bush camps or pubs or in an urban setting. A number of his better known one-liners are attached. Always keen for a beer and a yarn, one of his memorable expressions used late in the working day was that it was “beer o’clock”. His friendships were many and enduring as evidenced by the flood of anecdotes that have arrived following his passing (also attached). All testify to him being a loyal mate.

We will seriously miss Clappo and our collective sympathy is extended to his son James and his sister Nina.

**Michael Leggo and Ian Neuss**