

## **LINCOLN MCCLATCHIE**

### **1936-2018**

Lincoln McClatchie passed away on 31 December 2018 whilst in the bush doing what he loved.

Lincoln's career spanned sixty years, the first thirteen years in government then the next forty seven in the junior mineral exploration sector. He was an active field geologist for all that time. Clearly his was an extraordinary career.

Lincoln started his professional career when he joined the Geological Survey of NSW on 27 March 1958 as an Assistant Geologist on a salary of 1048 pounds. For those here under the age of sixty, by way of explanation, that is about 2100 dollars per annum.

Don Nicholson recalls when they worked together in Ferrous and Allied group in the Metallic Minerals Section of the GS. The big focus in those days was on tin and particularly in the New England.

Then, geological survey geologists provided technical support to the many small miners and prospectors. In the late fifties and sixties this resulted in many hundreds of reports prepared on the numerous mineral shows around the state.

Lincoln worked with Don Nicholson, Des Wynn and many others on tin projects especially in the New England such as the Pipeclay tin mine in the Mole area. The geological survey spent a lot of time in this region and the geologists' accommodation and watering hole Ma Gurk's pub at Emmaville became part of folk history.

Subsequently Lincoln was also involved in the famous geological mapping project south of Captains Flat in the early 1960s and led by Len Hall.

In 1968 he completed an MSc thesis on the geology and mineralisation of the Mineral Hill area, north of Condobolin, which was published in 1971 as a Geology Memoir by the NSWGS.

A search of the NSW Government's DIGS database shows Lincoln responsible for several hundred reports and publications from both his time in the Geological Survey and subsequently in exploration. He described numerous mines and prospects across NSW.

In the mid 1960s, he was appointed Principal Geologist of the then Metallics Section.

Lincoln was also a critical part of the Commonwealth Bureau of Mineral Resources-Geological Survey of NSW annual cricket matches being one of the few real cricketers among the NSW contingent.

When I joined the Survey as a graduate geologist in 1970 Lincoln was my first boss as the Principal Geologist of the Metallics Section.

Lincoln was often late for work and thus frequently ran foul of bureaucracy, notwithstanding the fact that he stayed at work well after everyone else had left for the day. My desk was outside his office and I frequently was privy to heated discussions between himself and his manager about being late or some other transgression. Lincoln loved the field and geology but he clearly hated the Public Service strictures. He was a free spirit and oh so idiosyncratic!

He resigned from the Geological Survey in 1971 but continued to be a regular in the GS library and he and Al Bashford the librarian had an enduring friendship. Lincoln assiduously mined the information systems there seeking out exploration opportunities.

Many of us continued to see Lincoln on a social basis at the Dunbarton Castle and then the Metropole Hotel where we enjoyed many a beer together. Lincoln was forever trying to give up smoking and when he joined us in the pub many of us still smoked. He took the view that he had to avoid buying a pack of cigarettes which would get him back on the habit. So, on many, many occasions he smoked that very popular brand that we then called OPs.

Lincoln left a lasting legacy with my family. In 1979, after I moved into what would be our family home at Rozelle, Lincoln offered me a Border Collie pup. Whoopy, as we named him, proved to be a wonderful dog and a cherished part of my family for the next fifteen years. He was always keen to know about our Whoopy.

Lincoln teamed up with Mal Bird in the early seventies and regularly suggested available prospects he thought had potential. Mal formed a private company, Sulphide Exploration P/L with Lincoln as a Director, which went on to investigate numerous exploration properties, mainly through JV agreements.

In 1983, Mal, Lincoln and Warren Staude floated Central West Gold NL, which then occupied the major part of Lincoln's time. Then in 1987 Mount Conqueror Minerals NL was floated and changed its name to Morning Star Gold NL after acquiring the Morning Star Mine at Woods Point in Victoria. In 2012, Lincoln and Mal ceased their involvement in both companies. Lincoln, nevertheless, continued to seek out further exploration opportunities.

Over the past ten years Lincoln worked closely with Andrew Slood and Fender Geophysics.

A few years ago, the NSW government made extensive changes to the tenement administration process. This caused the industry immense grief. As Lincoln mostly did all the reporting and renewals himself he received a 43 page form from government to complete as a part of a tenement renewal.

Lincoln told Andrew Slood, "Andrew, my exploration days are over!!" And he went on to express his views in a most colourful way. It was the "bloody paper work" that threatened to end Lincoln's career as a passionate explorer. Lincoln, however,

forever persistent, continued on and even the department couldn't douse that flame that burned within.

Lincoln never cared too much for presentation. He relied purely on his intellect and technical capabilities as well as his warm friendly character. Absolutely and completely unpretentious was our Lincoln and his field "clobber", of course, was very much "ultra casual". Rather, Lincoln was all personality and brains.

Andrew Slood shared a more recent memory. He and Lincoln met for coffee at Artarmon, and Lincoln uncharacteristically turned up in a fancy collared shirt. They had two coffees and then went their separate ways. Lincoln then had a "turn" and ended up at Royal North Shore for heart surgery. Later, Andrew said to Lincoln that it must have been the second coffee. Lincoln fired back "no, it was that bloody shirt!!"

The junior exploration sector is often a hand-to-mouth type of existence. We struggle to raise money from the market to explore and are forever fending off threats from the Department to cancel exploration tenements for underperformance. That is the lot of the junior exploration company and Lincoln struggled with this for much of his career.

Lincoln has been variably described as idiosyncratic, laconic, and rebellious of authority. For a very individualistic mineral exploration geologist, arguably these can be strengths. Lincoln, however, was much more than that. He was a careful geologist who put in the hard yards. He had a formidable intellect and a phenomenal memory. His research was exhaustive. Lincoln never gave up, whether it was geology, sport, or dealing with bureaucracy.

Lincoln's principal legacy is that of shared memories which he leaves to his family and close friends. He touched many more lives, however, including those of his many other friends, business partners and professional colleagues.

His professional and scientific contribution, however, is enormous. He has gifted a stunning technical legacy to both this and future generations.

The last time I saw Lincoln was on the SMEDG Harbour Cruise on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December (2019). He still had new ideas, new schemes, and new dreams!

Ladies and gentlemen, we have all lost a wonderful character. He loved geology and he loved the field. A very sad end, yes, ... but perhaps a very fitting conclusion to a wonderful career.

The industry that he loved will miss him terribly.

Farewell Lincoln, and we all thank you!

*Lindsay Gilligan 16 January 2019*