

## **Vale David Robertson**

**(13 January 1925 - 24 September 2017)**

David's father, a Scotsman, was a tailor/ cutter who conducted a business at Rozelle. He died when Dave was in his early teenage years. The Robertson family initially lived in Nelson St Annandale between Booth St and the Crescent and moved to Kentville Street Annandale in 1935. After the death of Dave's father, his mother acquired a sandwich shop in Mallet Street Camperdown. Several years later Dave's mother remarried and the family moved back to Nelson St Annandale.

Dave went to North Annandale Primary School in Johnson St, and was in the same class as the future Glebe Hockey Club Life Member, the late Mrs. Molly Wark and future Glebe Hockey Club player John Lansley. After leaving primary school Dave went to Drummoyne Boys High School, where he was in the same class as Harry Wark, who also went on to become a Glebe Life Member. It was while a student at Drummoyne Boys' High that Dave was introduced to the sport of hockey, where he played for the school team. Drummoyne Boys High School closed in 1990.

On leaving school aged 15 years, Dave joined the Glebe District Hockey Club to continue his hockey sporting interest. In that first year, he played eight games in the fourth grade team and scored three goals. In 1943 at the age of 18 years Dave captained the Club's third grade team and scored 13 goals of the team's total of 35 for the season.

In 1944 Dave was on the Club's Social Committee with Harry Butler and Jack Taylor and played in the Club's second grade team. By the end of 1948 season Dave had played 112 games for Glebe. In 1949 Dave was on the Club's Selection Committee. From 1946-1948 and again in 1956 and 1957 Dave was on the Club's Management Committee.

In 1952 Dave captained the Club's third grade team. The 1952 Annual Report had this to say about Dave: "By businessman out of "The Red". By the end of the 1955 season Dave had played 202 Club games. To quote the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade report in the Annual Report of that year: "Dave Robertson, another of the older players (writer's note--he was 30 at the time) and although not as fat as he was once, can still give most young players a lesson in stick work". Dave and his wife, Della's third child was born during the 1955 season, and his fourth child was born in 1957. They were destined to have another two children.

By the time Dave played his last season with the Club in 1958, he had played 245 Club games. His 1958 third grade team won the Sydney Hockey Association Third Grade competition. Alongside Dave in third grade that year was Pat Nilan, who went on to become one of Glebe's outstanding players

Dave had expanding business interests, and an expanding family, which restricted the amount of time he could devote to training and playing hockey. The Club was sorry to see Dave retire after the 1958 season.

Dave continued to receive a copy of the Red Rag Newsletter after his hockey playing days were over, and he followed the Club's progress with great interest. He was still receiving the Red Rag when he was 90 years of age. He had a warm, friendly disposition and was gregarious by nature, maintaining contact with many of his playing day's mates. Dave and his circle of ex-Glebe players discussed the good old days and the Club's current progress with close interest. Dave was a Glebe man through and through.

After he stopped playing hockey Dave developed an interest in equestrian activities, an interest he held until the end of his life.

When he left school Dave, did a toolmaking apprenticeship. Shortly after he finished his training he started his own business and he soon teamed up with his school mate from the North Annandale Public School, John Lansley. John, who had just completed his apprenticeship in Fitting & Turning, worked with David developing their engineering skills.

The business was started at Camperdown in the garage of the family home/shop and then continued at Nelson Street Annandale when Dave's mother moved back there.

Jack Lansley played hockey for the Club from 1943-1949, taking the field for 93 games in the lower grades for Glebe.

Another Glebe District Hockey Club Member, Harry Butler, did a fitting and turning apprenticeship in the early 1940s. Harry played hockey with Dave. They got to talking about employment and job opportunities. Most of these discussions were held while they were pursuing their hockey interests in the early 1940s. Harry joined Dave in the tool making business in the mid-1940s. Harry worked in the business until he retired in 1989, never having worked anywhere else.

As business increased it was necessary to acquire more space in which to operate. The business was moved to premises in Catherine Street Leichhardt where the Company's Head Office is still located.

The Company, Robertson & Lansley Pty Limited, was registered and incorporated on 26th June 1947, and the name was subsequently shortened to Roblan.

In 2017 Roblan has factories at Holsworthy in south-west Sydney and in Melbourne.

Interestingly a young accountant Jack McPharland (1948-1959, 146 Club games) became the Club's Auditor in 1949, a position he held for many years, and he played in the same team as Dave Robertson. Dave recognized Jack McParland's accounting talents while he was sorting out a financial mess at the Hockey Club and he gave Jack a job at Roblan, which at the time was on the lookout for an accountant. Jack subsequently became Chief Financial Officer of the Company and worked at Roblan until he retired.

The founders of Roblan and a couple of key personnel in its early years had a strong connection with the Glebe District Hockey Club.

Dave married twice. His first wife Della died aged in her 80s and Dave later married Nancy who also predeceased him.

Dave made a substantial contribution to his fellow human beings here on earth and led a long, full and productive life. The Hockey Club extends its condolences to the Robertson Family on Dave's passing. He made a substantial contribution to Club affairs in the 1940s and 50s, and we whole heartedly thank him for his contribution.

May the Lord welcome Dave into his Kingdom and grant him Eternal Life. Rest in Peace Dave Robertson.

An account of Dave's business achievements was written by the current managing Director of Roblan Mr. Eric Martin is shown below:



A Stalwart in Australian Manufacturing and Toolmaking Industry passed away last Sunday 24th September 2017. David Sharpe Robertson

Chairman of Directors of Roblan Pty Ltd and Associated Companies

Roblan Pty Limited's founding Chairman. David began the Company over fifty years ago, based upon his belief in Australian enterprise and his ability as a skilled toolmaker. David's leadership, his close friendship with his partners and work mates, and his determination to succeed were the foundations upon which the business has flourished.

David was the Founding President of the Australian Toolmaking Association, Past President of the Main Anjou Cattle Breeders Association, and a member of the Australian Metal Trades Association, with whom he has served on numerous committees and Industry Development work groups.

Through David's efforts, the trade of Toolmaking was accepted and approved by the Industrial Commission of New South Wales. Many businesses within the Australian Manufacturing Industry currently employ Roblan trained executives and managers. Their skills and

experience are attributable to David Robertson's dedication to properly planned training programmes for all apprentices, trainees and employees.

David will be sadly missed by all of his Roblan friends and associates.

On behalf of Fellow Board Members, Staff and Employees of Roblan Pty Ltd may I express our sincere condolences to all of David's Family,

Eric Martin

Managing Director Roblan Pty Ltd