



## Whitehill F.P. Club Newsletter

Issue XIX, August 2020

This issue of the Newsletter has a sporting feel to it. We thank previous "Heedie", Bob Hutcheson, for drawing attention to the story of Jimmy Mason, and to Ron Fernand for his diligence in discovering via the web, the world beating exploits of George Parsonage. Also as promised we have the follow up story from our correspondent, Alan Wright, in the antipodes.

### Jimmy Mason- Footballer

James Mason was a Scottish footballer who played for Third Lanark and Scotland. An inside forward, born in 1919, he grew up in Dennistoun and attended Whitehill School. Mason played for Thirds between 1936 and 1952 and he was awarded 7 caps for the Scottish national team. He scored in four of the internationals including the 3-1 defeat of England in April 1949. Other great results included a 5-0 thrashing of Belgium in 1951 and an 8-2 defeat of Northern Ireland in 1949. Mason scored in both of these games. How times have changed!

Third Lanark F.C. was founded in 1872 and was wound up in 1967.



## George Parsonage - "Two Men in a Boat"

The internet continues to throw up surprises. Ron Fernand has spent a lot of time surfing the web over the past few months and his researches have uncovered a story which few will have known about.

George Parsonage, whom we all know as a teacher, artist, sculptor but primarily for his Humane Society work on the river, has a less well known side.

In May 1975 he set a solo World Record on rowing the length of Loch Ness, some 22 miles, in 2 hours, 43 minutes and 34 seconds. The row raised over £800 for school funds. A year or so later this record was broken by a coxed eight of average age 15.

George, together with Peter Haining, a world champion, regained the record in 1993 in a time of 2 hours, 28 minutes and 9 seconds. This record stood for 26 years and was only bettered in 2019 by a team of **14** crew in a lightweight carbon fibre boat. They claimed to have "smashed" the record, then admitted to having a tail wind over the second half of the course. They were only 1 minute and 12 seconds faster!!



## A Further Letter from Australia (Part 2) - Alan Wright.

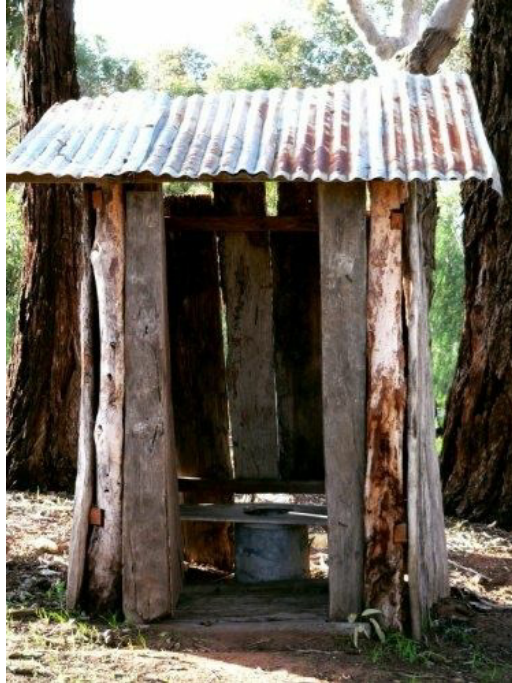
*We arrived at Sydney Airport on 27th October, 1969 to a temperature of about 30C and high humidity, to be met by the Pfizer personnel manager wearing a safari suit and Ian and Grace Halliday, friends from schooldays, also suitable clad. We had left a cold and damp London and I had on a suit and tie, naively done to make a good impression on arrival!*

*We settled into our accommodation which had been arranged for us and as it was an older property and we had two young children we were warned about the risk of creepy crawlies likely to be lurking in dark corners, and under stuff lying about in the yard. In particular spiders such as the Red Back and the Sydney Funnel Web.*





*The Funnel Web on the left can grow up to 5cm long and can be aggressive during the mating season; November to April. The Red Backs tend to be mostly passive! Antivenin has been developed for both of these spiders and although no deaths have been reported resulting from their bites since 1980, a bite can make you seriously sick. Many properties on the outskirts of Sydney and in the outback had no inside toilet but had a 'dunny' in the backyard and that could be a haven for 'wildlife'. (for additional 'dunny' information, read Clive James, Unreliable Memoirs)*



*Our first Christmas was spent with the Halliday family in their caravan on a beach near Wollongong, about 100km south of Sydney. The ladies and children slept in the caravan and the blokes (good Aussie word) outside. Much commotion from the caravan during the night as it was thought a possum had been in looking for fruit! The beach BBQ was typically Aussie and as was the custom in those days all the ladies were in a group and all of the blokes clustered round the barbie clutching ice cold cans of beer. To break away from the group to talk to any of the females just wasn't done. So different from our UK experience. Having started work soon after we arrived, a car was essential and so I acquired a second hand Holden ( the Australian made icon). I didn't have to pass a test as my UK licence was deemed equivalent. What I wasn't aware of initially, were some quirky differences in the road rules. For example, traffic had to give way to any vehicle entering from the right-hand side.i.e. give way to the right, even on major roads. Fortunately this no longer applies. Other examples which still apply are that all vehicles must park facing the same way as the traffic flow (no pommie parking) and vehicles can overtake on the inside. It was generally accepted that if 'newcomers' survived for two years, the negative comparisons to things 'back home' would have diminished to just memories, but we settled in very quickly to life down under.*

**We will have more from Alan in the next newsletter. If you have a story to tell let me know and we can include it in future Newsletters.**

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