

LAURIE TURNBULL – ALTRUIST & LACROSSE BUILDER

WRITTEN IN FEBRUARY 2022

The first section was written by Graham Rose (Kuljak Lacrosse Club) in 2010 and the latter section from a history written by Horrie Webber and others

The first part of this biography focuses on Laurie Turnbull, the man, and his remarkable life of altruism, including his contribution to lacrosse in W.A., Australia and to world lacrosse. Without Laurie's dogged determination we may never have seen an international lacrosse organization formed, which would bring about world competition, have one controlling body that would bring about harmonization of the rules or laws of lacrosse, including rules for the conduct of world championships, which up until 1974 were so different that the only common linkage really was that they were defined as men's lacrosse rules.

In a speech to the Kuljak Lacrosse Club in Perth in 2010, some 18 years after Laurie Turnbull had passed, Graham Rose, the president of Kuljak, spoke on the life and contribution of one of Australian lacrosse' greatest builders, not a capable and long serving administrator, but a builder, and that was Laurie Turnbull. The following is a significant extract of that speech, which provides a very interesting and informative insight into the life of Laurie Turnbull.

"I speak of none other than Laurie Turnbull, who passed away at 78 years of age in 1992. Firstly, I would like to give you an insight, to this remarkable man before touching on his lacrosse career. His other activities, outside of lacrosse became closely linked and provided him with the opportunities to attain his greatest achievements.

Born in 1914, Laurie had a very happy marriage with four children, namely three girls and a son named Ross who by his own skill, proved to be a champion lacrosse centreman, for Subiaco, Western Australia and Australia.

As a successful businessman Laurie took opportunities when they presented themselves, and became known by the family and close friends as "Lucky Laurie".

Laurie's business career started in the office of Harris Scarfe & Sandovers, then to a corner deli in Como. He became State Manager for two different agencies and then his own business, which distributed statewide products such as Primus Camping Gear and assorted other items. He also entered into a partnership with a nearby neighbour with a building product, which was in time sold to a very large company.

One Saturday morning, being a man who believed in bricks and mortar, while reading the paper Laurie saw an advertisement for an auction for a property in Perth on Beaufort Street. He thought this looked interesting and immediately raced off to the auction. The property failed to meet the reserve price. Laurie then proceeded to negotiate with the owners and settled a deal. Typically, he then went to the bank to ask for funds to support the purchase.

The main tenant at the time was Frank Parry, brother of Kevin of Parry's Department Store and America's Cup fame. The business was a retail electrical store named Stirling Lane. The company later got into financial trouble and "Lucky Laurie" decided to buy the shop, and run it himself under his name. He sold it in 1980 but it didn't mean that he had retired. He virtually worked up to the day he died.

To call Laurie a busy man, was no stretch of the imagination, living in Nedlands meant that he got involved with the community and gained a seat on the Council. Owning a property in the City of Perth, that sure enough meant he went further and won a seat on the City Council. This is the reason lacrosse had so many civic receptions for visiting state and international teams during that time. In 1981 he became Deputy Lord Mayor. In the same year he was awarded with an Order of the British Empire for his contributions to local government and the community.

Laurie was an immaculate dresser, impeccable without blemish. In his travels from meeting to meeting, he could be seen often with his portable battery operated shaver, shaving in the rear vision mirror whilst driving. One of his weaknesses, if you could call it that, was his love of his Jaguar car. It was his pride and joy.

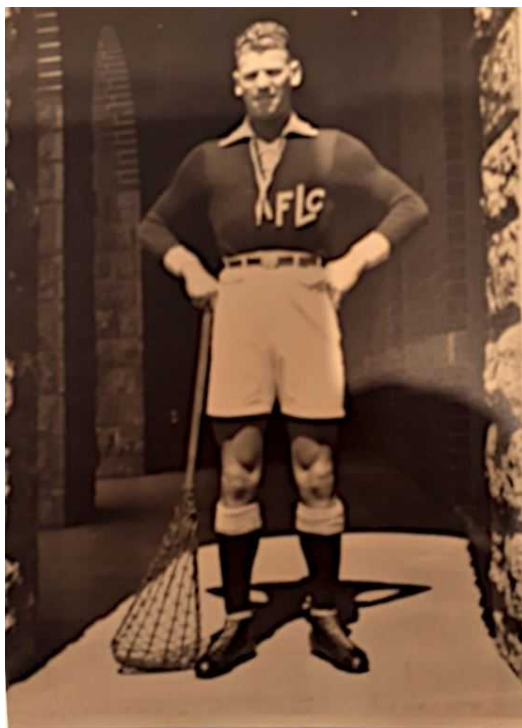
Laurie had a soft side to his nature for the under privileged, hence his involvement in a host of other activities, providing help and support to many people in many walks of life. He was also a Justice of the Peace and was the Commonwealth Magistrates Association (London) Australian representative. His was a sympathetic ear on the WA Parole Board. It doesn't finish there. He was a member of the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority, the WA Fire Brigade Board, Youth Council of WA, Metropolitan Water Appeals Board, Health Education Council, a Life Member of Rostrum, President of the Plastics Institute of Australia, Secretary of the National Fitness Association, Chairman of the Perth Chamber of Commerce Manufacturers - Agents Section, Council member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, Officer for the Young Australia League, a Councillor of the Royal Association of Justices of WA. In addition Laurie was a very committed Freemason. Not satisfied in being a leader in his own group, he went on to become the Grand Master of Freemasons in W.A.

One might ask what drove this man? In a word he was "passionate" and in a few words "Obstacles were a challenge". You will see more of this when I speak of his lacrosse history and achievements.

How did an individual such as Laurie, store so much energy for all these time consuming activities despite having a pacemaker? As I stated earlier, he was a fitness fanatic, he could take five minute cat naps at any place or any time. If he wasn't talking you knew he was taking a quick nap. He was a rower, squash player, golfer and a long distance swimmer. He enjoyed being out in his boat that finished up being a 23' Bertram. He was also a reader, but put him in front of the TV and he immediately fell asleep.

In his retirement Laurie was the state distributor and stockist on behalf of the Freemasons. A memory held dear, was when he was introduced to Prince Philip they shook hands and both acknowledged their comradeship as masons.

During his latter years Laurie enjoyed travelling to the U.S.A. his favourite location. He thoroughly appreciated going up the Amazon River. In Alaska he went white polar bear spotting by plane. He was a people person. He knew many and many knew him.



Laurie started playing lacrosse in 1928 as a 13 or 14 year old junior with Fremantle. He played right up until a motor accident in the Army in 1937.

Laurie joined the Army well before WW2 but never saw active service due to the horrific accident in 1937 where he fell off the back of a truck. It ended his playing career except for one game after the war. A metal plate was inserted in his head after lying for 6 months on a board. He also spent another 3 months in hospital because of TB circa 1950.

This did not reduce his passion for lacrosse. He was a referee for 25 years at local, national and international levels. Laurie refereed in the 1970 carnival in Adelaide and we believe refereed a match between the visiting Baltimore Lancers and W.A. in 1970.

On the administration side he progressed through a variety of positions at his club to finally becoming club president and subsequently awarded a life membership.

Laurie was WALA President from 1963-67 and again was recognized for his service with a life membership of the Association in 1961. In due course he became President of the Australian Lacrosse Council (A.L.C.), and unsurprisingly was inducted as a Fellow of Lacrosse in Australia in 1988, the inaugural year of fellowships from the then peak body, A.L.C.

The crown of all his lacrosse achievements came in the area of international lacrosse and he left an enduring legacy, which must always be remembered. It all started in 1959 when a combined American university team, University of Virginia and Washington & Lee, visited Australia and played several games in W.A., and went on to S.A. and Victoria where they played a test match against Australia at the M.C.G., only the second time an international team had visited Australia.

Two of the visitors stayed with Laurie while in Perth. They were responsible in converting an aspiring and promising footballer in Ross to play lacrosse. All they did was put a stick in his hand and throw the ball to him from then on he was hooked.

The seed of international lacrosse was planted in the mind of Laurie by the American tour, once there it was never to go away, with firm resolve he developed the idea and pursued it to the end. Until 1974 there had never been an international lacrosse tournament (Noting that in 1967 the American team was in fact Mt Washington, not a team selected from around the country, it was the best team).

The passion was there, so was the commitment, any obstacles were treated as a challenge. Gently and persuasively, he introduced people to his ideas and way of thinking. Some took their time, while others grasped the situation readily.

Laurie made trips to the USA, Canada and England to try and build up the idea of international lacrosse. He was able to tie it in with official trips on behalf of the many organisations and boards he was involved with, particularly on the justice committees. While overseas he took time out to speak to the respective lacrosse bodies along with numerous telephone communications. His understanding was that the U.S.A. was quite happy with just their internal competitions, and didn't embrace the idea with the same level of passion that Laurie did. The English were more receptive, probably because there was more of a natural relationship with Australia. The same applied with Canada.

However Laurie persisted and within a remarkable three years in 1962 organised and managed the first Australian lacrosse team to leave our shores, to compete in games in both England and USA. The Americans did not want it to be a recognized team but welcomed them to play matches against some powerful universities on the east coast.

Still, after 1962 the Americans were not totally convinced, but Laurie was more so. To reinforce his commitment, he was involved with our national team in 1967 that toured America, Canada and England to play in a proper competition that included Canada and England.

The first ever world championship was held in Melbourne in 1974 although Toronto in 1967 subsequently received that recognition as well. Since then we now have an under 19 competition. Not to be outdone the women, also run international championships. A small step by Laurie has become a mighty big leap for lacrosse.

1974 saw the founding of the International Lacrosse Federation that has as its mission, to promote and develop the game of lacrosse throughout the world, to establish rules and regulations for international competition, and conduct of world championships. It is a vastly different story today, with the enormous world growth compared to the early days.

Who did the ILF turn to as their inaugural president? - Our Laurie Turnbull of course, who held that role with distinction from 1974-1977. While president he donated the shield for the winner of the world championships. The Americans are now following his initiative by working very hard on promoting the game throughout the world.

As a word of caution the Americans approached the Australian Organising Committee for the 2002 World Championships held here in Perth, to sound us out, to see whether or not we could change the name and shield. Of course they like the biggest and brightest in everything. In fairness it is only a modest trophy, but it represents so much more than its appearance. We must not let the memory of Laurie Turnbull fade. We must continue to ensure his name is at the forefront of international lacrosse.

Due to Laurie visiting the England Lacrosse Association several times in England he was honoured by the Centurion Lacrosse Club as an honorary member for services

rendered to international lacrosse. He was also a guest of the Centurions at the dinners held at the Houses of Parliament for the Australian team management and captains in 1962, 1967 and 1972.

It is hard to realise that the origins of international lacrosse started in W.A. It happened because of a man with the foresight and energy of Laurie Turnbull. He did it virtually single handedly after gaining approval from the A.L.C. When he became the President of the A.L.C. in 1965 he was able to quicken the pace towards true competitive international championships. Laurie was President of A.L.C. from 1965-1968 and was President of the W.A.L.A. from 1963-1968. While the exact dates are not known Laurie was the W.A.L.A. delegate to A.L.C. from circa 1961 until he became president in 1965.

In W.A., players today, without too much thought, use American equipment. For many years after WW2, when Australia and lacrosse were trying to rebuild there were very tough import and currency restrictions that precluded or limited lacrosse equipment being imported. When the restrictions were eased, Laurie Turnbull along with others helped organize our first container of American supplies to W.A.. Money was tight in those days and the bank insisted on a bank guarantee. To help fund this project a number of officials and players assumed the financial risk relating to this shipment”.

The following are extracts from a history of lacrosse in Australia (From a Victorian perspective) written by Horrie Webber and others, which brings out the tenacity and endurance of Laurie Turnbull to not only bring about world lacrosse and world championships, but to unite lacrosse nations to grow the game and unify the various codes or laws of lacrosse for international competition. It all started in 1961 and had it not been for Laurie Turnbull it was doomed to fail.

While the following coverage of the events leading up to 1962 is lengthy, it is essential to understand the politics and financial position of lacrosse in those times, and just as importantly the cost of overseas travel and the time taken, with a 2-3 month trip costing a player or official the equivalent of 6 months income, thus no apology is given as it is informative and more importantly highlights the tenacity and negotiating skills of people like Laurie Turnbull and Noel Jeffrey.

“In 1961 the Victorian Amateur Lacrosse Association was most heavily preoccupied with the visit of an Australian team to the United States of America. This was a huge undertaking which presented difficulties at many levels.

The biggest hurdle was convincing club members that effort and expenditure on such a venture was justified. There were members of lacrosse clubs in all states, and especially in Victoria, who disapproved of the already considerable proportion of club funds which was absorbed by interstate games and carnivals. It is obvious, of course that any moneys available to associations originate from clubs. The expense of conducting annual interstate games against South Australia at two levels was already considerable. Added to this was the expenditure every three years on the national championships. Sending a team to the United States would require a lot of money, even if players of sufficient quality could be found who were prepared to pay their own way. Money had to be raised over and above the cost of participation in interstate games and carnivals.

The V.A.L.A. had learned by experience the health of the association depended on willing co-operation with member clubs. The team to visit America was to be an

Australian team. It therefore came under the jurisdiction of the A.L.C, and information filtered rather slowly through to state associations. At the Executive Committee meeting in March 1961 some concern is evident, for it is stated that the Hon. Secretary had written to the Australian Lacrosse Council for the latest report and details of the proposed American visit. The Victorian association was anxious to enlist the support of clubs from the beginning by keeping them informed of developments. This meeting took place in April 1961 with the express business of ascertaining the views of clubs concerning the visit, and to prepare recommendations to the annual meeting of the A.L.C. on 8 May 1961.

During the course of the meeting the Secretary stated that no states had yet given formal approval. This would be resolved at the A.L.C. AGM on 5 May.

The views of the S.A. association were read to the meeting where they recommended:

- a) The team should be the strongest available;
- b) Twenty-four players should be selected, 8 from each of the active states, Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria;
- c) A coach and a manager should be additional;
- d) The possibility of attracting sponsorship should be explored;
- e) The American association should be asked for the number of men they expected to form the party;
- f) Projects for raising funds should be actively supported;
- g) The question was raised whether the tickets should be return tickets to America or a round trip going through England;
- h) All selected players should be active in fundraising;
- i) All selected players were expected to remain active in the game for at least three years after their return from the United States.

They suggested that the selection of players should be based on:

- a) Equality between the states;
- b) At least 2 university men should be included;
- c) Ability and availability;
- d) Officials accompanying the team should be selected by the A.L.C.
- e) Each state should be equally represented on the selection committee

The S.A. association recommended that the trip be subsidized. They also were of the opinion that both the trip and the states carnival should be held in 1962.

The Victorian association concurred with most of these views, but differed from them in certain matters. These were:

- a) The number of players selected from the states should be in proportion to the amount of money raised by each state;
- b) The coach should be non-playing;
- c) A baggage master should be selected by the manager from among the players;
- d) Team secretary and treasurer should be similarly appointed;
- e) The American host clubs be asked to provide a masseur or a first aid man for the Australian team. They did not support the inclusion in the party of a trainer;

- f) The payment of a full fare subsidy to members of the party, but if the funds available proved insufficient, players may be required to pay a portion of their own fare;
- g) Taking out personal accident insurance for players should be investigated;
- h) The Council should obtain as soon as possible the details of the rules of the game as played in America.
- i) The United States association should be asked to arrange as soon as possible discussions to bring about uniformity in the rules as they were interpreted in America, Canada and Britain.
- j) A.L.C. should investigate the advisability of protective equipment as might be required in games played under American rules;
- k) A.L.C. should provide the players with uniform sweaters, socks and track suits.

There was only one really controversial matter arising from these additional recommendations, and that was the basis on which the representatives for the international team should be selected. We do not know exactly what brought this contentious note into discussions. We do know from the annual report of the W.A. association that the American trip received only luke-warm support from their registered players. Probably a similar coolness existed in South Australia. If this was the case, the attitude would have been well known to Victorians through their official and unofficial contacts. Victorian registered players no doubt felt that they were disinclined to subsidize other states, who were reluctant to bear their share of the financial load.

We should be under no illusion the money for the trip had to be raised by comparatively few people. From the report of the V.A.L.A. Record Secretary, presented to the annual meeting in 1961, we learn that there was a total of 824 registered players in the Victorian association, 427 of which were juniors. No doubt the parents and supporters of the junior teams would have subscribed to the fund raising schemes of the Victorian association, the financial responsibility for raising funds for the American trip must lie on the 397 senior players. The situation in Western Australia was a total of 488 players with no information as to the proportion of senior to juniors, but it is probably similar to that in Victoria. The Western Australians had an active association of past players. The figures for South Australia were no doubt similar to those of Western Australia. This meant that Victoria had about the same number of registered players as Western Australia and South Australia combined. What might have been more pertinent was the number of players representing each state in the composite team. It is probable that the Victorian association would have been happy to contribute its share, but it was not so pleased with the attitude of players in other states. The annual report of the Western Australian association for 1961 states (Page 2) "Despite early apathy among the clubs, it is most gratifying to report that this state will be represented in the first Australian lacrosse team to tour overseas."

The South Australian attitude was shown at the meeting of the A.L.C. at which the South Australian delegate stated that his association withdrew its support for the American visit. It was this sort of apathy which the Victorian association wished to discourage.

Not every state had a member on its Executive with the plans and energy of Mr Noel Jeffrey. Without his efforts the Victorian finances would have been more modest. Through his "Special Efforts" he raised £5000 towards the American tour. Since 1955 he had raised over £10,000 for the Association.

The reaction in Victoria was immediate. They had supported the proposal to send a team to America from the beginning. At a general committee meeting in November 1961 they passed the motion "That this meeting resolves that a team should be sent to the U.S.A, in March 1962, opportunity to be given to S.A.L.A and W.A.L.A players of suitable calibre to join the team at their own expense. Applications is to be made to the A.L.C to grant the team recognition as an Australian team.

A sub-committee consisting of Messrs Noel Jeffrey, Frank Hogarth and Cleve Weatherill was appointed to take care of all matters appertaining to the successful implementation of the committee's decision to send a team to the U. S. A.

It was also moved that Mr Laurie Turnbull, the original W.A.L.A nominee for manager, to manage to team, travelling at his own expense as already suggested by himself.

Further information regarding the withdrawal of support for the trip to U.S.A appears in the minutes of the A.L.C. In the record of the A.L.C meeting held in Melbourne July 1961 it appears that South Australia supported the project, at least at official levels. Mr K. Roennfeldt was named by the South Australian delegate as the selector for South Australia on the selection committee for the team to visit the U.S.A. The S.A.L.A also presented the name of a South Australian candidate for the position of manager. The South Australian delegate, Mr Don Hobbs, stated that his association had just started a fundraising effort aimed at raising £4000.

He stated that the S.A.L.A had 17 players available, provided that the bulk of the cost of the airfares was found by the Association. It was possible that the number might be increased to 20 or 30. He was confident that, irrespective of the result of the South Australian association's appeal, his state would fill its quota of eight players.

The situation in Western Australia was different. Their delegate, Mr Robinson stated that only three players had stated that they would be available. Despite several meetings and the efforts of several officers, no progress had been made towards raising funds, and Western Australia had no money in hand. There was a general feeling of apathy among members as a whole, who considered that the visit would not be in the best interests of the game in Australia. This view was not shared by senior officials of the association. The apathy amongst members was possibly the result of the intense interest in the forthcoming Empire (Commonwealth) Games in Perth in 1962.

At the Council meeting held in Melbourne on 11 November 1961 the clouds began to appear on the horizon. Mr Roennfeldt, the South Australian nominee for Australian coach, withdrew his nomination. He did so with reluctance, wished the team every success, and expressed his hope that the visit would do much for the game in Australia and as an international sport. A letter from the South Australian association stated that they expected to provide 8 players, and wished to reserve the right to take up any additional allocations of players from Western Australia.

The Western Australian association was more guarded. They would have one player, perhaps more. The stated delegates were asked if they had anything to add to the information contained in these letters.

The South Australian delegate, Mr Holloway, then said that he had been instructed by his association to withdraw South Australia's entire support for the American visit. Their

fundraising effort had been unsuccessful. Only £55 had been raised. With one exception, the players were unwilling to provide their own finance.

The officials of the South Australian association deeply regretted their decision, but player support had been negligible, and it had been necessary to employ a professional fund raiser. His collection amounted to only £600, the net proceeds of which were £55.

The position in Western Australia had changed little. There were two more possibilities of candidates for the team. They had several promises of support from business people which they would follow up.

The Victorian delegate, Mr Ponton, stated that, although the V.A.L.A. was in a position to send more than its quota of players, he could not commit his association to supporting a manager, a coach, and between 21 to 24 players.

A motion was carried that a letter be sent the American lacrosse authorities advising them that the A.L.C. was unable to carry out plans made for a team to visit them in 1962. It appears that the letter was not sent. It is not minuted among the correspondence at the next meeting of the A.L.C., which was held on 11 December 1961.

At this meeting a letter was received from the Victorian association asking for A.L.C. approval for a team to visit the U.S.A. in 1962, and that such a team be classified an Australian team. A list of names of players from Victoria was submitted for ratification, and requesting permission to add such other selected players of suitable calibre as may be available from member associations to the number of 24.

A letter had been received from the S.A.L.A., dated November 1961, advising that no players from South Australia wished to be included in the Australian team for the American tour.

The President of the A.L.C. stated that he had received information that players in South Australia had not been notified of the opportunity offered to them by the Victorian association. Though he sympathised with the difficulties of the South Australian association, he considered it a serious matter if players willing and able to make the trip were not kept fully informed of the opportunity presented by the invitation of the V.A.L.A.

Mr Turnbull, from Western Australia, the manager designate, supported the allegation. He had asked a S.A.L.A. official to arrange for him to meet potential players from South Australia on his way across to Victoria but on reaching Adelaide he found it impossible to do this. He had obtained the addresses of two, possibly three players, who might join the team, but he found that the players were not aware of efforts to continue the trip were still being made. The general feeling was that if the visit was arranged, South Australia would be represented.

The question then arose as to whether such a composite team should be styled as "an Australian" team. There was opposition from the South Australian delegate, Mr Church. As it was uncertain if any South Australian players would be included, he felt that the style "Australian" was improper. Any such team should contain representatives from the three states where lacrosse was played. The best players from every state, he insisted should be included in an Australian team. The motion granting permission that

the team to tour America be called an Australian team was put and carried by two votes to one, Mr Church dissenting.

The situation concerning the expenses of sending the team to the U.S.A. were made clear.

Each member shall go on condition that he is responsible for his own fare and personal expenses. Players would deal directly with their state associations as to what proportion of their fare and expense should come from their own pockets. No association would be responsible for the fare and expenses of players of another association, or of the manager and coach.

This was the situation at the end of 1961. A firm commitment had been made to arrange for the visit of the Australian team to the United States. The tour was to begin in March, 1962. Much work had still to be done, and the difficulties facing A.L.C. were still great.

The season of 1961 concluded with a visit to the United States of America and possibly Great Britain having been sanctioned by the A.L.C. The assent was given grudgingly, and then only because the V.A.L.A. intimated that they were prepared to organize the tour themselves if the A.L.C. could not see its way to carrying it out. The South Australian association had failed lamentably in its attempts to raise funds for the international tour, and Western Australia had done little better. There seemed to be a sharp divergence between the views of the administrators and those of the rank and file players and supporters in those states.

Thus in spite of apathy and/or a lack of fundraising capability from two states, disturbances within the A.L.C., and details of the English section of the tour still incomplete, the touring party assembled in Melbourne and on 11 March 1962 flew to Sydney where they were greeted by two stewards of lacrosse, Alan Bamford and Allan Vial. Clearly without the dogged determination and detailed organization by Laurie Turnbull and the fund raising and organization by Noel Jeffrey in Melbourne, the inaugural Australia team to leave our shores may never have happened. The team left Melbourne with the English leg of the tour still in doubt!"

Moving forward

Laurie Turnbull was president of A.L.C. in 1967 (As well as President of the W.A.L.A.) but was still heavily involved in the organization of the 1967 tour, forging relationships with lacrosse leaders everywhere he went.

Until 1972 there had not been any real cohesion in international lacrosse. Though there were similarities in the game as played in different countries, there were also fundamental differences.

Thus the unification of the rules, given such impetus by the Australian authorities, and taken up with some reluctance by other lacrosse playing countries may have saved the game from becoming an isometric exercise played under various names, in different regions; or indeed from complete disintegration. Of course, the need to standardize rules had begun prior to 1972, but by 1972 sufficient important contacts had been made in different parts of the world for real progress to have been made. The names of men such as Noel Jeffrey and Laurie Turnbull carried weight in international deliberations and Judge Hammerman in America carried similar influence. The project of a world

championship in 1974 made it imperative that a generally accepted code of laws must be devised, and became the final incentive.

The Australian team was met with great cordiality in England in 1972. Members were invited to the Centurion dinner in the House of Commons. The manager (Laurie Turnbull) in his official report wrote: "I report that formal discussions were held with the appropriate officers in America, Canada and England. Where the writer had had some misgivings as to the possibility of Canada and England sending a team to Melbourne in 1974 for the anticipated World Series, these are now changed considerably. Coincidentally, both those teams received from their respective governments 50% of the airfares necessary to send teams overseas. A full report will be forthcoming from the Liaison Officer of the International Federation of Amateur Lacrosse (IAFL), "I will briefly say that it appears almost certain that we can expect a team from all countries in 1974." Laurie Turnbull concluded his report in these words: "There is no doubt in my mind that the greatest achievement of the team, was the wonderful international relations forged, which has been further cemented between so many families of all ages, university students and leading sporting identities." There is no doubt that the 1972 international tour was a wonderful success in every way.

The publication "All Sports" (1 June 1972) wrote: "We have been told exclusively that following the success of the tour, the IAFL, has selected Melbourne as the host city for the 1974 world series".



Above is Laurie with the 1972 Australian team at Disneyland at the start of a very successful tour, which Laurie organized and led as manager.

The 1974 World Lacrosse Championship boasts the distinction of being the first official ILF Championships because the ILF became formalized in 1973 with a constitution, by-laws, and rules for membership and play. Former ILF President Tom Hayes of the USA recalled after 1992 "Australian Laurie Turnbull, now deceased, travelled widely on business trips. He and Henry Volk, President of the A.L.C., started having discussions

about forming a true ILF in 1972 and these discussions ranged across the lacrosse world based on Turnbull's trips." From his playing days with the Fremantle Club in the 1920s Laurie was involved in the administration of lacrosse from the club level to his role as manager of the first Australian touring team in 1962. He was W.A. delegate to A.L.C. from circa 1961 until he became president of the A.L.C. in 1965, he was president of A.L.C. from 1965-68, was president of W.A.L.A. from 1963 - 68 and then president of the ILF from 1974-1978. The Laurie Turnbull Shield, donated by the man himself, is awarded to the winner of the World Championships and was first presented in 1974 to the U.S.A. team by Laurie in Melbourne".

Clive Carr, another legend of lacrosse from S.A. and also a Fellow of the A.L.C. commented "The original organization was called IFAL or International Federation of Amateur Lacrosse and to the best of my knowledge never met formally at any time. The first constitution for today's ILF was drafted by Henry Volk of Melbourne and was agreed to by postal voting in 1972 or 1973. Laurie was the first president and I was the first secretary but after the 1974 World Championships these roles were filled by England, then rotating every four years according to the venue of the next championship. This was maintained until 1994 when it was agreed these officers should be elected from the best persons available irrespective of their country".

CONCLUSION

Laurie Turnbull passed away in 1992 aged 78, having made an outstanding contribution to lacrosse in W.A., Australia and world lacrosse. While Laurie Turnbull was a very capable and industrious administrator of the game of lacrosse, more importantly he was a rare commodity in our great game, he was a builder and an innovator, in a game where money doesn't talk very loudly and personal initiative and sacrifice are required for little personal gain other than seeing the game you love grow. He forged relationships that resulted in 4 nations initially getting together from 1974 to play lacrosse, under a unified set of rules, which has now grown to over 60 nations now participating.

Where would international lacrosse be if Laurie Turnbull had not been so determined and persuasive as he was in 1961/62?

No doubt the creator would have been amused and pleased with Laurie's game.