

# THE MOLLISONS

Greg, Paul, Dean and Glenn grew up in the western suburbs, around Sunshine and Niddrie. Their father was killed in 1965 in an industrial accident at Koo Wee Rup when Greg was 9, Paul 7, Dean 3 and Glen 1. Life was clearly difficult for Margaret, a 33 year old widow with 5 kids under the age of 9. Putting food on the table and clothes on our backs was the number one priority, we would go around to building sites after school and collect scrap copper and wire off-cuts to sell, collect bottles and mow lawns for 20 cents - it all helped. Rabbit became our staple meat because we could catch them in the paddocks around Sunshine.

Dean recalls "We were living in Parramatta in 1972/73 not far from the Parramatta gaol, a very tough area to live in, and if you couldn't fight you were in trouble"! The family returned to Melbourne in 1973, with mum and 3 of her children living in Niddrie and Greg and Paul sharing a house in Sunshine with their now brother in law Gary Smithwick.

Greg recalls his introduction to lacrosse was in 1968 while attending Tottenham Technical School where there was an announcement over the PA system "Anyone interested in lacrosse could go to room 12 for a presentation at 1.00pm. So I had a choice - lacrosse in room 12 or maths in room 13 ....I went to room 12!"

According to Greg "I played my first game the next Saturday on the "Hat" in Willy. I was picked up at "Totty" Tech every Saturday morning by either Robin Lourensz or Don Harris.

Paul recently told your reporter that he became interested when he was on the bus in Essex Street, Footscray and saw my brother and I throwing a ball around our front yard, and started playing the following year, 1969.

The next year Tottenham Tech. entered a team in the Mal Taylor local comp at Willy, which was supported by Harold Doerner, who had started teaching PE at Totty and played lacrosse for Altona. In 1970 back at the Mal Taylor comp we had a couple of FLC kids, including Les Richards, son of Keith Richards, join our U14 team and I also started playing at U16s after my games in the Willy Comp. I usually got taken to that game by Neil Clark who lived in Maidstone. Paul tagged along and I can remember walking to U16 training at Roberts Street where we played matches in the centre of the bike track - long walk from Sunshine and home again."

Because the family was moving around a fair bit Greg only played one full year in Under 16s, in 1972, and thereafter was playing senior lacrosse.

The four Mollison boys have always been fanatical about the great game and became a key part in not only saving Footscray from extinction in the late 1970s, the path so many clubs have taken, but in building Footscray into probably the most powerful and well run club in the country, which has 4 grounds at one venue and great clubhouse facilities to accommodate domestic and interstate competitions.

While the Mollison boys have been a key part of and remain a key part of Footscray, they have also been significantly involved in box or indoor lacrosse since it was re-introduced in Victoria in 1977, as well as women's lacrosse.

Both Greg and Paul played in the inaugural Australian box lacrosse team that toured Western Canada in 1978 and played two demonstration games at the Edmonton Commonwealth Games. Paul also played in the inaugural box lacrosse world series in Vancouver in 1980.

From that time, like many others, their eyes were opened to the wonders of box lacrosse, the skills and speed that this version of the game requires, and became and remain heavily involved in it as players, coaches and administrators.

Greg has been and is still involved in coaching men's and women's lacrosse, having recently successfully coached the Victorian senior men's team to victory in June 2019 at the national championships.

Paul has been Secretary of Lacrosse Victoria, is currently on the ALA Board, and is a life member of Footscray and LV.

Glen is also a life member of Footscray.

If you go to a match at Footscray it would be highly unlikely you wouldn't see at least one or two of the Mollisons.



Left to right above – Greg, Meghan, Thomas, Dean, Erin, Sarah, Glen & Paul

## AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION HISTORY

Greg played in 1978, 84 & 85 box teams, coached ASPAC U23 team in 2009, and 2015 box team. As at 2019 Greg has now coached 52 state teams both women's, men's, boys' and girls'.

Paul played in 1978, 80, 84 & 85 box teams, coached 1985 box team, coached U19 women's team in 2007.

Dean and Glen both played in 1984 & 85 Australian box teams.

Meghan (Greg's daughter) played in the U19 team in 1995 (World Champions) and assistant coach of the U19 women's team in 2007.

Erin (Greg's daughter) played in the U19 team in 1999 (Silver) and in the 2013 Australian touring team to the USA.

Sarah (Paul's daughter) played in the U19 team in 2003, senior team in 2006, 10, 14, 18, as well as captain of Maryland, which won the NCAA title in 2010.

Thomas (Dean's son) played in the U19 team in 2013

Missing from the photo are:—

Nelly (Glen's daughter) was captain of the 2015 U19 team

Kane (Glen's son) played in the 2012 U23 ASPAC team