

Windsor Knots

White boys in starched white shirts, windsor knots and cuffs rolled up just so. Daily filling our brains with quadratic equations, Keynesian theory, classical mechanics, the Periodic Table, Latin and the Bard. Struggling with offbeats on the clarinet along with Nick, and those Dam(n)busters. Our teachers, some great, some good, a few mediocre and two evil. Critical thinking under the gaze of names long gone. The VC winner, Governors, Nobel Prize Laureates, Professors, Oscar winners, Judges, Olympians and World Champions, Wallabies, Cricketers, and our first accidental PM.

We were pretty much the same back then. Middle class conservative church going families. Same age but you were a year behind. You didn't like having a nickname back then. Occasionally you tolerated Scotty. Nicknames were too common and crude for you. Rowing and rugby the elite sports of the privileged few. Not cricket and definitely not rugby league. The Sharks were nowhere to be seen or heard. No supporter's hat upon your head. You weren't ScoMo you were emphatically Scott.

On the 438 everyday to Abbotsford and our dilapidated sheds. Five nights in every week. Sinewed bodies slow roasted by river's glare and sun. Blue blades sweeping and chopping. A trickle of water



Steak fried rice and chips or half a chook and three veg fuelling our quest for glory. Homework enforced, or not, by the duty Father, what a job. 38 growing teenage boys. But you included the Bible in your reading. I thought it a bit weird. I worked out talking snakes were not a thing despite what my parents said. That whole critical thinking thing.

Tired foam on timber beds, lights off at 10pm sleeping till dawn the river calling again. Quick hands and slow down the slide. The sun rising in our eyes. Eight weetbix and toast. Returning on the 438, in our shirts not so starched, windsor knots and cuffs just so.

That year we did okay. Your VIII came third and my VIII came fourth. Best results in a long time. We whipped your arses at the CHS regatta by quite a few lengths too. Then I finished and left. I was not sorry to bid you farewell.

I went off to serve and ended up crippled from helping the poor and desperate. Seeing the brutality of war, the smell of BBQ'd flesh. It's nothing like the smell of the BBQ'd snags at Bunnings. With that cap on your head and the market tested nickname of ScoMo. In your starched shirt and cuffs rolled up just so. Sometimes a windsor knot in LNP blue. Then you speak and all we hear is #ScottyFromMarketing and the #MessiahFromThe Shire. All spin cliché and meaningless tripe. You know you're not a daggy dad. You were never going to be a daggy dad. No one could even call you Scotty all those years ago. Fibbing

about your holiday. My BFF saw you at your hotel. She said you looked very comfortable as the nation burned and people died.

I am embarrassed that one day in the Great Hall of SBHS you will added to the pantheon of great men whose names gazed down on our learning. The learning of science, and maths, literature, art and language. The ability to think critically and with compassion. What happened to you?

