

Many in Brisbane would be unfamiliar with the legacy of Brisbane's longest-serving lord mayor, Clem Jones. After all it was 43 years ago, back in 1975, when he last led Brisbane City Council, bringing to an end his 14 years in City Hall.

Clem, as he was known to almost everyone, was a surveyor and property developer who became got rid of Brisbane's backyard dunnies by sewerage the city. He created new parks and city libraries and prepared the Gabba's cricket wicket. In his later years, he was the chairman of the Brisbane Strikers, which won the National Soccer League title in 1997.

Clem, after whom the Clem7 tunnel was named, would have been 100 this year. He was born on January 16 1918 and died before Christmas in 2007.

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From Thursday morning, a life-size, 100-kilogram, 1.8-metre bronze statue of Mr Jones will stand outside the entrance to City Hall.

At the foot of the sculpture is one of his favourite quotes, from British philosopher, Bertrand Russell: "One must care about a world one will never see."

The sculpture, by Phillip Piperides, who has cast the Darren Lockyer statue outside Lang Park and the Bee Gees at Redcliffe, was paid for by the Clem Jones Trust.

Trust chairman David Muir said Clem would have appreciated the statue's location. "He loved the people of Brisbane and he would really love being back among the people of Brisbane," Mr Muir said. Mr Muir said Mr Jones, a proud republican, could keep watch on the statue of King George V also outside City Hall.

"So there is a delicious little irony in that. The republican former lord mayor will be able to keep an eye on King George V," he said. "In fact, Clem told me this story when he met the Queen who pointed to the statue outside Brisbane City Hall and she said 'grandfather is pointing the wrong way'. Clem didn't know what she was talking about the statue of King George V, who was astride his horse pointing 'towards' City Hall rather than outwards, so Clem then later rectified that."

Mr Piperides said it took three months to prepare the clay mould and then a further three months to cast Clem's statue.

“It was designed from numerous photographs, probably about 15 of them,” he said. We tried to compile images of him as a 50 to 60 year old and eventually we got the portrait of him you see today.”

Mr Muir congratulated Mr Piperides for his work. “Phillip has captured for current and future generations the real, energetic, and active Clem Jones in a most remarkable way,” he said.

Clem Jones's legacy

- He retired as mayor in 1975 and headed the Darwin Reconstruction Committee after the city was flattened by Cyclone Tracy on Christmas Day 1974.
- In 1990 he ran the Western Queensland Flood Appeal.
- Since 2007 around \$25 million has been distributed by trustees of his estate through the Clem Jones Foundation, the Clem Jones Estate, and the Clem Jones Group with medical research a major focus.
- The Clem Jones Foundation has provided \$3.2 million over eight years to establish and operate the [Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research](#) (CADRC) at the University of Queensland Brain Institute. Researchers there are hopeful of finding a cure for Alzheimer’s and ageing dementia.
- With the help of \$4.2 million over eight years the [Clem Jones Research Centre for Regenerative Medicine](#) at Bond University focuses on the use of stem cells in the repair of human tissue and treatment of disease, including age-related macular degeneration (AMD).
- The Clem Jones Foundation has provided \$2.6 million over eight years to the [Clem Jones Centre for Neurobiology and Stem Cell Research](#) at Griffith University which is conducting research into the transplantation of a patient’s own stem cells to repair spinal cord damage