

The Australian Society for the Study of Labour History (Adelaide Branch) Inc

You are invited to our



Quiz night



to be held

SATURDAY 18 MAY 2013

in the

Community Hall, Church of Good Shepherd

7 St Albans Place, CLEARVIEW

Parking and entrance off Fairview Terrace

SPECIAL GUEST QUIZMASTER



FRANCES BEDFORD MP



Entry: \$10.00 per person

7.30 pm start

'A NIGHT OF HISTORY, FUN, ENTERTAINMENT AND GOOD OLD LABOUR CAMARADERIE'

Book Early – Tables of up to 10 people
Contact Gary Lockwood phone 8262 2812
or e-mail - gary.marie.l@bigpond.com

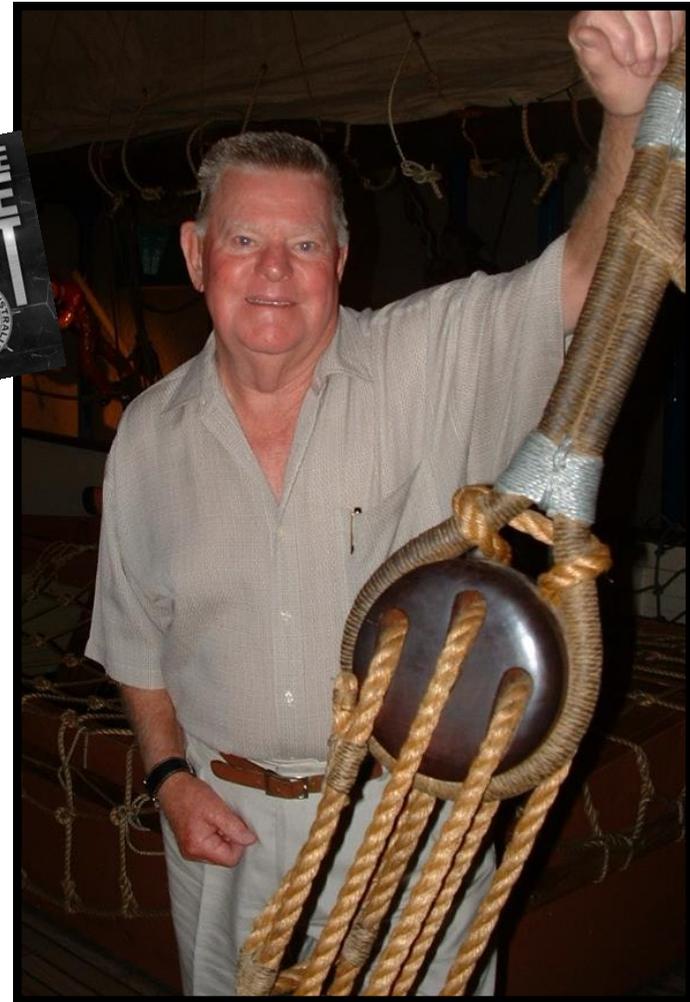
Fundraising evening to assist the Adelaide Branch of the ASSLH to have representation at the National Conference to be held in Sydney from 11th – 13th July 2013.

SA LABOUR HISTORY NEWS

Australian Society for the Study of Labour History
(Adelaide Branch)



Autumn
2013



**This edition is dedicated
to the late Rex Munn stalwart of the MUA
and man of many talents**

Message from the President

SHATTERED DREAMS



I recently read a book* on political issues and the further I went the more depressed I became about what I was reading. It challenged all my core beliefs in many of the great achievements of some great Labor Governments and most of my 'heroes' were painted as incompetent failures and in some cases even corrupt administrations – yes I completed reading it – felt for a time gutted – but eventually put it aside and many months later I am still questioning

– trying to rationalise the authors' views – trying to slot his views into a bit of balance.

Mind you – some of the long held views I had about the CIA involvement in the dismissal of the Whitlam Government were confirmed. My views about Doctor Evatt in the post war years rose into five star rating level and some of the dirty secrets Australia has held in its treatment of Indigenous people emerged so true that the areas I did not want to believe, especially about the Hawke and Keating Governments ...just left me gasping – just demanding I look out for some other views – try and help me arrive at my view of history regarding these matters.

There must be many in the Labour movement at the moment who are shattered as the history of the NSW Labor Party is being written before our eyes – ICAC revelations must surely reveal what happens when a political Party is taken over by self-serving people – I think the factional system – the period of the rule by the Machine in SA and the subsequent control of the whole Party by the Farrell Right is not healthy over here either – gene pool reduction – poor selection and clear warnings from NSW of what can go so very wrong.

No wonder many in the Labour Movement these days have 'shattered Dreams'.

The History of the Labour Movement and the role of the Labor Party within it cannot always be 'good news' but in difficult times a historical Movement like ours is worthy of continued membership support – we remain the connecting point for so many – especially those feeling a little lost to the Labour Cause. Hang in there.

Gary Lockwood

* *A Secret Country* by John Pilger

Aims and Objectives

The Australian Society for the Study of Labour History was founded in 1961 to study "the working class situation ... and social history in the fullest sense". The Society aims not only to encourage teaching and research in labour history but also the preservation of the records of working people and the labour movement. It desires to make history a vital part of popular consciousness, a matter for reflection and debate, at a time when it is under attack from prominent conservative intellectuals.

Executive Committee 2012-2013

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Except where explicitly stated, news, commentary and discussion are provided for educational and information purposes and **do not** represent the official position of the Society.

Meetings are usually held at the Box Factory in Regent Street South, Adelaide and are advertised through the newsletter, by email and by post to members and friends. Admission is free and all are welcome.

This newsletter is a publication of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History. It is not affiliated to the Australian Labor Party or any other political party.

It is edited by Allison Murchie on behalf of the ASSLH (Adelaide Branch).

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Old Days on the Waterfront re-lived in Port Adelaide (cont)

job, you're frightened to turn on the bloody steam, you're tryin' to hang the bloody job out. I'm not interested in you, get a job somewhere else.

'Righto, I want four strong holdies and I mean strong, not frightened of a bit of bloody work. Diva, Kellerman, Redder, Virgilio — you'll do. And have a look at these. These boots are nearly worn out. If I don't get new boots soon they'll be new bloody holdies.

'I wouldn't waste me time on some of you blokes, you wouldn't sweat in a bloody fit. I don't want you Wilson, you're a trouble makin' bastard. You're always whingeing about safety on the job. I've got an easy job here for a horse dragger. Selwyn, you'll do and don't forget to pay me tab up at the Railway Hotel or you won't get a bloody job next week.

'Now the rest of these jobs are shore jobs. I want ten strong men to work. Not skinny, under-nourished bloody weaklings. Let's have a look, who do I want? Not much good tryin' to pick out any amongst ya. There's only one thing to do. I'll throw the bloody lot at ya and ya have to fight for 'em. Strongest wins. Here! It's the best way I know to get strong men. Righto, there'll be another pick up at one o'clock. Don't bank on gettin' a job, shippin's scarce. That's the end of the pick up.'

They then marched through historic Port Adelaide behind a brass band to the Water-side Workers Hall. The special guest speaker was Jim Tannock, Deputy National Secretary of the union who said:

'In life as we move forward not often enough do we pause to look back and appreciate some of the things we have done in the past that makes it a better place to live in now.'

Led by the powerful voice of Rex Munn everyone sang Solidarity Forever and other working class songs. This great day was the collective effort of Rex Munn, Arthur Shertock and Keith Ridgeway.

Source: The Guardian 8.10.2003 OH 991 Mortlock Library.

From Page 15



The National Treasure is **Barry Jones**. Barry Jones was also a quiz-show champion, confounding the quiz writers on "Bob Dyer's Pick A Box" on several occasions in the early-mid 1960s. He was a teacher, a DJ and in 2000 was appointed National President of the ALP (Australia Labor Party). Oh, and the 'Joh For PM' push died a natural death, with Joh declaring that he was not interested in going to Canberra anyway! Or as John Howard so delicately put it—"Tropical Cyclone Joh has already petered out".

Oration for Rex Munn on behalf of the family by May Kivubiro, step-daughter

"It is difficult to know where to start when telling the story of a life that is so well lived. Rex's life epitomised the words of Mahatma Gandhi who said 'you must be the change you wish to see in the world.' He was a man who could never be accused of standing on the sidelines, he was a man who got things done, those who knew him, knew how much he loved a good meeting and he would have loved this meeting and the turnout today, his only regret when helping to plan this day was that he would have to put in an apology! But his hand is in every aspect of this day and he is with us in spirit.

... the 50's and 60's were years of frenetic activity for Rex and for industrial and political life in the Port. There were significant strikes on the wharf in 1954 and 1956 and Rex was in the vanguard as well as being in charge of the entertainment committee. ...He sang at every occasion he was offered, down at Semaphore, on any stage and then in the New Theatre. He sang Reedy River on this stage – the ballad of 1891 was his song and he sang it well.

... Many of you have spoken or written to us about Rex and his legacy – that he was a hero of the working class, an embodiment of the class-conscious working class, a man of principle, an honest, compassionate, altruistic and intelligent man, a loyal man, a truly generous and hospitable man, a quintessential Aussie, a larrikin, a wonderful singer, story teller and jokester, a good man, a good mate, a beautiful soul, a loving husband, father, grandpa, and guiding light. Rex would be humbled to hear your kind words."

These are just a few words taken from May's speech.



The late Rex Munn pictured watching his beloved football team

Waterside Workers Hall at Port Adelaide

The former Waterside Workers' Federation Hall at Port Adelaide was built in 1926 and opened in 1927. It is of high historical and cultural significance to the workers of Port Adelaide. The Foundation stone was laid by W Thomas on 5th December 1926 and he was the only surviving member of the original Working Men's Association. The building cost £8000 to build and had a seating capacity of 1,200. It was used by members of the local community for concerts, films and social events. A supper room at the back held 400 and was used for weekly meetings of the union. The letters WMA, for the Working Men's Association are inscribed on the façade of the building.

The large iron muster sheds next to the Hall were built for waterside workers seeking employment – they had previously had to wait on street corners. These were demolished to make way for the new TAFE.

The Port Adelaide Working Men's Association was founded in 1872 and was Australia's first union of wharf labourers, with Sydney and Port Melbourne following later that year. It was formed after the struggle for better working conditions. Working men at Port Adelaide were known as 'lumpers' for the loading and unloading of vessels at the Port. The union was formed at a meeting in the Town Hall on 19. 8. 1872 where the following motion was carried unanimously: *"That in the opinion of this meeting, it has, in consequence of excessive competition, become necessary to form a union for the purpose of obtaining a fair rate of wages for a fair day's work."*

In 1915 it affiliated with the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, but used both names until 1989, when the Association was wound up. The Hall provided offices and facilities for the Association and remained in its ownership for over sixty years. At its peak the WWF's membership in South Australia exceeded 3000, but by the 1990s there were less than 200 wharfies employed in Port Adelaide.

Aesthetically and technically, the building is of significance as a typical late 1920s South Australian example of Federation Free-Style architecture, exhibiting an eclectic mix of abstracted, classically derived details mixed with 'arts and crafts' floral motifs. The Hall has been little altered since construction. Located at 11 Nile Street, this magnificent old art deco union hall is still grand despite its peeling paint. The building is owned by the State Government and the sole tenant is the performance group Vitalstatistix who have been there since 1992.

Source: SA State Heritage Register and Port Adelaide Centre Heritage Survey 1993.



Personal Comment (cont)

high ground. Even those hanging on to the past with a Socialist/Communist dream must see that with all of political Labor's difficulties, the working people of Australia will be better served with a Labor government than it will ever be with the likes of Liberal governments led by Steven Marshall or a Tony Abbott.

Historically the Trade Union Movement and the Australian Labor Party are bound together; the role of and the need for unions remain as important as ever. Their needs and the best interests of working people in this country are best served through the election of strong Labor governments and for this to happen we must all put 'our own little issues' to the side for the greater good of the Labour Cause.

Gary Lockwood

Old Days on the Waterfront re-lived in Port Adelaide

The SA branch of Maritime Union and the local community got together to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the 1928 strike on 28th August 2003. A crowd gathered at the museum where Rex Munn re-enacted the pick up on Poverty Corner. Rex's last job on the waterfront was that of "vigilance officer" - going to ships and taking up the problems of the workers. Rex brought to life the tense and humiliating experiences of the men at the time of the "bull system" (the body-hire that used to take place on Lipson Street) at "Poverty Corner" near the spot where Port Adelaide's Maritime Museum now stands. Rex took the role of the boss's agent at a "bull system" pick-up.



'Righto, you useless lot, get around here if you want to get a job. How many of you here today? Four *hundred!* Bloody lot of you goin' home without a job, then. Righto, we've got the Adelaide Steamship Company — SS Mandala, eight o'clock start, number five berth, unloadin' railway sleepers in heavy redwood, kauri and jarrah from Western Australia. Don't turn up without ya bloody timber hooks.

'Here's the labour for today. I want four gangs and extras. I want to see four good bull gangs — I don't want bludgers. Bull hatchmen — Smith, Walters, Hendry, Murphy, take ya damned gangs down to number five berth and make sure ya move a bit of cargo, not sit on ya arse all day! 'Some of you blokes wouldn't move enough timber to make a box of matches! Now we've got the gangs, we need someone to get down there to get the gear ready. I want two winch drivers. Jones and Brown, you'll do. Jackson, don't waste ya time delayin', you're not gettin' the

Personal Comment

Within both the State and Federal arenas of the Labor Party there is a perception that suggests that the current contemporary group of Leaders and MP'S have somehow 'trashed' the Labor Brand and at the start of February this year the Vice President of the ALP Tony Sheldon made some observations about the NSW Branch and what he called 'B Grade' politicians – amidst the ICAC investigations in that State – a fair observation.

**LABOR BRAND is
not the issue -**

**It's the LABOUR
CAUSE that is
important**

On a State level, in SA we have a Premier taking on the role of Treasurer amidst claims that the Right somehow gave him leadership in a deal that included drinking from a poisoned chalice, – then Federally 'that red haired woman' pounding her way through – a hung parliament, deals with Greens and Independents, vicious anti-feminist radio jock campaigns and Rudd supporters who have never accepted that Julia is a far better operator than the person she replaced. Amongst it all we find far too many Labor supporters **'being lukewarm towards our current leaders – somewhat judgemental, unforgiving and somehow trashing what some would call the 'Labor Brand'.**

A historical Society like ours perhaps should remain silent on some of these issues – just let history take its course – just stand by, watch and observe, rather than be a comment machine on Labor, but there is another view: the Labor cause and the history of the Labour movement is too important to see all the effort, struggle, work and trials of the broader Labour Movement wiped out by the ongoing efforts of the Murdoch Press and their desire to install an Abbott-led Conservative Liberal/National Government – potentially one of the most anti-worker, anti-unionist groups in our Nation's History?

If ever the forces of Labour needed to be united, be they the political arm, the industrial movement and the historical – it is now. We have 12 months to ensure that Jay Weatherill brings Labor home in South Australia and even less time on a Federal Level to show that it is the LABOUR CAUSE that is important and get behind these leaders 100%.

Whether you like Jay as Premier or not – the Labour cause in this State needs your voice and active support and the total Labour Movement should embrace our history making Prime Minister Julia Gillard as the leader for our time who can give the Labour Cause its most important achievement – denying Tony Abbot the opportunity of ever leading this Nation as Prime Minister .

The lingering base vote of the ALP in the 35% area is concerning – it means that many Labor leaning people have drifted to the Greens for various reasons - environmental, boat people/immigration issues - claiming they have taken the moral

Rex Munn – a life well lived

Many of you will know Rex Munn who passed away in November 2012. I attended his funeral service where many hundreds of people came to say goodbye and to hear about his life. It was fitting that this service was held at the Waterside Workers' Hall which



was such an important part of Rex's life. It was there that his union education began and where he met his great hero Paul Robeson.

I have known Rex for many years and in 2012 I had the opportunity to record an oral history with him in which he talked about life on the wharf at Port Adelaide. I would like to share some of that story with you. If anyone deserves the title 'working class hero' it is Rex. Rex became a wharfie at 23 and worked there for 36 years, ten of those years were in the hold where life was very tough; he regularly carried bales of wool weighing several hundred pounds; he stood in asbestos dust up to his knees; the work was dirty and dangerous and the working conditions atrocious. At the age of 25 he joined the Communist Party of Australia, signed up by Jim Mitchell, this formed the basis of his ideological education and he stayed true to these beliefs; he was soon active in the party and in his union. He joined gang 74 with his good mate Maxie Ellis. At that time there were up to 2,500 men on the wharf in 96 gangs.

They went on strike for three weeks in 1956 and it was a very tough time for all. Rex was put in charge of the Entertainment Committee and every night for those three weeks entertainment was provided in the Waterside Workers' Hall

for the striking wharfies and their families. Some nights it was just a sing song and anyone who has heard Rex sing can appreciate how that powerful voice would have inspired his fellow workers. It is fitting that the song at his funeral service was The Internationale

sung by his step-daughter Sally Mitchell. Every week the wives were given food to feed their families and local businesses were contacted and payments deferred. At the end of the strike the workers had lost as they were sold out by Albert Monk, President of the ACTU – all they were asking for was an extra shilling an hour. But this only made them and their union stronger.

Under the leadership of Jim Healey they returned to work and then the real battle with the employers began. As Rex explained it, citing Jim Healey:

'We will go back to work united with the rest of the trade union movement. We will not allow them to create a splinter between the trade union movement and us, and we will continue the struggle.' And that's exactly what we did. And we harassed them and we harassed them, and we walked off the job, and left hatchets uncovered. We would be working away at a job. The VA would come along and say, 'Righto into the union for a meeting.' And we did that one day of every week. We just walked off the job and left it. The ships were held up and held up and held up and the ship owners were screaming bloody blue murder. 'When are you going to get this, when are we going to get some continuation of work on the job?' And of course the union said to them, 'When you come

Rex Munn – a life well lived (cont)

back to the bargaining table with a reasonable mind, prepared to negotiate, that is when this will stop.’ So anyway, after about six months they’d had a gutsful of it and they came back to the union and they said ‘We’re prepared to talk’. Then the union said to them ‘But the ante has been changed now. We don’t just want a shilling increase. . .’

This was the beginning of their militancy and they won not only a pay increase but sick pay, long service leave and finally got permanency in 1966. Importantly, occupational health and safety was finally addressed.

His political activity was not limited to the wharf and he and his fellow unionists were involved in international issues from the Vietnam War to apartheid and ban the bomb.

Rex was a delegate for many of the gangs he worked in and he committed his

life to the betterment of the working class through his union.

In retirement he was equally as active being involved in the Tea Tree Gully Football Club (being the inaugural winner in 2012 of the Rex Munn supporters’ award), the Port Adelaide National Trust, the Maritime Museum, COTA, Fair Go for Pensioners and the Asbestos Advisory Council. In such a busy life he was a wonderful family man. At the end of each interview he would say to me, ‘I’ve got to get back to my darling,’ the love of his life Marcia – I later learned that this was his usual farewell to all his comrades. He will be missed by his wonderful family and by many hundreds of workers, friends, and comrades in Adelaide and around the world. Definitely a man who left his mark.

Source: Oral History interview by Allison Murchie; Jamie Newlyn Secretary MUA.

Trade Unions Must Embrace Politics

There seems to be a belief that trade unionists should concern themselves only with economic matters such as wages, hours and working conditions and leave matters of a political nature to the politicians. What this means in reality is to leave the fate of the working class in the hands of the ‘capitalist class’ and at the mercy of capitalist class propaganda and ideology.

Whilst unions are compelled by the nature of capitalist society to continually strive for improvements in economic conditions, they know from experience that such gains are of a temporary duration and are whittled away by the capitalist system.

Politics must be introduced and linked to the union’s problems. Union journals and all avenues must be utilised to educate union membership in the need for a fundamental change in society.

Source: Jim Doyle, ‘The Plod’ Volume 15, Issue 6

Labor’s Working Class Voter Base—then and now (cont)

His argument was accepted in his PhD. But what happened when Howard was elected in 1996 – there was a drift of these ALP voters, the battlers and the aspirationalists away from Labor and they now need to gather them back. The electorate is now much more volatile and life-long Labor voters are moving to other parties. Research shows that 60% of voters will always vote for the same party but 40% are open to being won over and this is a much higher percentage than has ever happened in the past.

What class do you see yourself belonging to?



Why Unions Matter More than Ever

It is common to read and to hear comments that unions don’t matter any more. They claim there was a time and place for unions – but that time has passed. Some cite the fall off of union membership as a reason for moral decay.

If we want to lift the Australian working class, we need active and strong unions. It is no coincidence that the decline in union membership has enabled the employers to foster the growth in inequality and the continuing degrading of the ‘standard of living’ of the Australian working class.

We see the result of this decline every day, with more Australians working in low-wage jobs and without adequate health care or safety and with no means of being able to save for their retirement. Unions give workers the chance to win decent wages, pensions, safe working conditions and health care. With economic security, workers can send their children to college and trade schools, play a part in their communities and to have a secure retirement.

This is the dream of Australian workers and only unions can give workers a chance of its attainment.

Source: Jim Doyle, ‘The Plod’ Vol.15, Issue 6

**NATIONAL
TREASURE**

This man was named a “National Treasure” by the National Trust in the bicentennial year, 1988 and has a bay named after him in the Australian Antarctic Territory. He also has an extinct marsupial, Yalkaparidon, named after him. His comments on Joh Belke-Petersen’s run, in the mid-late 1980s, for the Prime Ministership were scathing—“He is the Ayatollah of the north. How can you have an open debate in the Kafka-like atmosphere of secrecy and cronyism of Joh-style politics?” Who is this man, this National Treasure?”

(Go to page 18 for the answer!)

Labor's Working Class Voter Base—then and now



The guest speaker for our AGM on the 28th October was Haydon Manning, Associate Professor, School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University.

Haydon is a labour historian with a long pedigree of studying the working class and this started with his research in the 1980s into the history of banking and later with his PhD where he asked who are the working class in Australia today – what is social democracy? He grew up in the western suburbs where his father was a bank manager but went to a private school in the eastern suburbs and saw two different worlds.

Professor David Kemp who was a Professor of Politics at Monash University (later to become a Federal Minister in the Howard government) stated that the Labor Party ideology of socialism and paternalistic government was irrelevant and that Australia was moving towards a middle class society. Haydon set out to prove him wrong. He realised that the working class was no longer just blue collar workers but included white collar workers, the so-called “aspirational” voters of Mark Latham and the Howard “battlers.” A value consensus emerged in which values were more important than class identity. Values developed around consumerism. Kemp defined the working class as the manual labourers.

However it was clear that the working class also included the white collar workers. Although on similar incomes to the blue collar workers, white collar workers had a clear career trajectory to management. The nature of work was changing. There was feminisation of the workplace, particularly seen in his research in the banking industry and in the public sector; the marriage bar disappeared. The strength of white collar unions grew. Hawke and Keating were departing from the traditional ALP conventions – they deregulated the banking industry, they privatised government assets, they restricted government expenditure and brought in reforms, the Accord was created. From all this emerged a new working class. Unions became less trades based.

We reached the 1993 election in which Hewson lost the unlosable election and Keating won with an increased majority. The new white collar working class had voted for Keating. Manning had predicted this victory and received some notoriety in a Bulletin article. In part he is quoted as saying, “Labor’s new ‘working class’ is, in fact, growing.” And he argues that Keating won on March 13 because the Hewson Fightback program was such a vivid threat to the interests of this new ‘class’ of Australian.... [on the 90s recession] the growing white-collar base for the first time has become vulnerable to the economic pressures that historically threatened blue-collar Australia.

We now speak of the working *classes*. His theory was backed by both qualitative and quantitative research available from the 1960s on.

1998 Waterfront Dispute

This dispute came about when Patrick Corporation’s CEO Chris Corrigan attempted to sack 1400 workers across Australia and introduce non-union labour. He claimed it was for the purpose of increasing productivity but in fact it was an illegal restructuring of their operations. After the restructure the workers, most of whom were members of the MUA, were locked out. This action was fully supported by the Howard government; they supported Patrick Corporation in its attempts to reduce the power of the MUA. The main ports involved in the dispute were Melbourne, Brisbane, Fremantle and Sydney.

In 1995-96, 70% of Australia’s imports and 78% of its exports were transported by sea, amounting to about \$60 billion in trade – this did not include the revenue from car imports. The Productivity Commission found that generally Australia charged more, and productivity and services were lower than overseas; marine and port charges were 2-3 times more expensive than overseas. This led to higher costs to shippers and it was seen that there was scope for significant improvement. The Workplace Relations Act of 1996 was also introduced with the aim of ‘individual choice’ and individual employment contracts in workplace bargaining and reduced powers for unions.

Fynwest Pty Ltd, an Australian stevedoring company, began recruiting former and current members of the Defence Force, including SAS paratroopers and commandos to become stevedores; others were recruited from private military and security consulting companies such as Sandline International. They planned to send them to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates where they would receive international standard training; they would then become non-union dock workers in Australia.

The MUA was tipped off about the plan and took it to the press. The threat of international industrial retaliation forced the Dubai Government to cancel the visas.

The Patrick restructure transferred assets to different companies with the result that the labour contracts were terminated. On 8th April 1998 they dismissed all their employees and liquidated its assets and imposed a lockout at the ports it operated. The following morning the docks were being operated by non-union staff who were trained in Dubai.

Paddy Crumlin, Assistant Secretary of MUA spent a month on the picket lines at Fremantle where the dispute was particularly strong and had several confrontations with the police, including the tactical response group. He commented, ‘It was really a brutal and barbaric way to deal with employer-employee relationships....It



1998 Waterfront Dispute (cont)

changed my life and I still don't know anyone who can talk about it without getting emotional.'

Bill Kelty, Secretary of the ACTU, gave Greg Combet the job of fighting the dispute and he became the face of the dispute. It gave him the reputation as a strategist and a fighter. He commented, 'I think what we really learn from the waterfront dispute is that a negotiated way of achieving change can work. It's been a far more sustainable outcome than trying to smash people.'

Julian Burnside, QC, represented the union. The case went to the Federal Court and Justice North found in favour of the union, finding that the company had deliberately restructured with the intent of dismissing the unionised workforce. The company, with the support of the Howard government, appealed to the full bench of the Federal Court which upheld the original decision; they then appealed to the High Court of Australia, again with government support. Again the MUA won.

A new workplace agreement was negotiated which reduced the workforce by half through voluntary redundancies, contracting out, smaller crews, longer hours and productivity bonuses for faster loading. The MUA retained the right to represent workers but the company got significant changes to work practices. The union has nearly 100% coverage at Patrick. The non-union workers were dumped by their employer, many still being owed unpaid wages.

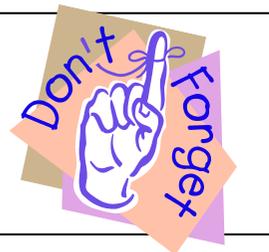
Corrigan lost control of Patrick Corporation in 2006 after a hostile takeover from Toll holdings but walked away with \$130 million in cash and Toll share. Fynwest employees who were on salaries of \$120,000 were given bonuses and commissions of about \$50,000. Reith left politics in 2001 and in 2003 the Howard Government appointed him to a position representing Australia on the European Bank for Reconstruction. Greg Combet is a Minister in the Gillard Labor Government. Paddy Crumlin is now the National Secretary of the MUA. Julian Burnside is now a leading advocate for more humane treatment of refugees.

Paddy Crumlin has a ring tone on his mobile phone, 'Who let the dogs out? Woof-woof, woof-woof.' Who let the dogs out? is his private reminder of these events which redefined the nature of workplace relations.

Source: Wikipedia, MUA website, ABC website, article by Anne Davies 12.5.2007.

2013 meeting dates:

- **May 5**
- **June 30**
- **October 27**
- **AGM—Sunday 25 August**



Maritime Union of Australia (cont)

forced to compete against each other for work; this system continued until the Second World War. In 1928 Justice Beeby introduced a new award which made conditions and pay even worse which led to spontaneous industrial action in ports around the country. A riot of 2,000 at the Melbourne Princes Pier resulted in the death of a union member who was shot from behind by police.

Wharfies now had to have a licence to work and this became known as the 'dog collar' and the new Transport Workers' Act 1928 was known as the Dog Collar Act; pink for unionists and brown for non-unionists, and the licence could be cancelled for any reason. Non-union labour was brought in and bosses unions, or 'scab' unions, were set up, including the Permanent and Casuals; non-unionists took most of the jobs. The ACTU told members to return to work and work with the scabs but Adelaide, Melbourne, Fremantle, Newcastle and Queensland refused. The bitterness continued and was passed on for generations. In Adelaide 4,000 members stormed the Labour Bureau and were bashed by a private army, the Citizens' Defence Brigade and by police. Adelaide was one of the strongest ports and one of the last to hold out.

It took many years to sort through the issues and the union was saved through the leadership of Secretaries including Jim Healy and Ted Englart. Healy was the General Secretary from 1937 to 1961. Many WWF members went without work for several years. During WWII wharf labour was in demand for the first time in decades. The Curtin government established the Stevedoring Industry Commission which abolished the bull system, improved working conditions and efficiency and the WWF won the right to recruit wharf labour. In 1954 legislation was introduced which gave employers the right to employ non-union workers and WWF went on strike for two weeks and finally fought off the 'scab' unions. The 1954 strike was a time of great solidarity and is still remembered as a high point in the union's history.

At its peak there were 25,000 wharfies in Australia but today there are less than 4,000, due largely to the automation of the late 1960s.

The Seamen's Union of Melbourne, the first maritime union in the world, was formed in 1872. This later became the Federated Seamen's Union of Australia in 1906 when it merged with the Sydney Seamen's Union. There was a three month strike from December 1935 to February 1936 about poor working conditions and an unsatisfactory award but the strike failed and the union was crippled. Eliot Elliott was the Federal Secretary from 1941 to 1978

Source: Wikipedia, MUA website

Maritime Union of Australia

The MUA has coverage of waterside workers, seafarers, port workers, divers and office workers and came into existence in 1993 after a merger of the Seamen's Union of Australia and the Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) - two unions which have a long history dating back to the 19th century. Both unions had a strong sense of class issues throughout their industrial history. The MUA and its forerunners is the oldest continuing maritime union in the world. It has about 13,000 members with a union density of over 90%.

The union has a long history of solidarity and activism and some of the causes it has worked for include anti-apartheid in South Africa, against the Vietnam War, the environment, an anti-nuclear Pacific, land rights for Aboriginal people, independence of East Timor and trade union rights on a world scale. They are active in the International Transport Workers' Federation where its National Secretary, Paddy Crumlin, was elected ITF President in 2010.

These unions were established in the late 19th century because of the dangerous working conditions which included 24 hour continuous shifts, especially in peak wool and wheat seasons. They carried sacks of wheat, cement and wool on their backs, they could weigh up to 200 pounds; sulphur caught fire in the holds and made them poisonous; they worked with rotting food full of maggots; some died when loads fell on them.

The Sydney Wharf Labourers' Union was established in 1872 and became the Waterside Workers' Federation in 1902 under the leadership of Billy Hughes as a national trade union. Hughes was expelled from the union in 1916 over conscription. Workers were subject to the 'bull' system of employment where they assembled at a particular place and were chosen for work on the basis of brute strength, and sometimes for compliance; they were

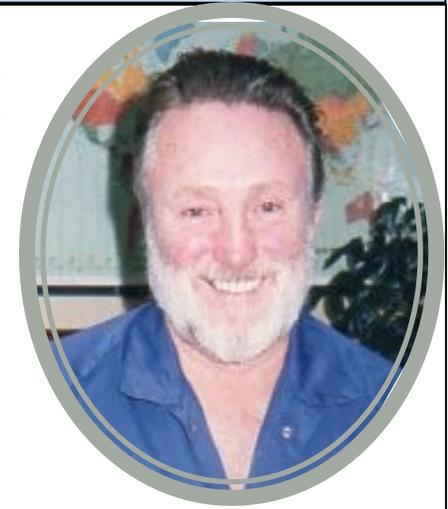


VALE

Mr Les Perry

Many members were saddened to hear of the death of Mr Les Perry, the husband of our Society member Patricia (Pat) Perry. There was no official funeral but several members of the Society attended the **'Farewell to the ashes of the late Les Perry'** on Tuesday 20th November 2012 at the **SEAFARERS MEMORIAL**, McLaren Parade, Port Adelaide.

The Society extends to Pat our deepest condolences.



The Hungry Mile

During the dark days of the Depression the Sydney wharves were known as the Hungry Mile, where workers went from wharf to wharf hoping to find a job.

On 3rd June 2003 hundreds walked the former Hungry Mile to celebrate the life of, and pay respects on the death of, Tas Bull, the once leader of the Waterside Workers' Federation. Those marching included Bob Hawke, Bill Kelty, Greg Combet, Jennie George, Martin Ferguson, John Coombs and Pat Geraghty. Greg Combet said his former boss was his inspiration. The wharves were closed for the day as a mark of respect.

In the 1950s the union established its own film unit which made films about events and working conditions on the waterfront. One was made on The Hungry Mile and this can be viewed on YouTube. The film is about working conditions during the Depression. It also recounts the 1954 legislation that allowed ship-owners to recruit labour directly and bypass the union; it demonstrates the spirit of the Eureka Stockade in portraying solidarity amongst workers.

Source: Wikipedia, Sydney Morning Herald 4.6.2003



Rex Munn



..... at Port Adelaide Workers' Memorial



Wharfies' ballet at the Waterside Workers' Hall during the strike



Right: ...giving the "Bull" Speech in the re-enactment of Poverty Corner at Port Adelaide

