

SA LABOUR HISTORY NEWS

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

Spring Edition

Newsletter No 3



History in the making

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Personal Comment

Message from the President

As president, I am pleased to advise that with the support of many, the Society now has a membership returned to sustainable levels.

Labour History Ambassador Greg Stevens has been most effective in gaining eight or nine Corporate Members – welcome aboard.

Now the challenge! Having restored our membership to more acceptable numbers, it is now a matter of moving into stage two of our campaign. Membership renewal is our top priority and I urge all members to renew their 2011/2012 membership as soon as possible.



SUNDAY OCTOBER 23—RED LETTER DAY!

Please keep Sunday October 23rd clear to attend our Annual General Meeting - a date of high importance. It is also going to be a great social gathering with members invited to attend a light luncheon to commence proceedings.

The renewed strength and involvement of the ASSLH is only possible with your active and financial support – please keep it going. Thank you also to all members of the Executive John Thomas for his valuable work as Treasurer and hard working Secretary, Kevin Kaeding.

I am pleased with the level of participation and attendance at functions this year and as will be seen within our Newsletter – our Adelaide Branch is making a worthwhile contribution to the overall well-being of the Society on a national level. We are indebted to Frances Bedford MP and her staff for their assistance—thank you.

I greatly appreciate the work of the Editorial Board members.

Gary Lockwood, President

AWU honours Jim Doyle

Port Pirie AWU Celebrates!

AWU Life member, Jim Doyle
with AWU State Secretary
Wayne Hanson



On the 8th July I was honoured to be the guest of Jim Doyle at a special celebration. Jim is well known to many Society members and throughout the state for his long history as a shearer and union official and his life long commitment to improving the lot of the working class. At 93 years young he has slowed down a little but the drive and passion is undiminished. It is no surprise then that his union, the Australian Workers Union, should choose to honour him in a very public way.

A busload of friends and unionists left the union office on a cold wet morning and after a pleasant trip the weather broke as we arrived in Pirie and the sun came out for the march down the main street – 300 people waved flags as the procession was led by Jim, a fire engine and a police escort. People came out of shops to watch. The union was involved in a peaceful march!

The union had decided to open a new branch office in Pt Pirie to help service its country members and this building, Jim Doyle House was officially opened on 8th July. After some very moving words from State Secretary Wayne Hanson the building was officially opened by National Secretary Paul Howes and Bob Sneath, President of the Legislative Council. Jim gave an emotional response in which he spoke of the on-going battles facing the working class in our society. Jim had joined the union at the age of 15 when he began his trade in shearing and has been a financial member continuously since then, a period of 78 years, being the longest continuous member of the AWU. He is a life member of the AWU. Hanson described him as “...an agitator, an educator and continues in his own way to be a very effective organiser.”

After the official proceedings a very good barbecue and drinks were provided for all in attendance. Congratulations, Jim.

Allison Murchie

Recognition of ASSLH Member

Adelaide, May Day 2011: Adelaide member of ASSLH and life long activist in the labour movement, **Vic Potticary**, is well known to many of our members for his commitment to the working class and the struggle they face. After a working life in the printing industry and on-going union involvement he has not slowed down in his retirement, in fact he may even be busier. At this year's May Day celebrations he was given the annual award by the May Day Committee called the Spanner Award for his contributions to the ideals of May Day. Previous winners have included Rex Munn, Cheryl Scopazzi, Jimmy Doyle and Steph Key, so Vic is in good company. Humble as ever, he said he didn't think he deserved the award. Congratulations Vic.



This year's May Day was addressed by Humphrey McQueen who spoke about issues facing today's working people and their on-going struggle. Rex Munn, an ex-wharfie and labour activist, led a stirring rendition of The Internationale and other working class anthems.

McQueen spoke again on Sunday at the Workers' Memorial at Port Adelaide, talking about the history of the monument and telling stories about the real heroes in society - those who fought for better conditions and a better society. Both of these speeches are available from his website and I highly recommend that you read both of them and look at some of his other writings (just Google his name on the internet).

Evatt Foundation

The Evatt Foundation was established in 1979 as a memorial to Dr Herbert Vere Evatt with the aim of advancing the highest ideals of the labour movement, such as equality, participation, social justice and human rights. For the past 30 years the Foundation has been helping to promote these ideals through research, publications, public discussion and debate. The Evatt Foundation was launched in the Great Hall of Sydney University. Former Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, ACTU Secretary, Bob Hawke, the Leader of the Opposition, Bill Hayden, the NSW Premier, Neville Wran, Professor Manning Clark and the leader of the 1967 referendum on Aboriginal Australians, Faith Bandler, all made inspirational speeches on the occasion before a very large audience of loyal supporters.

To encourage the Foundation to pursue its objectives, major grants were awarded by the NSW government, the Tasmanian government and other public and private organisations, including trade unions and business enterprises. From 1984 to 1999 the Foundation received an annual grant from the Commonwealth government. During the past 30 years, the Evatt Foundation has established a prominent public profile through its public education program of seminars, conferences and publications. A major reason for the success of the Foundation over the years has been the support of its very loyal membership base.

(continued Page 5)

Canberra — we're on our way!

DYNAMIC REPRESENTATION FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Members can be well satisfied that our Adelaide Branch will be well represented at the National Conference in Canberra during September 2011. Many thanks to members who helped to make this possible – especially Frances Bedford MP.



L to R:
Allison Murchie
Greg Stevens
Gary Lockwood
Kevin Kaeding

August Quiz Night

On a cold winter night in June a group of 80 members and friends gathered for a night of fun and friendly competition.

Quizmaster Frances Bedford MP challenged us with a range of educational and quirky questions on a diverse range of topics from numbers to the Royal Wedding to the establishment of Canberra. Fun battles were waged between competing tables with Sandra Morton's group eventually being our champion team.

They were rewarded with champagne donated by Frances Bedford and an array of prizes donated by the ASSLH committee. Other prizes were awarded for rounds of True and False, Heads and Tails and Sue Newell guessed the number of jelly beans in a jar – 155.

Thank you to all who helped make this evening so successful and to assist in sending our Executive to the National Conference in Canberra later this year. A full report of this event will be included in our next newsletter.

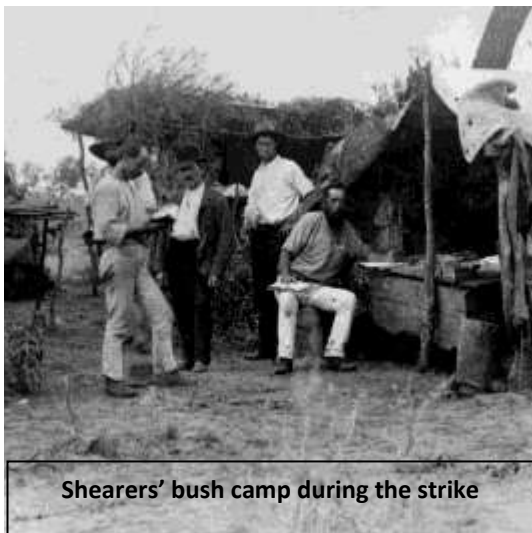
Evatt Foundation (continued)

The guiding hand of the Foundation's policy, direction and management is the executive committee. The First Evatt Foundation Executive Committee (1979-1981) was President: Sir Richard Kirby and Vice-President: Professor Manning Clarke. This information was taken from the website and may be of interest to members.

Shearers' Strike

In the 1800's wool was one of Australia's largest industries with thousands of people working in the industry, many of them covered by the Australian Shearers' Union. By 1889 Queensland shearers and bush workers had formed unions. At their conference in 1890 they made a new rule which prevented members from working with non-members.

The pastoralists were determined to smash the unions and formed "Freedom of Contract" which allowed non union workers into the shearing sheds. They announced severe cuts in wages and refused to negotiate with the unions.



Shearers' bush camp during the strike

Shearers in the Darling Downs went on strike over this issue of "scabs" processing wool.

On 5th January 1891 the shearers went on strike demanding:

- Continuation of existing rates of pay
- Protection of workers' rights and privileges
- Just and equitable agreements

On 13th January 1891 the following telegram was sent to Barcaldine:

"Private information. Federated pastoralists levying three hundred thousand pounds throughout Australia to fight Queensland ... Employers plan to raise thousands blacklegs to take district after district in rotation. Keep this strictly secret. Act cautiously. Big trouble ahead."

Thousands took to the streets for their demands and formed armed camps. Barcaldine became the headquarters for

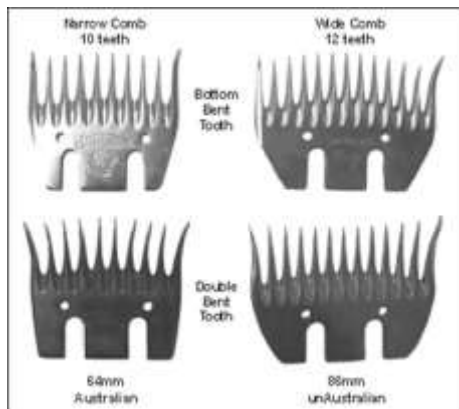
the strikers to await the outcome of negotiations. Meetings were often held in the shade of a ghost gum in the main street – this came to be known as the Tree of Knowledge. They asked all bush workers to join the strike. Armed soldiers protected non-union workers and the strike spread *throughout* Queensland in the next few months and union organisers were arrested on the charge of conspiracy. Eight thousand workers went on strike.

On 1st February 1891 the Queensland Shearers' Union issued the 'Bushman's Official Proclamation' which said in part:

"... Fellow unionists! We call upon you all, individually and united, to pull the unions through this fight let the cost what it may ... Here in the bush we have no voice in the making of the laws and no share in the Government, we are disenfranchised and denied all rights as citizens, we have only our unions to which we can look for justice and if our unions go down we are

totally enslaved. We are the men whose labour mainly upholds Queensland. It is our toil that brings rich dividends to banks and fat incomes to squatters and profitable trade to great cities. Yet we have no votes by which we can secure laws to protect us even in our earnings."

The pastoralists were supported by the government who sent 1,000 armed soldiers to *central* Queensland and scabs were provided with military escorts.



One of the first May Day marches in the world took place during the strike on 1 May 1891 with 1,340 men taking part.

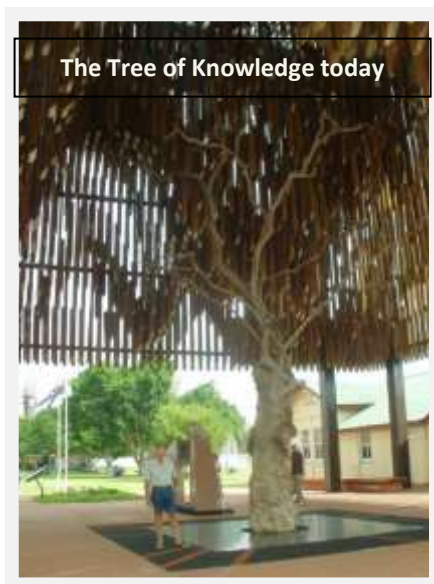
After five months the shearers were hungry and their funds had run out, their leaders were in gaol, the strike was over and lost, the employers could hire whoever they wanted. On 13th June 1891 the unions declared the strike was over. Thirteen union leaders were gaoled for three years for sedition and conspiracy. They were arrested under the Act of 1825, an Act which had been repealed in Britain well before 1891 but was not repealed in Queensland until 1899. Attempts to improve working conditions were seen as illegal under the Act. During the trial the judge criticised police for not shooting unarmed strikers.

Another strike was held in 1894 when the

Pastoral Association wanted to reduce shearers' wages and conditions. Violence broke out and there were armed battles with police, sheds were burnt down. A Peace Preservation Bill was proclaimed and guns were banned.

The strikes of 1890-94 was a time of major conflict between labour and capital and became known as the years of the "Great Strikes." Apart from the shearers' strike there was the big maritime strike in 1890. These strikes were one of the factors behind the formation of the Australian Labor Party in December 1899 in Queensland – the world's first Labor Government, and the development of the labour movement in Australia.

As *workers* were *getting more* organised through their unions, employers were also getting more organised forming groups such as the Pastoralists' Union and the Employers' Union. With the beginning of the Depression employers used the huge pool of unemployed as strike breakers.



Member Profile

Jim Doyle—A Shearer's Life

Jim Doyle, member of ASSLH, has just completed an oral history for the State Library of South Australia and has talked about his long and interesting life as a shearer and union organiser. Here is part of his story.

Jim was born in 1918 in Yeppoon, Queensland, one of seven children. His father was a teamster and drove a wagon of 12-16 horses carting wool from Longreach stations. At the beginning of the Depression the family moved back to Longreach where his parents came from. Jim left school at 14 and started working on a station where he gradually learned the skill of how to shear sheep. In the early years he worked all over Queensland and NSW in a large number of sheds which was the main source of his education – the Communists were a great source of information, being well read and well informed on world events. Many an evening was spent listening to short wave radios and the broadcasts from London, Russia and Germany; he recalls one night hearing a speech by Hitler when he launched a battleship (all talks were translated). Fellow shearers had been involved in the 1890 Shearers' Strike and talked to him about what it was like. Many of the shearers were supporters of the ALP, including the Communists as they thought that they were the solution to Society's problems. He joined the ALP in 1936 but resigned in 1938. He later rejoined is currently still a member.

He enlisted in the army and volunteered to be a truck driver, even though he didn't have a drivers' licence. He returned to shearing after the war and worked in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia, maintaining his membership of the Australian Workers Union continuously since 1933, eventually becoming a life member. Fellow shearers included Mick Young, Jack Wright and Jim Dunford.

He was a key player in the fight to win the 40 hour week, first in Queensland in then in the other key shearing states with SA being one of the last to come on board. They campaigned as individual groups of organised shearers without the support of their union. He first worked for the AWU as an organiser for six weeks at Renmark in 1950. He along with many others were banned from standing for the union ticket if it was thought that they were Communists, no proof was required – this was in the union rules.

In 1961 he attended an international conference in Sophia, Bulgaria organised by the World Federation of Trade Unions where he was the only representative from Australia. Many of the delegates invited him to visit their countries and he spent three months visiting many countries including Poland, Czechoslovakia, Russia and Indonesia, where he was treated as an honoured guest. In the Soviet Union he travelled extensively and visited collective farms where he taught the Russians how to shear in the Australian style which was much more efficient.

Back in Australia he continued his shearing career working in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. In many sheds he was elected delegate and many contractors became wary of employing him.

He had a few breaks from shearing and worked in New Guinea at Bougainville Copper Mines and in SA at Moomba; he had gained a certificate as a Boiler Maker and did some driving jobs as well but always returned to shearing.

He had a continuing battle with the AWU, particularly Clyde Cameron who continually blocked his attempts to get on the union ticket for elected positions and it was not until 1971 that the laws were changed that he was able to be elected as a union organiser. He was a union organiser from 1972-82, based in Whyalla, but his area of coverage included Leigh Creek, Cooper Pedy, the West Coast, part of the Riverland and Kangaroo Island. He was a very effective organiser and managed to recruit new members in some very difficult areas. He travelled 90-100,000 kilometres a year and was hardly ever home. Apart from state positions he was also Vice President of the national branch of the union.

He was forced to retire in 1986 as he had reached the mandatory retiring age, otherwise he would probably still be out there organising. His passion has not diminished and he still continues to be very well read and keeps himself informed on world events. He now organises on a smaller scale through his many friends and contacts, including politicians and union officials. Many of you will be familiar with his regular publication the PLOD where he shares his views with an ever increasing readership.

I would like to thank Jim for sharing his story with me and giving his time so generously to completing a very interesting oral history.

Allison Murchie

Allison Murchie, in her role as an oral historian, has interviewed many very interesting people over the years. She says Jim Doyle was an absolute delight and such a gentleman. His commitment to bettering the life of the working class is till a driving force in his life. Well done, Jim.



Out and About Labour



From top left, clockwise:
friends; Marie and Gary
Marlene Fenwick; The
Judy Davis;; Sue and Clive

r History members in action



—Peter Garrett with Ian McGlennon and John ; PM Julia Gillard with Allison Murchie; Janet Giles and
 ry Lockwood with grand-daughter, Sia Anderson; Quiz Night participants hard at work!; Jim Doyle;
 Happy Couple—Ian McGlennon and Kerryl Murray; Greg Stevens, Allison Murchie and Cam Johnson with
 Chris Dyer and their daughter—winners of the Quiz night prize—a stay at Winnie Walters Waikerie Cottage.

The History of Women's Rights in the Commonwealth Bank



On 17th July we had a very entertaining and informative presentation from Judy Davis. Judy is now a senior executive in the Commonwealth Bank and has a proud history of fighting for women's rights and after working there for 40 years she has seen and participated in many changes. Like many working class kids of her generation she had a happy childhood and grew up in the country; a clearly a very intelligent child she won scholarships to university. However her parents' aspirations were different from hers and decided the best job for her was to work in a bank. Although a strong feminist with firm political views she accepted her parents' wishes, so that is where she went in 1971.

Her first job was that of a 'runner' which she found quite terrifying; the bank was run like a military operation. She boarded in the city and every night she went home and cried – what had her parents done to her? Women did the low level jobs of typists, clerks and ledger machinists. She started to asked questions about becoming a teller and was considered to be a pest. She wanted to be a teller so she went to the Secretary of the bank's union (CBOA) Chris Carroll – he suggested she get noticed by the people who count and to be patient! This was not the advice she wanted. Women's issues were not on their agendas. She continued to work with Carroll and leaned to be politically smart.

Judy and three other women 'troublemakers' wanted to address this inequality in jobs. They spoke to Chris Carroll about equal pay, equal opportunity, home loans for women staff, and maternity leave and by 1971 they had a representative on the Women's Advisory Council of the CBOA and the following year she was on that committee.

In 1972 when she was pregnant she was the first to test their policy on maternity leave and was successful in getting four months unpaid leave. By 1975 equal pay was finally granted to women in the banking and insurance industries. This was just the start for women and the many gains that were to be won. But previous promotions. had to be won again and so the women had to effectively start all over again. They did not have to break through a glass ceiling but one of stainless steel!

Judy wanted to succeed and work hard, putting in very long hours and had to prove that she was twice as good as any man; often women competed with each other rather than supporting each other and often her sponsors and mentors were men. In 1982 she was promoted to a supervisory position and this was seen as a major achievement, today it would hardly rate a comment.

organisation. She has developed her skill level and has learned to be pragmatic and to use her intellect and wit. She was prepared to stand up for women's rights and still continues to advocate for women's rights. She may no longer be called a pest but she maintains the same belief system of equality for all workers with promotion and opportunity open to all, ability, not your sex will determine the outcome.

Judy's motto:
"Is it fair, Is it
just, Is it
reasonable?"

Some of her firsts include being the first woman I SA to take maternity leave, being the face of EEO in the bank in 1989, the first woman to be promoted to management level in SA at the age of 39. she finally got to university in 1993 with the support of the bank. She has worked in many roles within the bank including training, leadership training, Human relations, strategic planning, marketing, restructuring and has led the charge in many areas.

Judy is now a senior Executive in the bank with responsibility for two hundred staff in 16 branches. Her management is clearly one of inclusion and on-going support for staff. Having "been there, done that" she is now able to mentor both men and women giving them the benefit of her experience. Unlike many at her level she maintains her union membership and actively encourages women to be involved with their union.

She lives by her motto....." Is it fair, is it just, is it reasonable" Not a bad motto for others to adopt.



Great Launch of Nick's Book in Adelaide

The Adelaide branch of the Society was delighted to sponsor the launch of ASSLH National Secretary Nick Dyrenfurth's book 'Heroes and Villains: the Rise and Fall of the Australian Labor Party'. It was held on May 5th at Imprints Booksellers—Hindley Street, Adelaide and was most successful. Thank you Nick and thank you to members who came along to give Nick our support.

Dr Nick Dyrenfurth is Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney, Federal Secretary of the ASSLH and the author of a new book called **Heroes and Villains: the Rise and Fall of the Australian Labor Party**'.

Book Review

The Best Hated Man in Australia - The Life and Death of Percy Brookfield 1875 - 1921 'by Paul Robert Adams

Review by Chris White, a veteran labour movement activist and Labor Party member.

Historian Dr Paul Robert Adams takes us through Brookfield's exciting story – the events when a radical unionist becomes a politician and keeps and fights for left principles, 'the greatest champion that the people ever had.' Nobody elected into the NSW Parliament today is like 'Jack' Brookfield MP from Broken Hill. At his funeral 15,000 marched and sang 'The Red Flag'. Brookfield's militant stand and his unrelenting political radicalism is revealing and refreshing. He was notorious for his combative criticisms of ruling class employers and politicians. Today's unionists and ALP MPs are just far too timid.

The media and right-wing politicians attacked him for his stances, such as, 'not to fight for the British flag as long as they were making profits out of the war'. He was hailed as the most extreme anti-politician ever to be elected. He delivered reforms for workers. He became politically more popular nationally with radical speeches at mass meetings.

Adams takes us through Brookfield's story starting as a key organiser in the great strikes on working conditions and shorter hours for underground mining in Broken Hill. 'If you want the 44 hour week, TAKE IT.' Adams recounts Brookfield's struggles to prevent ill-health in the mines and then for compensation for the industrial diseases. In Parliament Brookfield campaigned tirelessly winning Occupational Health



Percy Brookfield

and Safety and Workers Compensation reforms.

Brookfield supported the 1917 NSW General Strike. We are taken through the 1919 Great Miners Strike/Lockout. Brookfield was a supporter of the OBU, One Big Union. On principle, he campaigned successfully over many years to free the 'IWW Twelve' from their

trumped up police convictions to burn down Sydney. He supported many left activists persecuted by the government's 'anti-terrorist' laws of those days. Governments prosecuted him. He was jailed for his principled anti-war speeches against Prime Minister Hughes. His powerful leadership against conscription contributed to the success of the NO referendums.

He was a socialist not a communist, he learnt about and supported the new Bolshevik revolution and their supporters. He always spoke the truth as he saw it. 'Ironically, while he was an extremist, he was able to put his opinions in a way that drew people to him rather than driving them away.' Adams recounts the left labour movement struggles with the colourful leaders like Brookfield and their battles with right-wing enemies, the NSW ALP. In Parliament Brookfield was tenacious and outspoken for his left causes. Brookfield later joined the split from the NSW Right ALP to form the Industrial Socialist Labor Party and was re-elected and held the balance of power in the NSW hung parliament. (continued bottom of next page.)



How well do you know your Prime Ministers?

Over the next two issues we will provide details of all our Prime Ministers since Federation. If you would like to write a short article of up to 250 words on one of them please send to the Editor.

Prime Minister	Party	Term
Edmund Barton	Protectionist	1901-03
Alfred Deakin	Protectionist, Commonwealth Liberal Party	1903-4, 1905-8, 1909-10
John Watson	Labor Party	1904
George Reid	Free Trade	1904-5
Andrew Fisher	Labor Party	1908-09, 1910-13, 1914-15
Joseph Cook	Commonwealth Liberal Party	1913-14
William Hughes	Labor Party, National Labor Party, Nationalist Party	1915-23
Stanley Bruce	Nationalist Party	1923-29
James Scullin	Labor Party	1929-32
Joseph Lyons	United Australia Party	1932-39
Earle Page	Country Party	1939 (20 days)
Robert Menzies	United Australia Party, Liberal Party	1939-41, 1949-66
Arthur Fadden	Country Party	1941 (40 days)
John Curtin	Labor Party	1941-45

What were their occupations before entering Parliament? See the list below and see if you can work out what they did – answers on page 20.

Occupations – trade unionist, coal miner, surgeon, lawyer, public servant, accountant, book keeper, journalist, compositor, teacher, businessman, storekeeper, grocer. Note that some had more than one occupation. (Answers on Page 18)

Brookfield was fatally shot at Riverton in South Australia. Was his shooting an assassination?

Paul Adams has given us a biography as thoroughly gripping as it is thoroughly researched. Adams takes us through the events. Inspiration floods from its pages'.

Elizabeth Johnston

First Woman Union Secretary in South Australia

Elizabeth Teesdale Smith was born in Adelaide in 1920 into a privileged background. They were a generous family and it was a happy household that she grew up in. She was educated at Woodlands Church of England Girls Grammar.

She met Elliott Johnston in 1936 and they both joined the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) in 1941 and both maintained a life long commitment to the Party. They married in 1942 and their son Stewart (Stuart) was born in 1949.

Harry Krantz the Secretary of the Federated Clerks Union (FCU) joined the services in 1942 and Elizabeth applied for and got the job. She was the only paid member of union and had to do everything working long hours and working very hard. Her main job was to get out and to get members, to organise at offices, and speak to people about what the union did. It was hard to get permission from employers to talk to workers; clerks were lowly paid. She presented a log of claims to get an award and got around £3 a week. It was predominantly a male union but she never felt any discrimination and was well accepted by all the men in the union, she never felt an outsider. She became a delegate to the Trades and Labour Council while with the union, and was Executive member and Treasurer of TLC in 1945. There were no more than 12 women delegates at the time. She held the position of union Secretary from 1942-46. She gave up her position when Harry returned after the war. She became a life member of the union.

After leaving the union she helped to establish the Left-wing Cooperative Printing Press which published the Communist paper *The Tribune*. She became a founding member of the Adelaide branch of the CPA in 1950 and became branch secretary.

After qualifying as a lawyer in 1958 she joined Johnston and Johnston legal firm in 1959 as an equal partner. In 1971, during the time of the Dunstan reforming government she joined the Crown Law Office and went on to be the first woman assistant Crown Solicitor in 1976. It was a time when feminists were influential in government and leaders of change and Elizabeth was part

of this with other feminists such as Robyn Layton, Mary Beasley and Deborah McCulloch. She provided legal advice on a vast range of topics including formation of a Legal Aid Commission, Workers' Compensation and Aboriginal Lands Trust. She chaired the first SA Sex Discrimination Board in 1976. After 10 years at the Crown Law Office she spent three years on the Legal Aid Committee and was a driving force in establishing the Legal Aid Commission in 1979. She retired in 1982 but continued to work for the Aboriginal cause and continued to support women's rights.

She joined the Board on the SA Housing Trust in 1984 and served for four years on housing issues, including housing of the socially disadvantaged. It was noted in an ASIO file that she was intellectually superior to all other women in the CPA.

Elizabeth died of cancer in 2002 at the age of 81. Her death was celebrated at Tandanya Aboriginal Centre. She had a truly remarkable life of many achievements and firsts for a woman. She was a professional and independent woman who led the way for future generations of working women in Adelaide.

For further reading I would highly recommend that you read *Red Silk*, on the life of Elliott Johnston – when being interviewed for the book Elliott suggested that the book should be written about Elizabeth.

Sources: “To Unite More Closely” Compiled by Chris Vevers
“Red Silk, The Life of Elliott Johnston QC” by Penelope Debelle

Vale

Elliott Johnston

who died on 25 August 2011



Comment

History in the making

At the time of writing this article South Australia is somewhat 'marking time' – Premier Mike Rann is strongly leading the State – opening this and announcing that...and meanwhile, we have the Premier-Elect Jay Weatherill – head down, carrying out his role as Minister for Education in his usual and very efficient manner.

Sadly for the ALP -what should have been a business like and efficient change over has just degenerated into a bit of a political circus - a very poor look for Labor in SA - ***so what went so wrong?***

In February 2011 - I delivered a speech to the Florey Sub-branch of the ALP that posed the question ***'Is the Labor Government of South Australia controlled by the Catholic Right?'***

In some ways – much of what has happened in South Australia has linkage to issues raised by me in my February speech – but there is much more to be told in future writing over the role of the SDA – how things were handled – Rann's reaction and who leaked?

Over the years, (within the dominant right faction) pragmatic right members have been compliant to the religious right - but on this occasion – with an eye to getting re-elected, did the 'pragmatics' revolt at the thought of Jack Snelling as Premier ?

Did 'other powerful forces' ensure Mike Rann's choice— John Rau— would never get the job, leaving Right Wing members of Caucus no alternative to the left's Jay Weatherill? ***What role did Michael Atkinson play in making sure current Attorney General - John Rau – did not get the nod?***

Congratulations to new Premier Jay Weatherill from the Adelaide Branch of the ASSLH and we thank Mike Rann for his years of leadership in South Australia and wish him well in his future retirement.

Gary Lockwood

Message from the Editor

All members are encouraged to contribute articles to our newsletter. Perhaps you have a story to tell about your own experiences; share your views on any aspect of labour history; send us a book review, maybe a cartoon or historic photo. Please send your contribution to our Editor.

Aims and Objectives (as determined by National Branch)

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.

President: Gary Lockwood *Secretary:* Kevin Kaeding *Treasurer:* John Thomas

Committee: Greg Stevens, Allison Murchie (newsletter) Marie Lockwood, Sandra Morton.

Meetings are 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 ASSLH (Adelaide Branch). Articles can be sent to the Editor at murchie52@hotmail.com

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General enquiries can be made to the Secretary, Kevin Kaeding, ph. 0429 696324

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.

Answers to Quiz:

Barton – Lawyer, *Deakin* – lawyer, journalist, *Watson* – compositor, trade unionist, *Reid* - public servant, lawyer, *Fisher* – coal miner, trade unionist, *Cook* – coal miner, trade unionist, *Hughes* – teacher, store keeper, trade unionist, *Bruce* – businessman, lawyer, *Scullin* – grocer, trade unionist, editor, *Lyons* - teacher, *Page* – surgeon, *Menzies* - lawyer, *Fadden* - accountant, *Curtin* – journalist trade unionist.

THREE EVENTS IN ONE—NOT TO BE MISSED!

SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER 2011

Event No 1! Commences with a delicious finger food

LUNCHEON

at 12.30pm (please book)

Event No 2!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Estimated starting time 1.30pm

Event No 3! - 2pm -

GUEST SPEAKER



PROFESSOR DAVID PALMER

Senior Lecturer, School of International Studies from Flinders University

Topic: “Labour History and South Australia’s Future: A Mining/Military based economy or a renewable/Labour based economy?”

Questions

3.15—3.45—Afternoon tea

Location: BOX FACTORY COMMUNITY CENTRE

59 REGENT STREET SOUTH

ADELAIDE

