

SA LABOUR HISTORY NEWS

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

Summer 2015-16

Will Sergeant, guest speaker at the AGM



Included in this issue

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Alive & Kicking

The articles, reports and event publicity in this newsletter further illustrate the relevance of labour history to today's changing and challenging world. The SA executive of the Labour History Society is also well-advanced in the planning of an exciting program of topical events for members and friends this year. Keep your eye out for upcoming event notices. Joining the Society will enhance our capacity to tackle important issues and present key speakers.

The AGM In October 2015 saw changes to the branch executive. Long serving Vice President Greg Stevens stepped back from this position after many years' hard work on behalf of the Society. He remains on the executive, while David Faber has taken up the Vice President's role. We sincerely thank Greg for his past and continuing advice and support, both practical and personal. Greg has done much to not only hold the Branch together during difficult times, but also encourage new and innovative activity. We thank David for agreeing to stand for the VP position and his growing contribution. Sue Marks has also been co-opted onto the executive. In addition, young academic Fletcher O'Leary is offering new perspectives as a volunteer.

In this issue Greg reports on the presentation by Will Sergeant at the AGM. Will gave an entertaining account of the life of Bert Edwards, 'King of the West End'. The talk coincided with the 40th anniversary of the decriminalisation of male homosexuality by the Dunstan Labor Government and showed the diversity of the labour movement. Edwards was Gay, an AWU member, Labor parliamentarian, and staunch supporter of his local working class community.

We are delighted to note the award of Life Membership of the Oral History Society to executive member Allison Murchie for her work in recording and making accessible the lives of South Australian activist women and men. The piece on the award also gives information on the Oral History Society, which may be of interest to members.

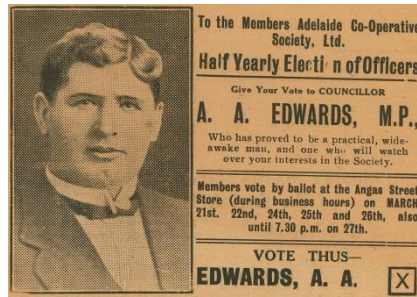
The newsletter features two articles on 'The socialism of George Orwell' and 'The Turnbull regime' by David Faber. Steve Acton reviews *Speak up, speak out*, a recently released account of the life of South Australian left activist Graham F Smith.

Readers will note publicity for this year's national Australian Historical Association Conference, *Boom & Bust*, which includes topics of real interest to labour history enthusiasts. An added bonus is that the conference will be held in Ballarat, the location of M.A.D.E. (the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka). A piece on M.A.D.E., one of the most progressive museums in the country, is also featured.

In this issue we remember three South Australians who have recently died: historian, progressive thinker and noted advocate of affordable, public housing, Hugh Stretton; Life member of the Labour History Society Louisa Miller; and Labor Premier and historian John Bannon.

Thanks to the newsletter team, especially Allison Murchie for co-ordination of contributions and putting the newsletter together. We also thank the staff at the Office of Steph Key for their on-going support and Wakefield Press, with special thanks to Trevor Klein.

Bert Edwards – King of the West End

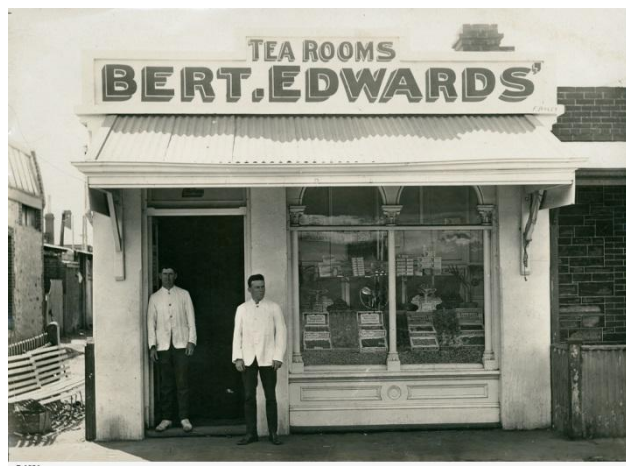


West End identity, Will Sergeant, gave our well attended October meeting an informative and entertaining account of the life and times of another West End identity, the late Bert Edwards (1887-1963).

Drawing on published sources and anecdotal material, Will drew a well-rounded picture of a man of many parts; a politician, city councillor, publican, philanthropist, pederast, and a football official.

Life was indeed tough on the streets of the West End in 1887, where Bert was brought up by his mother, who worked for the Kingston family. Bert thought that Charles Cameron Kingston was his father, but this was never proven.

Bert was an enterprising young man. By 1912 he had opened a tea house in Compton St. Behind the tea rooms was a two up school!



Will told us that Bert was first elected to the Adelaide City Council in 1913 where he had two lengthy spells as a Councillor, the second ending in 1963.

Bert bought the licence for the Duke of Brunswick Hotel in 1915. He later held the licences for the Newmarket Hotel on North Terrace and the Hotel Victor at Victor Harbor.

By 1917 he had been elected as the ALP member for Adelaide. In Parliament he stood up for the under privileged, engaged in prison reform measures, and

supported better pay and conditions for police officers. However his seat was vacated in 1931 when he was convicted of an 'unnatural offence' with a boy aged 16 years and sentenced to 5 years gaol. He was released after 2 ½ years in 1933.

Bert then returned to hotel keeping, where he held the licence for the Castle Inn, situated on the corner of Hindley and Morphett Streets.

After being expelled from the ALP, Bert stood unsuccessfully for the Federal seat of Adelaide in 1940 as an Independent. In 1948 he again became an Adelaide City Councillor. Bert had a long association with both the Duke of Brunswick and West Adelaide Football Clubs.

Will interviewed Westies legend Doug Thomas, about his involvement with the Club. Doug stated that Bert had, over the years, held the offices of Chairman, League Delegate, President and Patron. Bert held the very real affection of the players.

Will also interviewed former Police Association President, Peter Alexander, about Bert's support for the police force. Peter recalled there was a 'Bert Edwards Cup' which the Union used for toasts on special occasions.

Bert's philanthropy extended into his later years. He used to deliver food to the Roman Catholic Cathedral to be given to the poor and needy. He gave money to the Hutt St Centre for the homeless. He paid the rent for people about to be evicted from their homes. He saw to it that no one in the West End had a pauper's funeral, by paying for it himself.

Bert died of cardiac disease after a short illness. His funeral was held at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral. The funeral procession went through the city streets to the West Terrace Cemetery, where he was buried in a copper coffin in a double grave.

Will asserted that Bert had led the life that he saw fit to live, unapologetically. He was loud and snazzy, often dressing in a white suit with a homburg hat.

What a remarkable man. Thank you, Will, for your presentation.

Greg Stevens



A young Bert Edwards

Oral History Australia SA/NT: Life Member Allison Murchie



Congratulations to Labour History Society executive member Allison Murchie on her recent award of Life Membership of the Oral History Association SA/NT for her contribution to Australian oral history.

Allison has worked as a volunteer in the field of oral history for over 20 years. Her interviews with 128 South Australians, including trade unionists, working women, political activists and refugees can be found in the State Library's JD Somerville Oral History Collection. A selection of Allison's interviews also appears on the *Women's Register* and *SA Memory* websites.

Allison has contributed many voluntary hours to the State Library of South Australia; listening to recordings, summarising content, and organising and summarising transcripts of interviews to facilitate public access. Her work is greatly appreciated by the Labour History Society.

The Oral History Association

Those interested in the documentation of South Australian labour history are encouraged to consider membership of Oral History Australia.

Oral History Australia is a non-profit organisation whose members practice and promote oral history. Its aims are:

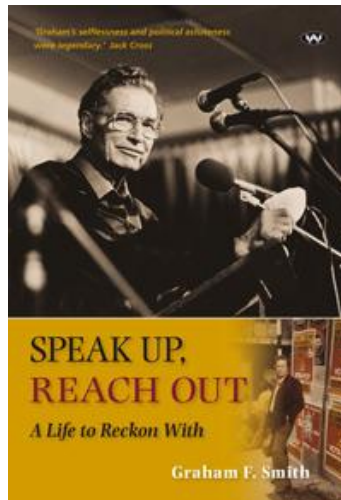
- to promote the practice and methods of oral history
- to educate in the use of oral history methods
- to encourage discussions on all aspects of oral history
- to foster the preservation of oral history records

Membership benefits include oral history workshops, providing training in interview practice and the use of recording equipment; equipment hire; and receipt of the *Word of Mouth* newsletter. More information can be found at:

<http://oralhistoryaustraliasant.org.au>

Graham F Smith

Book review



“Speak Up, Reach Out, A Life to Reckon With” is a chronicle of a left activist, Graham F Smith. His life tragically ended in 1989. The book’s importance is underscored by the fact that it gives great insight into a rarely mentioned aspect of Australian life: how a conservative society was challenged by the contribution of one person across a wide range of issues.

The book reveals the staggering amount of sheer bigotry Graham encountered because of the virulent anti-communism at the time. This had major implications for him and his family.

This was best exemplified by his struggle in the late 50s. To gain a Bank position at a relatively junior level required the intervention of H.C. Coombs (at that time Chair of the Commonwealth Bank), and the legal advice of a young Elliot Johnston who in later life would become the only Communist Q.C. in South Australia.

Graham’s considerable involvement included his early political work in the Australian Army, his part in the struggle by the Indonesian people against Dutch rule, and the failed attempt by the Menzies Government to ban the Communist Party of Australia via a referendum. This showed the breadth of his activities. He was a lifelong socialist.

His work with others to transform the South Australian Institute of Teachers into a progressive Union (now the AEU Australian Education Union) is deserving of a separate review, particularly his efforts to secure adequate funding for education and to improve teachers working conditions.

Similarly the decision and speech by Khrushchev to denounce Stalin in 1956 had wide ranging ramifications for the Left in Australia. The book gives a great account of how that speech impacted on activists in the Party at that time.

The book also traces Graham's early life. The son of a train controller he moved around country South Australia eventually settling in Adelaide and attending Unley High School. He enlisted in the Australian Army in 1943. In 1944 he joined the Communist Party. Upon discharge from the Army he commenced tertiary studies at the University of Adelaide in 1945. Whilst a student he continued to actively support the campaign to achieve Indonesian Independence and resist the reimposition of Dutch colonial rule.

Graham worked in a factory (as a consequence of a Party directive) for a period in the early fifties. At the factory (Perry Engineering), he was a shop steward with the FIA (Federated Ironworkers Association) and was a tireless advocate for workers on the shop floor. He later resumed teaching in 1956.

He was also active in local government. This took the form of involvement in the MPA (Marion Progress Association), which later became a Residents Association for the people of Marion. Apart from standing for office in the local council Graham lobbied Government to provide better infrastructure for the people of Marion.

Later in his career he was a Lecturer at Torrens CAE (College of Advanced Education) where he brought the same values he had always believed in, the importance of the Union, the need to be organised, and the importance of a stimulating and questioning learning environment for students.

Overall the book is a testimony to a man of high principle whose death was not only a tragedy but represented the end of an era in left politics.

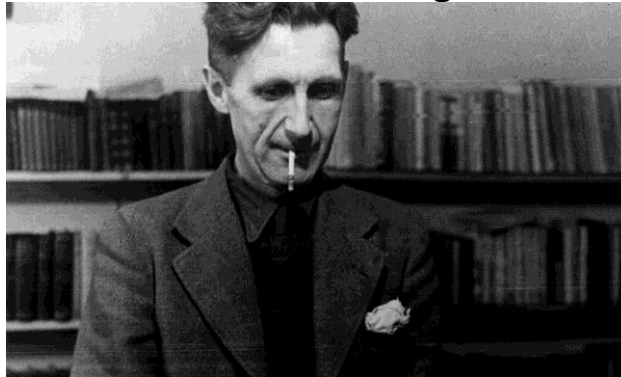
A great read.

Steve Acton



Guests at the book launch

The Socialism of George Orwell



Eric Blair was a contrarian, a man who like Groucho Marx didn't care to belong to any club that would have him as a member. He was also a Socialist, something conveniently forgotten by apologists of the right who embraced him as the conscience of the left. For example he was skeptical of liberal economic dogma, describing 'economic liberty' as 'the right to exploit others for profit.' When I was a schoolboy during the Cold War, his classic denunciation of Stalinism *Animal Farm* was taught to us as if it were an anti-Socialist tract. When I pointed out that the introduction recorded that Blair/Orwell had written it while recovering from wounds suffered serving with an Anarcho-Communist militia unit on the Aragon front in the Spanish Civil War, my modest ability to read was greeted with dismay as a challenging revelation. Orwell never recanted his Socialism, however scathing he became of comrades he believed had lead others astray and suppressed others again outright. The virtues betrayed by the elitist pigs in the *Farm* were always the humanistic and consequently egalitarian ones Orwell always consistently adhered to.

In his 1941 essay *The Lion & the Unicorn: Socialism & the English Genius* Orwell championed at the nadir of the war a revolutionary social program and a national road to Socialism in keeping with mass sympathies and radical traditions. Patriotism and the real uniqueness of national cultures, was, he argued, a reality the left had ignored at its peril in countries like Italy and Germany, precisely those which had gone fascist partly by default. If the nation is a dimension of community, then there is something still relevant today in Orwell's argument, above and beyond the limitations of his dated English ethnocentricity. Communities, he argued, have characteristic natures, and those who would renovate them must learn to work with the grain, not against it. This insight applies equally to developments in Italy and Australia as well as England, the corner of the United Kingdom he knew best. Not for nothing was this perspective a corner stone of PCI (Partito Comunista Italiano) and CPA policy after WWII and especially after the Prague Spring. But he was far from being an apologetic conformist for the status quo. Like his Italian contemporary Gramsci and the radical Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire after him, he understood that working class culture was an incipient culture of resistance:

"In all societies the common people must live to some extent *against* the existing order. The genuinely popular culture ...is something that goes on beneath the surface, unofficially and more or less frowned on by the authorities."

David Faber

The Turnbull regime: the human face of capitalism

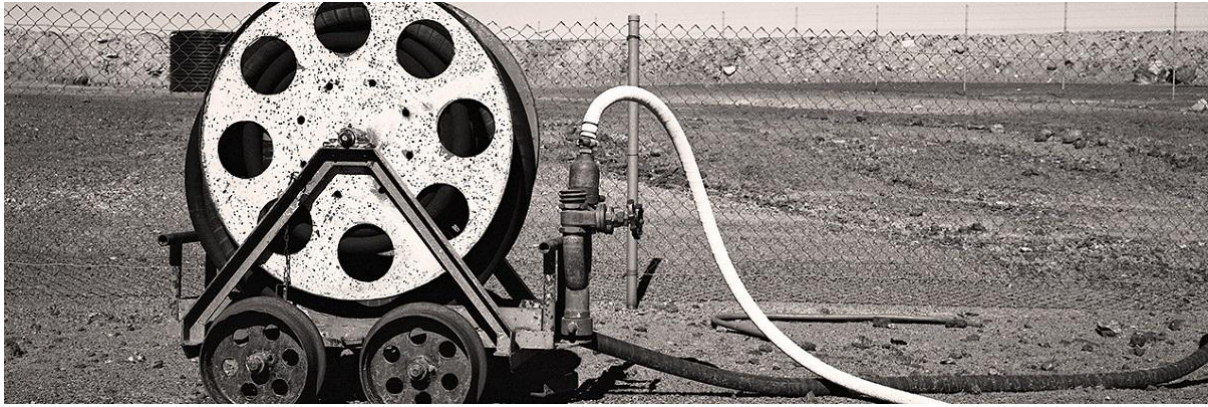


Coalition supporters will have breathed a sigh of relief at the polls which showed the electorate responsive to the savvy charm of lawyer banker Malcolm Turnbull after the demise of the out of touch and arrogant reactionary Tony Abbott. But the honeymoon effect however significant will not of itself guarantee the Tories victory at the next election. Many ducks and constituencies will have to line up as per usual at a general election for that to happen.

Bread and butter economic and welfare policy affecting the mainstream will be crucial, and voters will be keen to assess the extent to which the conservative leopard has changed its spots with its change of leader. Turnbull is a much better leader and negotiator than the blustering and intransigent Abbott. But this hardly ensures that his policies will substantially differ from his predecessor's, as opposed to their being sold or marketed, *à la* Abbott and Hockey, with greater tactical discretion to the Senate and the electorate. The future like the past projected from the Treasury Benches will be neoliberal, emphasising small State rhetoric and 'responsible fiscal policy.' This will have a deflationary tendency in a context of elevated unemployment, offset by an open purse disposition towards the defence, security and intelligence communities. Private initiative will be praised to the skies and industrial policy will continue to be directed at undermining wage labour and the unions. The Murdoch press will egg on the government to radical measures on the socioeconomic and security fronts, with the government adopting the more restrained tone typical of conservative 'progress' associations. This government will be one where style counts for as much as substance, remembering that in politics, up to a point, style is taken for substance.

The challenge to the left, as ever is to be relevant to the political and historical process at this crucial juncture. Effectively the government has stolen a march on the opposition, which may be countered only by a change in the leadership of the Parliamentary Labor Party, given that Bill Shorten has retained barely any traction with the electorate. Labour is rightly preparing for a union bashing election campaign and welfare groups are girding their loins to defend entitlements which have remained under threat under consecutive Liberal-National Party administrations. It is a fact that the broad left in society, those to the left of Genghis Khan with material interests in institutions like Medicare, recognise themselves in no single political party or organisation. Mobilising the left thus means alliance politics of some subtlety, animating several socioeconomic sectors and strata. The country risks changing irrevocably for the worse under Turnbull as it did under Abbott. We had best be about our business to ensure it does not.

David Faber



‘From Boom to Bust’: AHA Conference 2016

The 2016 Australian Historical Association conference will be held in Ballarat from Monday 4 July to Friday 8 July. Opening events will take place on the evening of Monday 4 July, and goldfields site visits and ancillary events will be scheduled for Saturday 9 July.

The drama of a ‘boom to bust’ (rise and fall) or a ‘bust to boom’ (rags to riches) tale makes for a compelling story. Historians rarely shy away from the appeal of such narratives. At the AHA 2016 annual conference the changing fortunes of the mining, industrial, cultural, environmental, and heritage sectors – and the histories of everything in between – will be exposed and scrutinised. The conference will give historians a forum in which to explain the rhetorical value of ‘boom to bust’ histories, challenge their veracity and expand what we actually think of as booming and busting.

Conference themes include:

- Frontier encounters and challenging colonial legacies
- Urban and regional histories
- Industrial heritage, cultural landscapes and historic urban landscapes
- Minerals and mining, from gold seeking to the end of the second long boom
- Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) sector, history and cultural heritage
- Labour and economic histories
- Environmental histories
- Oral histories, public histories, genealogical and migration stories

AHA 2016: From Boom to Bust is convened by the Collaborative Research Centre in Australian History (CRAH) at Federation University Australia.

Image: Jane Brown, *Mining Machinery, Line of Lode Miners Memorial Complex, Broken Hill*, 2014, from the series *The Sievers Project*, hand printed and toned, silver gelatin print on fibre based paper. Courtesy of the artist and Stills Gallery, Sydney

M.A.D.E. Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka



The Museum of Democracy at Eureka (M.A.D.E.) is an inspiration. This museum, located on the site of the 1854 Eureka Stockade in Ballarat, Victoria focuses on the efforts of ordinary men and women in Australia and around the world to secure and expand democratic rights. It explores the story of the Eureka Stockade as part of the struggle for people's rights in Australia and has on display the original Eureka Flag, the Flag of the Southern Cross.

While M.A.D.E. acknowledges the importance of the right to vote and stand for election, its exploration of democracy emphasises power and influence rather than parliamentary processes and electoral politics.

It first investigates what happens when people are denied power. Aboriginal people, Holocaust survivors, women, gays, people in detention centres, Chinese Australians and political prisoners recount their experiences of deprivation of democratic rights and their struggle to have their voices heard.

Interactive museum displays then encourage visitors of all ages to think about what it takes to achieve change. In the section on *the Power of Numbers* examples of social and political change address questions such as: How many people does it take to create real change? or start a revolution? Tips are given on making numbers count.

Displays on *the power of influence* consider the power required to change a person, thing or event. It is suggested that such power can be influenced by both things we want and things we fear.

In the section on *the power of words* visitors are reminded that 'the right words at the right time can change the world'. An 'Incendiary Library' lists words relating to struggle and change; words that have been banned; and words that are shockingly and powerfully new. Visitors can hear speeches by Peter Lalor (Eureka), Martin

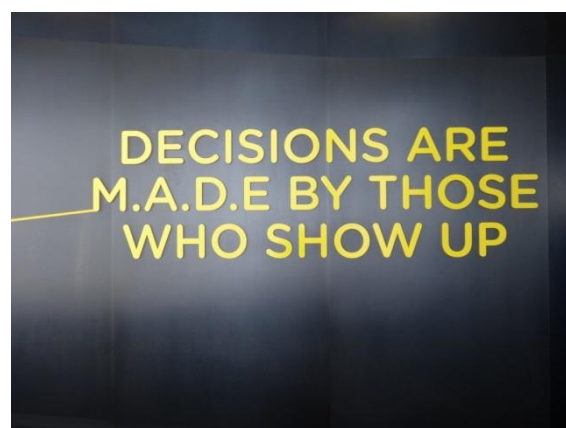
Luther King (I have a dream), Mary Fisher (AIDS), Paul Keating (Redfern Speech), Dame Edith Lyons (women in politics) and Winston Churchill (WWII).

The Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka is an exciting museum that is interesting and accessible to children and adults. It includes a theatre and a range of activities for children. The grounds include political sculpture and playground.

In 2015 M.A.D.E won the Innovation category at the 2015 Museums and Galleries National Awards (MAGNAs) in Sydney. This prestigious award recognises a museum or gallery project that promotes pioneering and sustainable practices. M.A.D.E received the accolade in recognition of their Eureka 160 program, a series of over 30 events celebrating the 160th anniversary of the Eureka Stockade.

If you are passing through Ballarat or attending the Australian Historical Association National Conference there in July, a visit to M.A.D.E. is a must.

Jude Elton



Hugh Stretton 1924–2015

By Geoff Harcourt



“Hugh died last Saturday at the age of 91 after a long illness. I had known him since 1958 when I first came to Adelaide where he was the much-admired Professor of History. In later years we became firm friends, though I continued to regard him with awe and admiration. He was a giant intellect, easily Australia’s most deep and progressive thinker, and a remarkably kind and humane man who lived up to his ideals in many practical ways.

Having established an excellent History department, he resigned from his chair so that he could write. The first product of this new phase was *The Political Sciences*, published by Routledge in 1969, and named in the *Times Literary Supplement* as a work of ‘near genius’. It contains a most profound analysis of the inseparability of analysis and ideology in the social sciences.

He published privately his ground-breaking book, *Ideas for Australian Cities* in 1970, which then became a bestseller. *Housing and Government*, his Boyer Lectures, were published in 1974. His Cambridge University Press book, *Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment* (1976), was so far ahead of its time that it has not received the attention it should have. His volumes of essays analyse vital social, political and economic issues in Australian society. His ‘anti-Samuelson’ economics textbook, *Economics: A New Introduction* (1999), presents to students a viable alternative to mainstream economics.

Most of all, he was a loving and lovable person, always extraordinarily generous and supportive to his many friends and admirers (overlapping sets), and lovingly supportive and proud of his children. He and Pat had many years of deep love and support for one another. I doubt that we shall see his like again.”

Source: *Evatt Foundation Journal*. Volume 14 No.1. December 2105

Louisa Miller

Well loved and respected life member of the Labour History Society Louisa Miller died on 11 November 2015. Louisa was well known to many South Australians from all walks of life. She was born in 1935 in Scotland and grew up in the tough years of World War II and like many children of her generation quickly learned self-discipline and personal responsibility, survival lessons that remained with her. She got a degree in Industrial Psychology and her first job was in a clerical position in a colliery where she joined her first union, the Clerical Union and later the National Union of Miners.

At the age of 30 Louisa moved to South Australia. She worked in the Public Buildings Department and joined the Public Service Association. When a fellow worker had to resign on getting married Louisa was appalled and campaigned strongly with her union to have the policy banished and here began her long involvement with the PSA.

When Louisa's husband died at 41, she had 5 children and four of them were at school. Undaunted she continued to work as well as taking on a substantial role as the senior job representative. She was later elected to the PSA Council and held the position of Vice President as well as delegate to the United Trades and Labour Council. She was recognised for her work with a life membership of the PSA. She also served as Director on the Board of Health Partners and the Savings and Loans Credit Union.

In 1991 she was appointed by the government to the Board of Flinders Medical Centre where she also re-organised their Human Resources Industrial Relations Department.

Louisa joined the SA Industrial Relations Society in 1978 and took on numerous roles including Treasurer, President, Vice President and member of the Management Committee. She was subsequently awarded Life Membership for her commitment and contribution to the Society.

After leaving the Public Service Louisa joined the Australian Education Union and began her teaching career at TAFE where she specialised in Industrial Relations, Business Studies and Marketing. She also tutored at Adelaide University and lectured part-time at the Aboriginal College (later named Tauondi College).

After retiring Louisa continued to be very active as President of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History; her many contacts provided excellent speakers at the regular monthly meetings. Yet again her contribution was recognised by a Life Membership from the Society. Louisa had a huge work ethic and was a great contributor to society, she was highly skilled in Industrial Relations and teaching.

Our condolences go to her husband Peter Dewhurst and family. She will be sadly missed. Proud of her Scottish heritage I leave you with the words "Lang May Yer Lum Reek."

Allison Murchie

John Bannon

John Bannon passed away on 13th December 2015 and many articles and eulogies have been written in recent weeks covering many aspects of his life. I have chosen two, one from the ALP and the second from his long-time friend Rodney Cavalier. Allison Murchie



“John Bannon, longest-serving Labor Premier of South Australia, has died. With him dies another living link to Australian Labor’s most successful peacetime era of government, the 1980s. He was 72. When John Bannon became the leader of the Labor Party in South Australia, he was just 39-years-old. The state’s Dunstan era had ended in high drama barely months earlier. Yet rather than serving as a transitional or transactional leader, Bannon was to transform South Australia and its politics as much as any of his predecessors. Bannon went from a newly elected Member of Parliament to Premier of his state in just five years. Taking office in 1982, he was emblematic of a generation of modernising, moderate Labor leaders around the country and in Canberra.

Labor’s Whitlam-led modernisation of the 1960s and 1970s had seen a great broadening of the interests of Labor in power – liberal social policies joined with a new social-democratic understanding of the economy and an ambitious and updated sense of Australia’s place in the world. The legacy of the oil shocks of the 1970s and the recession of the early 1980s – the deepest since the Depressions – was a renewed Labor emphasis on economic management as the bedrock of progress in government.

John Bannon saw this and led Labor for its times. As newly elected Premier, Bannon took the role of state Treasurer. In the joint roles, he led a city-building government and made South Australia a growing state. The brushstrokes of his big picture for the state – defence industry including submarines, development of the Torrens’ bank as an events and tourism precinct, and support for the uranium industry including at Olympic Dam – can be seen in the economic agenda of the state to this day.

John Bannon’s integrity was never at issue and his patience and humility in the decades that followed was an example to his successors. His service to the ABC Board was remembered by the corporation’s managing director in a statement on his death. His service to cricket in South Australia will long be remembered at Adelaide Oval.”

Source: *Labor News* 13 December 2015

John Bannon – a dear friend

Rodney Cavalier was one of John Bannon's closest friends. He wrote a long eulogy for his friend and these are just a few excerpts. Rodney was a Minister in NSW Labor governments. He served as Chairman of the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust 2001-14, a record term. He is a published author on Labor history and cricket.

"I first met John when he joined the staff of Clyde Cameron, Minister for Labour, in the halcyon year 1973. He was in a suit, his tie was straight, he was impeccably presented. JC Bannon was all class. Clyde had identified him as a young man of unlimited ability, just as he had identified Don Dunstan decades earlier.

With Clyde's patronage and a more general recognition that he was one out of the box, John advanced rapidly. He was selected for the safe seat of Ross Smith and won it comfortably in 1977. He was in the cabinet in no time at all. After the debacle of the 1979 state election he became Leader of the Opposition and led the party comfortably back into government at the next outing.

1982-83 were great years for Labor. A party vested with ideas and principles, led by men of the calibre of JCB, John Cain and R.J.L. Hawke, won election after election because the party stood for something. Remarkable that.

John's years as Premier were years of expiring youth, sticking at marathons and half-marathons, being a model of fitness – and never ever missing the Test at Adelaide Oval. When he left the parliament in alleged disgrace over the collapse of the State Bank, he did not mope, he did not bury himself in accumulating documents in self-justification, he had no inclination to write memoirs.

My visits brought me into the friendship of Angela, John's wife whom he loved with all his heart. One could see why. Angela was an artist in several genres. I enjoyed seeing her works. In the room where I slept was kept a doll's house that Angela's father had made for his daughters. It was craftsmanship informed by love.

A tradition began of a slap-up dinner party at his home. A tradition within a tradition was pulling down Hansard, opening a page at random and reading the immortal words of the then premier, followed by verbal annotations. Each night of the Test, lasting usually into a fifth day, had its own traditions about group gatherings, intimacies, showing me the sights.

I came to understand the genius of Colonel Light and the ongoing bounty of the Dunstan era as Adelaide transformed into the finest dining in Australia. I learned about the zany in Hindley Street, fine dining along East Terrace, student specials and gelato in North Adelaide. There was not a cuisine the Bannons did not know and did not reveal.

So it came to pass at the *Bellevue Hotel* in Paddington, January 2011, no one rang a bell, no heralds proclaimed a chorus, there was a moment and the moment was John Bannon. Unrequested JC Bannon had become Winston Churchill during the War, proclaiming defiance. Not an imitation, not mimicry, this was Churchill. Vast

passages of War speeches rolled from his tongue, the nuance of Churchill, the grand sweep of phrase, imagery, invocations to glory leading unto a crescendo at which the speaker ceases. Done and exhausted.

As his body failed him, John became more and more productive. He undertook and completed a Ph.D, published his biography of the first Sir John Downer, was awarded an AO and rose to the pinnacle of cricket administration. John was the indispensable man. When there was a lunacy abroad that cricket might leave the SCG, John was ferocious in stamping on the madness.”



With his wife Angela



Opening an exhibition of his father's art (3 days before he died)



With David Bowie



Marathon Man to the end

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2014-15

Presented at the AGM 18 October 2015

Membership

Financial membership of the Branch as at the end of the 2014-15 financial year was 48, including 10 trade unions and the May Day Collective.

Jim Doyle was made an honorary life member in recognition of his longstanding labour commitment and activism, including as a member of the Labour History Society.

General meetings & events

The Society held 5 general meetings, the AGM and a special meeting during the year. General meetings featured a range of individual and panels of speakers. Presentations included:

- A seminar on trade union relations with the SA Labor Governments as part of SA Unions 130 years celebrations
- Greg Stevens: 'Campaigning for Peace in Vietnam in South Australia'
- David Faber: 'Today we own the streets', being an account of the organisation of Adelaide's 'No war' protests against the war in Iraq
- Ruth Russell: 'the Untold Story', marking the centenary of the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom
- Andrew Leigh: An historical perspective on inequality in Australia

The talks by Vice President Greg Stevens and Executive member David Faber drew upon the papers that they presented at the 14th Biennial Labour History Conference held in Melbourne in February 2015.

A new executive was elected at the AGM on 26 October 2014. Outgoing President Gary Lockwood spoke on 'Labor's way back: Is integrity important?'

Two special events were also held this year. The Labour Ambassadors Dinner on 11 October 2014 saw the induction of 5 new ambassadors: Gary Lockwood, Don Jarrett, Patricia Perry, Murray De Laine and Jude Elton. The task of ambassadors is to promote labour history and the Society. It also recognises individual contributions to the labour movement. Awards of appreciation were also presented to long serving Society Secretary Marlene Fenwick and Treasurer Kevin Kaeding.

The Society also teamed up with History SA to run an afternoon workshop on 2 May 2015 as part of the 2015 State History Festival. The workshop 'Remember the 8 Hour Day', gave participants the opportunity to see up close, objects in the State History Collection relating to the winning and celebrating of the 8 Hour Day in South Australia.

Newsletter

The branch newsletter continued to be produced on a regular seasonal basis during 2014-15. A new team approach to its production has been adopted, enabling a sharing of tasks. There is an increasing emphasis on content aimed at giving

members access to new and interesting information, for example on public seminars and recently released books relating to the labour movement and relevant broader issues. Feedback to date has been very positive.

Executive meetings

The executive continues to meet bi-monthly, in between general meetings, on the last Thursday of the month at 6pm at the Box Factory. Members are welcome to attend and contribute (without voting rights).

Matters in train include the upgrading of the SA Branch website and development of a program of meetings and events for the coming year.

Federal matters

The President or Vice-President of the SA Branch have participated in meetings of the federal executive of the ASSLH either via phone hook-up or at meetings coinciding with conferences during the year. The SA Branch also made a submission to the Review of the ASSLH initiated by the federal executive. The outcome of the review is expected during the 2015-16 financial year.

AGM



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 2014-2015

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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 in 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 Adelaide Branch of the ASSLH. It is not affiliated to the Australian Labor Party or any other political party. Members are encouraged to make contributions to this newsletter.

General enquiries can be made to the Secretary, Marlene Fenwick on 041 880 4124 or by email to nonning@bigpond.net.au



Photos of local events by Allison Murchie