

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2014-15

Labour History Society (SA Branch)

Membership

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 Keading.

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 Vic-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.

Jude Elton

18 October 2015