

## **ASSLH (Adelaide Branch): President's Report 2015-16**

### **Membership**

Adelaide Branch membership at the end of the 2015-16 financial year was 69, comprising 1 Life Member; 10 trade unions & SA Unions; May Day Committee; 32 Concession Members; and 25 Full Members.

Life Member Louise Miller sadly passed away during the year. Society representatives attended the funeral. Condolences were conveyed to her family and her extensive contribution to the Society acknowledged.

### **General meetings & Events**

Five general meetings/public seminars and the AGM were successfully held this year. Speakers covered a range of topics, including historical reflections on topical issues:-

- 16 August 2015, then Assistant Shadow Treasurer Andrew Leigh, *Inequality in Australia*
- 18 October 2015, Historian and Gay Activist Will Sergeant, *Bert Edwards: King of the West End*
- 28 February 2016, State Secretary of the Ambulance Employees Association Phil Palmer, *Against the Odds: The Ambulance Employees Association of South Australia*
- 17 April 2016, Author Stephanie McCarthy, *Tom Price: From Stonecutter To Premier*
- 19 June 2016, Adjunct Professor Rhonda Sharpe, *Are We There Yet: The Evolution of Superannuation Policy in Australia*

Seminars are now more broadly advertised through the Box Factory Newsletter and the Adelaide City Council What's On website. While notice of speakers has become a required condition of use of the Box Factory, the Executive welcomes the opportunity to reach a wider audience.

### **Newsletter**

Allison Murchie has taken up the co-ordination of the Branch newsletter with gusto, with other members of the executive contributing. Greg Stevens also organises production and assists with distribution. Newsletters feature reports from events; book reviews; articles, including on current and past labour activists; and a range of information relating to labour history. Four seasonal issues of the Newsletter were produced this year.

Newsletters are now largely sent by email. However, provision is made for members without an email service to continue to receive newsletters by post.

We thank Steph Key and her Electorate Office staff for their assistance with the printing of the newsletter.

### **Website**

The Society was one of 26 community organisations from across South Australia to be selected as beneficiaries of UniSA's Advanced Web Design Course during the first half on 2016. Student Ann Lewis (a previous employee of the AMWU) chose the Society as the organisation for which she would develop a website. Ann received a high distinction for the completed design.

Following Executive training in uploading material and maintaining the website, it will be transferred to the national ASSLH server. Members and the general public will then be able to freely access it to find out about Branch and Executive activity; register for events; become a member; provide comment & ideas; and connect to other labour and history organisations.

Members and friends will be notified later this year as soon as the website is up and running.

### **Executive Activity**

Officers and the Executive were re-elected at the AGM on 18 October 2015. Long-standing activist Sue Marks and young labour history researcher Fletcher O'Leary have also volunteered to assist the Executive and have attended executive meetings.

The Executive meets bi-monthly on Thursdays from 5.30pm at the Box Factory. When the website is operational Executive meeting dates will be notified in advance wherever possible. Members are welcome to attend and contribute to discussion, but may not vote.

Six Executive meetings were held during the year plus a number of working group sessions on matters including financial and membership data processes and co-ordination, and the website.

Members will have noticed that speakers at general meetings/events are generally recorded by Allison Murchie. Recordings are lodged with the State Library of South Australia and can be accessed by the public for personal and academic research. There are now 64 LHS recorded oral histories and addresses in the State Library. New recording equipment has recently been purchased to enable this work to continue.

My thanks go to all members of the executive for their ideas, enthusiasm and hard work over the past year. Thanks also to David Faber for his contribution as Acting President while I took leave of absence early in 2016.

### **Federal Matters**

The President/Acting President participated in two national federal executive and the national AGM hook-ups during the year. Noteworthy items of discussion included the Labour History Journal and national labour history conference.

Editorship of the Labour History journal has changed and moved from Sydney to Melbourne. Diane Kirkby, La Trobe University, Victoria is the new Editor.

The 15th Biennial Labour History Conference, will be held on 23–25 September 2017, at Emmanuel College, University of Queensland. Academics and labour activists are invited to present papers around the theme, *Workers of the World* and the broader agenda of labour history. Keynote speaker is the fabulous Ruth Milkman, USA labour historian with noted work on immigrant labour and its treatment in the USA.

Members and friends are encouraged to attend and consider presenting a paper.

Jude Elton

Presented AGM 21 August 2016