

LABOUR HISTORY NEWS Summer 2021/22

Labour History Society (South Australia)



Here's a photo of Whitlam writing his first policy speech in December 1972 - what did you do during the holidays?

This issue of the LHSSA brings you last minute holiday reading: sad farewells to some labour history greats, but good news about our February meeting, the renewal of WEL and some fascinating book film and display reviews – plus the usual *Local Hero* and another incisive polemic from Brian!

Contributions welcome: letters, articles, book reviews etc. Ken Bridge (copy editor) <kbridge38@gmail.com>

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- February meeting: *The uses of history* (David Faber)

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- *Becoming John Curtin and James Scullin: The Making of The Modern Labor Party* By Liam Byrne (Pat Wright)
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- *Miss Marx* film review (Don Longo)
- *Apron Sorrow, Sovereign Tea*, Nat Harkin Port Adelaide exhibition

Local Heroes – Jim Cane

Before you go... (Brian Abbey)

Presidents Report Labour History Society SA (inc.)

Our successful branch program over 2021 included a number of high profile events:

1. February saw our first **State Conference** for many years. The Conference was well attended, and with support from the Union movement, Search Foundation and NGOs turned a small profit
2. In March we released in conjunction with the Independent Peaceful Australia Network (SA) the 79-page **booklet 'Moratorium Now!'** based on our joint 20th September 2020 Conference on the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Moratorium Campaign in South Australia to celebrate. LHS (SA) and IPAN provided seed funding to cover the cost of printing.
3. In May our general meeting celebrated the **100 years of the Port Adelaide Workers Memorial**, and for the first time LHS(SA) had a stall at the May Day festivities at Port Adelaide – we will have a tent at this year's celebrations.
4. The June general meeting was addressed by a **panel discussing 'The Accord: Socialist Strategy or Election Gimmick?'** Speakers included Daren McDonald, Barbara Pocock, Tony Evans, and Ralph Clarke.
5. At its July meeting the Branch Executive agreed to a couple of minor amendments to our constitution to allow for two vice presidents to be circulated to the membership and to be voted on at the August AGM. A small group is considering further **updates for the Branch constitution** to be put to the membership in 2022.
6. The August AGM went well, and the proposed constitution amendments were agreed by the membership. **Yianni Cartledge** our supported PHD student for 2021/22 gave an update on his PHD topic (the 1822 Chios Massacre and subsequent diaspora) and **Don Longo** spoke of the **1871 Paris Commune and its relevance for modern society**.
7. The October general meeting (last for the year) was a **more relaxed meeting with amusing talks** by **Ione Brown**, the first ever female press secretary to a State Minister and **John Trainer** a previous Speaker in the SA House of Assembly.

Overall, 2021 was a good year for LHS SA Branch, with an **increase in membership** (general meetings averaging about 35-40 attendees), the production of quarterly **Labour News Newsletters**, and the appointment of **community, academic and trade union liaison officers on the executive**.

And so, onto 2022 where the Branch looks forward to another busy and rewarding year. The 2022 general meetings program is being developed in the context of the **study of history being under attack** by the conservative Right. A *Happy 2022* to members and supporters as we look forward to an important year with **Federal, State and local government elections!**

Doug Melvin
President, Labour History Society (SA Inc.)

<p>NB: The LHS(SA) general meeting dates for 2022: <i>20 Feb, 24 April, 19 June, 21 Aug, & 16 Oct</i></p>
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The Uses of History: A South Australian Labour History Symposium. **20th February 2022, The Box Factory**

In its 2021/2 Budget, the Morrison Government launched an attack upon the discipline of History and the Humanities in general. Discriminatory taxation was levied against their students, favouring instead a narrow, vocationalist and instrumentalist misunderstanding of STEM studies [Science, Technology, Engineering & Medicine] – with the insinuation that studies in History and the Humanities are of little or no social utility.

The 2021 State Labour History Conference had many objectives, among them reinforcing our links with the labour movement in this State and South Australian historical scholarship. In that spirit, the following is a panel of distinguished Flinders University scholars who will discuss the importance of studying history at the first general meeting on February 20th:

- **Dr Valerie Munt** is an Academic Adjunct in History whose early interests embraced the issues of class and education in colonial SA and the stress of teaching in SA in the neo-liberal era. Her current interest is in European history and the history of Anthropology during the Cold War. She co-authored *Red Professor: The Cold War Life of Fred Rose* (2015) with Professor Peter Monteath.
- **Professor Peter Monteath** is Interim Vice-President & Executive Dean of the Flinders University College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences. Born in Brisbane and educated in Queensland and Germany, he has researched and taught in a wide range of Australian universities, in the United States and in the Technical University of Berlin as an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow. His research interests include Modern European & Australian histories. Recent publications canvass Australian living memory of involvement in the Mediterranean Theatre during the II World War; for example, *Escape Artist: The Incredible Second World War of Johnny Peck* and *Battle on 42nd Street: War in Crete & the Anzacs Bloody Last Stand*.
- **Professor Philip Payton** was appointed Professor at Flinders in 2014. He is Emeritus Professor of Cornish & Australian Studies at the University of Exeter in the UK, where he was Director of the Institute of Cornish Studies 1991-2013. His prolific research includes the history of the Cornish homeland from ancient times to the Cornish diaspora within the British Empire, including Australia, where the Cornish contributed materially to the rise of South Australian Laborism. Professor Payton has also contributed to the history of Australian immigration within the imperial context. He has written two books on service repatriation in conjunction with the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- **Professor Matt Fitzpatrick**, educated at UNSW & the University of Sydney, is also a scholar in the Flinders' College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences. He specializes in international history, in particular European imperialism and German liberalism and nationalism. His grants include a 2018-2020 Australian Research Council Discovery Grant focused on 'Monarchy, Democracy & Empire'. He is an Editorial Board Member of *Central European History*, Series Editor of Bloomsbury Modern German History and has edited *History Australia*.

Our panelists are all excellent plain English communicators, and we look forward to a lively discussion and pertinent questions afterwards from the floor.

David Faber

NEWS



Steph Key is with Emma Lowe and 2 others.

5 December at 03:56 · 🌐

RE LAUNCHING WEL-SA

Thank you to all the Women who turned up on Saturday and those who said they wanted to - to relaunch WEL in SA.

The Australian Education Union AEU hosted our event- We all very much appreciate the Union's support.

Fortunately Jennie Groom , our wonderful & professional photographer was there so there are more photos to come.

Here and some of Rhiannon and my photos of the event.

The organising team ,all great women and from different backgrounds. Our youngest team member a teenager and the more senior in their 70's.

I'd like to thank my fellow Organisers -Emma, Heidi,

Maddie,Judith,Abbey, Hannah,Gaybrielle, Leela,

And special mention-

We are very fortunate to have Fliss Lord, Marilyn Rolls and Joan Russell with their herstoric WEL memory & organisational skills .



(from Facebook)

OBITUARIES

Vale Deborah McCulloch

Women's Electoral Lobby has been advised that Deborah McCulloch passed away on 16th October, 2021 after a long battle with dementia. Deborah held the first meeting of WEL in South Australia in her home in July, 1972. Present was Carmen Lawrence and Helen Glazer, among others. She was a women's liberationist and was looking to doing something useful instead of "going around defining the problem yet again."



Deborah began her working life as an English teacher and then lecturer in the then Salisbury College of Advanced Education, now part of the University of South Australia. She was appointed Women's Adviser to the Premier of South Australia, Don Dunstan in May, 1976. Her initial focus in that role was employment and education. Dunstan had given her the brief to eliminate sexism in the SA public service! She quickly realised that such an end required a major structural, cultural and systemic revolution and was therefore unlikely to happen quickly or at all. She turned to establishing what she called alternative services run by women for women. They were innovations at that time.

During her period as Women's Adviser from 1976-79, the Switchboard, later the Women's Information Service, was established followed by the Working Women's Centre and then the Rape Crisis Centre. These women's services led to others like Women's Health Centres. At the same time, the Premier was introducing the first discrimination legislation in Australia – the SA Sex Discrimination Act, 1975 and Deborah was appointed to the Sex Discrimination Tribunal holding that post till 1982. She left the SA Public Service to become, in her words, "a lesbian hippie." But far from dropping out, she took on numerous roles in violence intervention, in women's health, in disability information and resources and was a Director of FEM Enterprises from 1985-1995. She was active on the Executive of Women's Electoral Lobby (SA) from 1992-99 and was a member of the Australian Native Title and Reconciliation committee from 1991-1999 and a member of Reconciliation South Australia from 1998-2004. She was a client representative of the SA Legal Services Commission from 1993-2006.

Deborah acknowledged at the age of 64 that feminism remained her most significant influence and, at that time was doing work with Indigenous women and CALD women and men. She also edited two anthologies of poetry for schools and published her own collections of verse. She loved a laugh and embraced life.

She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Flinders University in 1994 and became a Member of the Order of Australia in June, 2005 for service to the community as a proponent of equal opportunities for women, Indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. WEL pays tribute to her community and feminist contribution and extends its best wishes to her son, David and daughter, Ella and family and close friends.

Jozefa Sobski AM, WEL Australia, National Convenor

Remembering Geoff Harcourt, the beating heart of Australian economics



Lewis Miller's painting, a 2019 Archibald Prize submission.

The Conversation December 7, 2021

John Hawkins Senior Lecturer, Canberra School of Politics, Economics and Society and NATSEM, University of Canberra
Selwyn Cornish Adjunct Associate Professor, Research School of Economics, Australian National University Both authors of this hastily-written obituary remember Geoff with great affection. Harry Bloch, the incoming co-editor of [History of Economics Review](#), remembered Geoff as “the beating heart of the history of economic thought in Australia”.

Australian economics has lost one of its most internationally renowned scholars with the passing of [Geoffrey Harcourt AC](#) at the age of 90. He was also one of its most prolific. He wrote more than 30 books and 400 articles. The award of Companion in the Order of Australia in 2018 cites his eminent service to higher education as an academic economist and author, particularly in the fields of post-Keynesian economics, capital theory and economic thought. He was a distinguished fellow of the Economic Society of Australia in 1996 among numerous other honours.

Geoff gained his first class honours degree at the University of Melbourne. It was there he made a life-long commitment to work toward alleviating poverty and against social and racial discrimination. As he later [wrote](#), “I became an economist because I hated injustice, unemployment and poverty”. He then moved to Cambridge where he got his PhD. He was supervised by economics greats [Nicky Kaldor](#) and [Ronald Henderson](#). He taught for many years at the University of Adelaide.

He was not just an ivory tower academic. He worked with some colleagues on the very practical 1974 “Adelaide Plan”, which proposed disallowing tax deductions for wage increases above a certain level as a means of reining rampant inflation. Another part of the plan was trading off wage increases for personal income tax cuts. It was not adopted, but later found an echo in the [prices-wages accords](#) of the Hawke government.

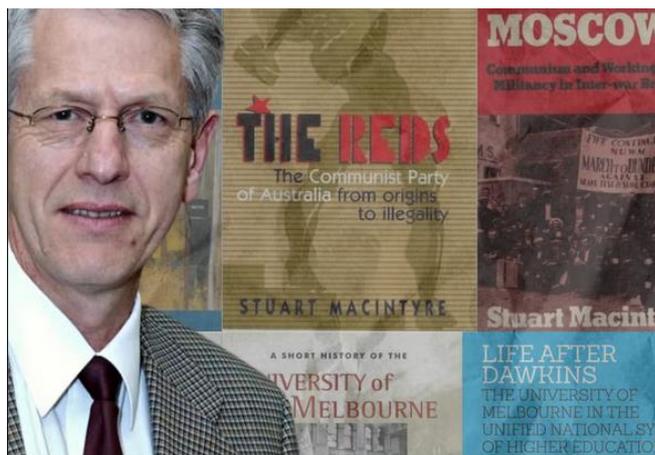
He declined an offer by [Jim Cairns](#), briefly treasurer in the Whitlam government, to be appointed Governor of the Reserve Bank. When Whitlam was dismissed, Geoff's son (the economist [Tim Harcourt](#)) recalled his father speaking at a protest rally just as he had at anti-Vietnam war rallies a few years earlier. In 1979, during the term of the Fraser Coalition government, he drafted an economic policy programme for a future Labor government. He later joked that Hawke followed it for “at least a good half-hour”.

While always Australian, he was also very much a Cambridge man. He visited there to lecture in 1964-1966, 1972-1973 and 1980. He moved there on a more permanent basis from 1982 to 1998. He was [president of Jesus College](#) for most of the period 1988 to 1992. He was on the University Council for eight years. Some of his best-known work revolved around Cambridge. He wrote on the “[Cambridge controversies](#)”. This refers to an argument about the nature of capital between economists from the University of Cambridge and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He co-wrote the definitive intellectual biography of

famous Cambridge economist [Joan Robinson](#). (Geoff, like many others, thought she should have been the first woman to win the Economics Nobel Prize.)

Geoff described himself as an “all-rounder” with a range of research interests. He is probably best remembered for his work on what is now termed “[post-Keynesian economics](#)”.

Vale Stuart Macintyre: a history warrior who worked for a better Australia Janet McCalman *The Conversation*, November 23, 2021



Stuart Macintyre has gone. To those whose lives touched his, an Australian history community without him seems hugely empty. For almost half a century he was there in the lives and work of his students, his colleagues, his comrades and his friends. He was one of those commanding people against whom others measure their ideas, their work and their politics. He has gone far too early, but he has left an extraordinary legacy.

He was assiduous. He always answered letters and later, emails, immediately. He was a close and constructive critic of his students’ work and a dedicated supervisor. While he taught general Australian history, many will remember his classes on the working class in history and literature with deep pleasure. As an academic leader he was assured. As a historian in the public realm, he was an unrelenting defender of good scholarship and academic freedom.

He was the prime target of the conservatives [in the history wars](#) and condemned as a partisan scholar by other frankly [partisan scholars](#) , but I remember well his generous reconciliation with [Geoffrey Blainey](#) some years later. He was a [history warrior](#) for the discipline of history.

He had deep feelings: for his family and friends, his heritage, his institutions, his comrades, and for a fairer world. He took a not uncommon path from Scotch College to the Communist Party. On leaving the Party, he remained [its best historian](#) [*The Reds; the Communist Party of Australia from origins to illegality*] and his final work, the [second volume](#) of that history [*The Party: the Communist Party of Australia from heyday to reckoning*] is just about to be released; he lived just long enough to complete it despite withering chemotherapy.

But his public legacy will be the books. His productivity was prodigious, and many have been not a little envious. But again, that productivity came from his assiduousness: sitting down every night he was home to write for two hours. He had, like many great historians, a highly retentive memory and an epic collection of books that he had actually read. For everyone it was “ask Stuart” and Stuart would know. That command of detail, and the years in the archives, made him our greatest historian of politics and society from the late 19th century to the present day.

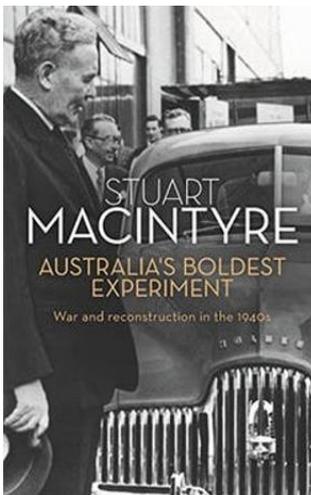
He was fascinated by political actors, largely male because of the times, and he probed character, ideas and actions forensically. They were not all “great men”, but they were powerful and influential figures from all sides of politics.

He opened his volume for the [Oxford History of Australia — The Succeeding Age, 1901-1942](#) — with portraits of five Australians: one of them the tycoon father of a distinguished politician who became a baron; another Australia’s finest lyric poet labouring in heartbreak land, forever longing for the lovely woman he was too poor and sick to marry; a working man who became a man of substance; a poor woman beset by loss and poverty and an Aboriginal stockman forced to straddle his traditional world and working for rations for whites. That was Stuart’s Australia – [winners and losers](#) (the title of an early book), the strugglers against an unforgiving land, tossed about in the great seas of history: booms and busts, natural disasters and the persistent structures of inequality that mocked Australia’s myth of egalitarianism.

Stuart was one of the few who could write national history, who commanded the detail and nuances that made an uneasy federation of colonies into a nation, who recognised the distinctive as well as the common in the Australian experience. And [he understood](#) as no other scholar, the institutions that bound the Commonwealth or defined the various states and territories.

His books began with the study of British Marxism [A Proletarian Science](#) (1980), the subject of his Cambridge doctorate and the grounding of his mastery of Marxist thought. He wrote on [colonial liberalism](#), the Labor Party, the Council for Civil Liberties and collaborated on a wide range of works with both scholars and journalists, catalysing debate on history, politics and institutions in the public domain.

He was dedicated to the mission of teaching civics in Australian schools. And he wrote on the [history and place](#) of the social sciences in Australia.



His greatest work is arguably his penultimate monograph: [Australia’s Boldest Experiment: war and reconstruction in the 1940s](#) (published in 2015). It promises to be his most influential because for our own time of existential crisis, he shows how Labor prime ministers, John Curtin and Ben Chifley, advised by the brilliant public servant Dr H.C. Coombs, began building modern Australia amidst the stringencies of war: to win the peace as well as the war. It is a book about political vision and moral courage, and it is now the bible of the Albanese Labor Party. Macintyre’s greatest legacy may yet be written in a better Australia, and it’s the one that would please him most.

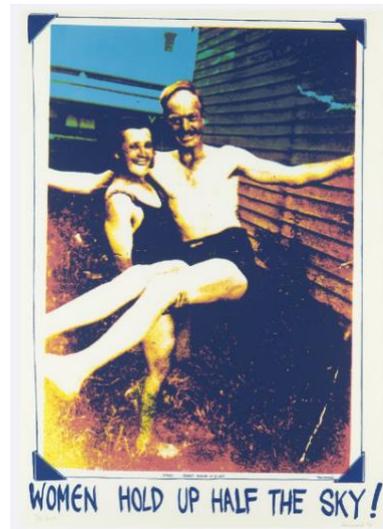
Read more: [The past is not sacred: the 'history wars' over Anzac](#)

See also: [The Citizen Historian, Frank Bongiorno, Inside Story](#) (Dec 1, 2021)

Vale Ann Newmarch

Ann Newmarch is remembered for her ground-breaking work as a feminist artist, 1945 – 2022 A.A. Cristi Jan. 17, 2022

The Art Gallery of South Australia honours the life and career of esteemed South Australian artist Ann Newmarch (born 9 June 1945), who passed away peacefully on Thursday 13 January 2022.



Newmarch is celebrated for her significant national and international reputation as an innovative printmaker, painter and sculptor and for her service to community cultural development through art. Embracing feminism and feminist issues since the 1970s, Newmarch was a founding member of the Progressive Art Movement and the Women's Art Movement and is recognised for her trailblazing work as a feminist and social activist.

Newmarch is particularly renowned for her experimental printmaking practice, which she often employed to raise awareness of political issues, gender inequality, environmental concerns and Aboriginal land rights. Her work also drew upon personal and family imagery to make statements about the role of women in society. AGSA Director, Rhana Devenport ONZM says, 'Ann Newmarch was an artist who never shied away from the political, the radical or the personal. Ann was ground-breaking in more ways than one; she was among the first women to hold a teaching position at the South Australian School of Art and was the first woman to be the subject of a retrospective exhibition at AGSA, held in 1997 and titled *The Personal is Political*.'

Newmarch was also keenly involved in local community art projects through her involvement in the Community Association of Prospect and the Prospect Mural Group. In 1989, Newmarch was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her services to the Arts; and the City of Prospect, her home base for five decades, acknowledged her contribution in 2019 by naming their new community gallery the Newmarch Gallery.

Vale Ross Shanahan (4 Sept 1930 – 21 Dec 2021)

Ross Shanahan, a long-term activist within the SA tertiary education union and a labour educator for many years in the SA-based Labour Studies program, has died at the age of 91.

Born in Sydney in the middle of the Great Depression, Ross was the youngest of seven children in a Catholic working class family that valued education and enthusiastically debated politics at the kitchen table. His father, a coal-stoker at the gas works by day, on weekends took Ross to the Sydney Library and Speakers Corner in the Domain – Ross acquired a life long commitment to social justice and a belief in the importance of trade unions's role in creating a better society.



Ross trained to become a Christian brother but left in his early 20s to teach English to migrants working on the Snowy Mountains scheme and on migrant ships coming to Australia in the late 1950s – where he met his East German wife Renata. After settling in Adelaide Ross became a history teacher for over 25 years at Brighton High and wrote a number of history books for high school students.

In the 1970s Ross enrolled in a sociology masters degree at Flinders University – at that time a hotbed of leftist ideas and resistance to the Vietnam war – then left secondary teaching to head a new Sociology Department at the Adelaide CAE with Ray Broomhill, Greg O’Leary and Pat Wright, offering one-day courses on social, labour and political economy issues for unionists. With the support of AMWU education officer Ted Gnatenko and Paul Acfield (convenor of the WEA’s union education program) a more formal Associate Diploma in Labour Studies began in 1979, expanding over the next few years (with additional staff including Graham Smith, Ken Bridge, Barbara Pocock and Kathie Muir) and offering a range of degree programs after the incorporation of Labour Studies into Adelaide University in 1996.

Building on the adult learning principles he had developed in migrant English teaching, Ross developed a cassette-tape exchange conversation system for distance education students, as well as a Practical Project where all students conducted a research project which validated their own work, life and union experience. Many of these workers and unionists otherwise would never have been able to access a tertiary education, and many of the hundreds of Labour Studies students since 1979 have left their mark on the world, taking on roles in the union movement, government and public service at both state and federal level. As his son Martin said at the funeral: ‘Dad was immensely proud of the course, and he met many wonderful students’. Ross is survived by his wife Renata, his three children Martin, Michael and Lisa and several grandchildren.

Ray Broomhill & Pat Wright

ARTICLES

Examining exorbitant pay for university elite, Barbara Pocock, *In Daily*, December 17 2021

When I was an economics student at the University of Adelaide in the 1970s, I was taught by that physically diminutive but intellectually expansive professor, Geoff Harcourt. Apart from famously playing Aussie rules for the Blacks well into his 50s, Geoff shaped generations of economists at both the University of Adelaide and Cambridge where he held joint appointments and, thereafter, at a range of other universities. His classrooms were lively and demanding places, packed with theory, history, real world problems and complex ideas. His lectures were peppered with footy references and commentary on the weekend’s games.



Sadly, in December 2021 Geoff left us at 90 years of age, a loss to the global history of economic thought and post-Keynesian economic theory. University teachers can change their students' lives and Geoff changed plenty. His lifelong opposition to poverty, unfairness and racism brought these questions to life in his classrooms.

Around this time, I was making my way to becoming a labour economist, fascinated by wage relativities and by the anomalies all around me: shearers paid less than clerks, car park attendants paid less than childcare workers, women paid less than men doing the same work. Who decided value? What was fair? How were wages fixed? One day in 1978 Geoff said to our honours group that he found it puzzling that he was paid a great deal to do a job he loved, when so many others were paid much less to do those they hated, or found dangerous, or sweated over. He probably would have paid to work, he said. Why this yawning inequity? He saw this as wrong, as unfair.

What would he have made of pay relativities today I wonder? The inequities of the 1970s have widened to a chasm we could not then have imagined. Executives in Australian companies are paid increasing multiples of the average worker. Between 1993 and 2009 the average earnings of ASX 100 executives grew from 17 times average earnings to 42 times, and that multiple has continued to increase – to outrageous levels in some cases: in 2019 the CEO of stock market darling CSL earned 380 times the average Australian wage. The top has run away from the bottom. While CEOs and the top earners in our labour market have increased their incomes, average wages have remained stagnant for the past decade. As a result, the wages share of the national cake relative to the profit share is now back at the level of the 1950s.

This widening in inequality is obvious in many workplaces, not least the university sector. Through the pandemic, the university sector is estimated to have lost 40,000 jobs and is increasingly characterised by insecure employment. Those at the top of university hierarchies are paid salaries that are many multiples of the average university worker, and much more than our national leaders.

The average pay of Vice Chancellors in Australia in 2019 was estimated from university annual reports to be just under a million dollars, at \$989,742. In 2020 the Vice Chancellors at SA's three universities (Adelaide, UniSA and Flinders) were paid an estimated average of \$1,120,833. This is more than double that paid to the South Australian Premier (\$418,000), about six times that paid to a university professor and 12 times that paid to a registered nurse. Some shareholder organisations around the world are using the multiple of CEO pay to average employee pay as an indicator of inflated executive pay. They argue for the publication of this multiple in annual reports, and for caps on CEO pay that keep it reasonable. In this spirit, Rob Simms MLC recently introduced a private members bill into the South Australian parliament to cap Vice Chancellor salaries at the level of the Premier.

Something is not right in the state of the academy. At a time when students – domestic or foreign – have never paid more for their enrolment, when staff pay is stalled at a shrinking fraction of that paid to senior managers, when 40,000 people in the tertiary sector have lost their jobs, our state's university leaders are being paid twice the level of our Prime Minister, who receives around \$550,000. Many of those who do the core work of teaching, administration and research in our universities live with both growing employment insecurity and the risk of underpayment.

Over recent years, many universities have shifted their employment from tenured to insecure terms in pursuit of cost savings. Job insecurity has particular salience in South Australia, where two of our universities offer amongst the least secure terms to their staff: in 2019 Flinders University had the lowest rate of tenure out of 37 universities (with only 38% of staff in ongoing work) and the University of South Australia was not far behind at fourth out of 37 (43%). At the same time many universities have understated the true duties of casual and contract staff to save on wages, denying pay to staff that are often both underpaid and overworked. A remarkable 21 of 40 Australian public universities are currently under investigation for wage theft. The latest casualty, RMIT, was recently required to make a \$10 million dollar back payment. Others have been similarly penalised. In contrast with stagnant wage growth, increasing insecurity and widespread wages theft, those at the top of the tree in our universities are paid at rates that are quite extraordinary – unmatched in the rest of the world’s universities.

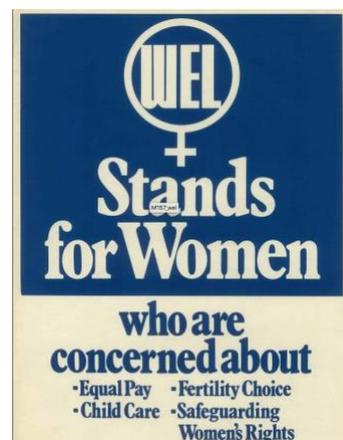
I wonder what Geoff Harcourt would have made of all this. When I studied under Geoff in an honours group of fewer than ten, no fees were payable. I went on to enjoy secure, decently paid work in the Reserve Bank, in the public sector, and in universities. I was able to put together a house deposit as I began my family. The young people around me now – including those who work in universities – do not enjoy these certainties.

We need to fund our universities appropriately. We need to make university study accessible to all. And we need to end exorbitant senior salaries and find wage justice within our universities – including appropriate relativities, secure pay and an end to wage theft, so that the students of the future can enjoy their own quotient of Geoff Harcourt-like education from teachers and researchers who are as good as he was: funny, demanding, inspired, brilliant, generous, mind-changing. Who knows, some might even go on to become the next generation of teachers and researchers who, like Geoff, aim to improve the world as they change students’ minds.

Barbara Pocock is Emeritus Professor in the Business School at the University of South Australia. She is also the lead Greens Senate candidate for South Australia in the next election.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEL IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Women’s Electoral Lobby (WEL SA) formed in South Australia in July 1972 when the late Dr Deborah McCulloch AM, a feminist and member of Adelaide Women’s Liberation, held a meeting of 13 like-minded women at her home in Adelaide. In their determination to achieve greater equality for women, this independent, non-partisan women’s lobby group had a double purpose: to make elected and aspiring parliamentary representatives aware of the views and needs of women voters, and to inform women voters of political candidates’ attitudes to women’s issues.



Their initial strategy was to survey all political candidates for the 1972 Federal Election. In order to ascertain and publicise their views on key issues affecting women’s lives, 14 questions were prepared about fertility control, child day-care, abortion, equal pay, education, and on the status of women generally. The announcement of a public meeting to launch this campaign gained wide media publicity. A focus on the daily lives and concerns of

women from all walks of life immediately appealed to women who saw no real representation of themselves and their interests in the powerful decision-making sectors of society. By late September, membership had grown to over 100.

WEL SA members sent out their brief questionnaire to the political candidates in August 1972, and 50% replied. Small WEL groups were immediately set up in the North-East, Southern and Hills suburbs and trained to campaign and lobby political candidates and parties in Federal Electorates over the following 5 months. They conducted in-depth question-answer interviews designed by a professional psychologist member. Further publicity in the major Adelaide newspapers about the preliminary results of the interviews (and refusals) attracted large numbers of women, so membership soared, peaking at 1,000. Two weeks before the election, results of the survey interviews were published in 'The Advertiser' in an election form guide that rated individual candidates according to their answers to the questions, and the slogan: "Think WEL Before You Vote!" was adopted. It is unsurprising that Anne Levy AO, as the ALP candidate for Boothby, was one of those rated 'most recommended'. She subsequently became the first female President of the SA Legislative Council and Life Member of WEL SA.

A monthly newsletter was produced, and teams met to discuss lobbying tactics. Action Groups formed to lobby State and Local Governments about women's right to work and equal pay. A few older women who had been activists in education and union circles, mentored other members in making submissions on policy issues, organising meetings and conferences, writing letters and media releases, addressing public meetings, and speaking on radio and TV. WEL's submissions were accurate and well argued, so they formed the basis for subsequent State Departmental writing of legislation. Hundreds of individual letters were written about sexism in many aspects of education, as well as discriminatory practices in industry and government. The experience of being able to shape the political agenda had an immense, positive impact on members' lives. They felt an excitement never experienced before, of working together for their own and other women's benefit. It should be remembered that this was a time when all the voluntary work was done by hand, on typewriters, use of "phone trees", manually folding and posting newsletters, notices and invitations, and hundreds of face-to-face meetings! Archived records of the dedication, determination, and commitment of those early WEL SA members is impressive, almost exhausting, to read and think about!

1975 was the United Nations International Year for Women, leading to the United Nations Decade for Women. This provided many opportunities for lobbying and submissions to Federal, State and Local Governments. In their advocacy for women, WEL SA members played a significant role, successfully lobbying for the appointment of a Women's Adviser to the Premier in November 1975. Deborah McCulloch was appointed by Premier Don Dunstan in May 1976 with the brief "to eliminate sexism in the SA public service." This led to a focus on major structural, cultural, and systemic change in employment and education, and ongoing Government funding support of key community-based services for women, such as Women's Emergency Shelters, and the Rape Crisis Centre. WEL SA successfully advocated for the establishment of the Women's Information Switchboard, later named the Women's information Service, and for other community-based services such as the Working Women's Centre, Women's Community Health Centres, and the Women's Studies Resource Centre. The North-East group successfully lobbied Premier Don Dunstan to establish the St. Peters Women's Centre, now known as the Women's Community Centre.

In 1976, the Premier introduced the SA Sex Discrimination Act - the first anti-discrimination legislation in Australia. This provided an opportunity for significant legislative and structural

changes, including equal opportunity being a key factor in interview panels for promotions and appointments. He appointed a Sex Discrimination Commissioner, and 4 years later, Women's Advisers were appointed in a number of Government Departments. WEL SA continued to lobby, research, publicise, conduct campaigns, and participate in public debates. Action groups held workshops, ran seminars, and focussed on a vast and expanding array of sexism and discrimination in society - far too many to list here. WEL SA organised a WEL National Conference, networked with other organisations, collaborated with several State Conferences, and in June 1979 became legally incorporated. Women MPs and other women leaders were invited to speak at monthly general meetings. This two-way process of listening, learning, discussion, and feedback was very effective: at one stage, all but one of the women MPs in State Parliament were members of WEL SA.

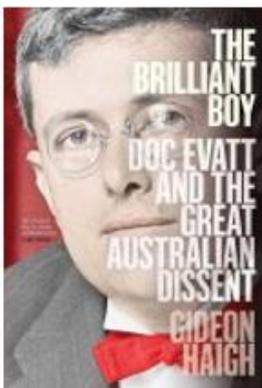
During the following years, WEL SA set up an office and continued to make submissions on many other legislative and policy reforms, including the age of consent, the needs of women on welfare (particularly Aboriginal women), teaching of English to migrant women, divorce and abortion law reform, rape within marriage, prostitution, domestic violence, sexual harassment, environmental and consumer issues, peace, and women's election to Parliament. In 1986 WEL SA's Right-To-Choose Group held a phone-in survey. The results were a major contribution to a Working Party Inquiry into abortion services, and after a 6-year campaign, the Pregnancy Advisory Centre was finally established. Women of diverse political persuasions uniting together in non-partisan campaign were so powerful and effective, that one awe-struck male MP was heard to say "Gee, you women are solid on this!" WEL SA also initiated the planning for the year-long celebrations of the 1994 Centenary of Women's Suffrage in South Australia, being officially represented on its Steering Committee and on the inaugural Women's Advisory Council to the Minister for Women.

The recent "Me Too!" Movement, and the recent successful campaign to remove abortion from the South Australian Crimes Act, have seen a revitalisation of WEL SA. Almost 50 years since its inception, WEL SA is maintaining its commitment to change social attitudes and practices that discriminate against women. WEL SA aims to influence and shape the political agenda for the upcoming State and Federal Elections, so that the best outcomes for women and gender diverse people affected by women's issues can be achieved.

Marilyn Rolls (WEL)

REVIEWS

Gideon Haigh, *The Brilliant Boy: Doc Evatt and the Great Australian Dissent* (Scribner, 2021)



H V Evatt, whom Gideon Haigh describes as 'a forgotten Australian', is the subject of four full blown biographies and many shorter studies. And no wonder: 'Doc' Evatt was an immensely talented if highly controversial figure, whether as scholar, lawyer high court judge (the youngest ever appointed), member of Parliament, our wartime Foreign Minister and Attorney General, a founder of the UN and its President for two years, Deputy Leader of the ALP (to Curtin) from 1946, then Leader of the Party for nine tumultuous years between 1951 and 1960, and completing an astonishing career as Chief Justice of NSW till 1962.

Evatt's formidable achievements and his manifest failings divided Australians during his lifetime and since. Supporters, such as Kathryn Pritchard, regarded him as a 'Titan' and Manning Clark, wrote he was 'a man who had the image of Christ in his heart'; others, like followers of R G Menzies and B A Santamaria, depicted him variously as evil, a monster or just plain mad¹.

The extraordinary polarisation of views about Evatt are most evident in reactions to his proposed nationalisation of the banks after the war, and his ultimately triumphant opposition to the banning of the Australian Communist Party in the early 50s. Evatt's legacy and the sweep of his life run much broader and deeper than these issues of course, but Haigh's sobriquet of 'forgotten Australian' is understandable, possibly because the competing noises of those that loved or hated him have reduced Evatt to something of an enigma. Haigh sees a purpose of his book to rediscover the greatness of the man by shining a light on his humanitarian and internationalist values, a flawed genius perhaps, but driven by the best of motives.

To that end, Haigh has crafted an innovative study. For one thing, this is not a standard 'cradle to the grave' biography. Rather it is a collection of reflective, illuminating and well researched stories, as opposed to a serially unfolding narrative. This approach has the dual effect – along with Haigh's fluid, intelligent, witty writing – of rendering the book extremely readable. But it also incrementally builds a powerful case for the re-evaluation of Evatt's legacy built very largely on the man's values and commitment to justice.

The most affecting and emblematic story at the core of this book is the case arising from Max Chester's death in 1937. Max, the very bright seven-year-old child of immigrant parents barely two years in Australia, tragically drowned in a flooded street excavation in Waverley, Sydney. Following a frantic search for her son, Golda Chester witnessed the lad's muddied body being recovered from the deep by Constable Schmitzer using long poles. This was a devastating trauma from which she never recovered, and which caused further tragedies in her family.

Supported by lawyer Abe Lander, the family sued. The *Chester v Waverley Council* case, which came to the High Court on appeal from the NSW Supreme Court (1937), turned on whether the Waverley Council had a duty of care to the bereaved mother. The Justices hearing the matter were Chief Justice Latham and Justices Starke, Rich, and Evatt. All but Evatt dismissed the case on grounds which now seem absurd; that the death of the child could not have caused other than temporary consequences; that the shock of the mother was 'not within the ordinary range of experience' and 'the law must fix a point where its remedies stop short of complete reparation to the world at large'.

Evatt delivered a landmark dissenting judgment which was informed, argues Haigh, by his understanding of personal loss. Having observed the grief of his mother following death of two sons who were killed during the first world war, Evatt especially empathised with Golda, the distraught mother who suffered a shattering 'nervous shock' because, in Evatt's devastating words 'she was not looking for the body of her child, she was looking for her child'. 'These...devastating lines' Haigh writes, were delivered by Evatt expressly in refutation of the judgement of Chief Justice Sir Frederick Jordan of the NSW Supreme Court. Evatt further argued that Waverley Council was negligent in its duty of care by failing to consider the trench, 'inadequately guarded and filled with water a dangerous place for children, that

any parent who came there and discovered his or her child had died would incur great shock and distress.’

Though Justice Evatt did not prevail on that day in 1937, Lords Wilberforce, Bridge and Scarman in adjudicating a 1973 case on appeal in the House of Lords (for compensation to Rosina McLoughlin who had suffered a decade of trauma following the annihilation of her family by a negligent lorry driver) found his dissent in *Chester*, ‘powerfully convincing’, and it was later used in the drafting of the UK *Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act*, while in an important Australian High Court case in 2002, Justice Mary Gaudron paid tribute to the ‘seminal dissenting judgement of Evatt’. In broad terms, Evatt’s judgement prefigured the now widely accepted condition of post-traumatic stress syndrome, with the result that subsequently, ‘Australia’s High Court led the common law world in recognising that psychiatric injuries were as real as physical injuries’.

It should not be assumed from this account that *The Brilliant Boy* is dry legal drudge. On the contrary, the account of *Chester* and other cases which demonstrate Evatt’s socially conscious, reforming and humanitarian drive for justice, make for riveting reading and are only part of a wide ranging narrative which spans Evatt’s early life, punctuated by the death of his publican father and the maternal impact of his widow, Jeannie, on her six sons; Evatt’s extraordinary achievements in scholarship and sport; and his incredible career in the law and on the bench; along with delightful accounts of the family life of Bert, his wife Mary Alice and their adopted children Peter and Rosalind.

One of the most affecting chapters covers Evatt’s literary works, his Presidency of the Trustees of the Public Library of New South Wales (1937-63), his strong advocacy for contemporary art in Australia and a sabbatical he took with Mary Alice to the USA and Britain in 1938. He wrote his biography of Holman (*Australian Labour Leader*) during this trip, witnessed the climate of fascism in Europe, met up with old friends (including Harold Laski and VG Childe) met Cripps and Bevan, the leadership of the British Labor Party;; in Paris they enjoyed exhibitions by Utrillo, Braque, Klee and Laurencin; socialised with Ateyo, Dyring and Rosenberg, agent to Matisse and Picasso. In the USA, the Evatts were hosted by prominent art collectors, and met with distinguished American jurists during Herbert’s lecture tour to Harvard and Columbia.

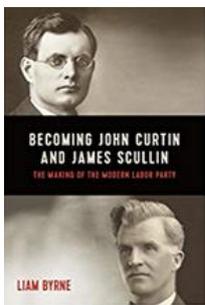
In this way, Evatt, accompanied by Mary Alice, presents as a lively intellectual (writing his best book while en route by ship), an avant garde culturist, networking as a peer with the cream of socialist (antifascist) and liberal political leaders, jurists, and cultural icons of international standing. This distinguishes him as a politically progressive, cultured, smart, internationally networked Australian, rare amongst political leaders in Australia at the time.

In that context, the book does not pay significant attention to Evatt’s role as an Australian political leader during the war and afterwards. This is important, because it was during the fifties that the party split, tossing it to the periphery of Australian politics until 1972. And although Haigh acknowledges the omission, neither is there any serious exploration of Evatt’s participation in the diplomatic councils of the Allies during the war; or his important role in the founding of the United Nations, the drafting of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, his Presidency of the United Nations from 1948 to 1949, his prominent role in the establishment of the State of Israel, or in conciliating several tricky international disputes during this period. As Haigh suggests, there is scope for a detailed and critical study of this important phase of Evatt’s career, not merely because it positioned Australia in a rare place of influence over international affairs at a critical watershed in global history, but because it drew on Evatt’s internationalist outlook, his values, and his intellect. Aspects of that history

will complement Haigh's attempt to reposition Evatt to a higher place of honour in Australian legal and political history.

In this very readable and well researched new biography of H V Evatt, Gideon Haigh, offers a thoughtful and deeply personal exploration of the development of his humanitarian and internationalist values which motivated and directed his professional and public life. In his dissenting judgment in *Chester*, for example, Evatt exercised a rare power in the law, to go beyond mere empathy with someone wronged, to regard it also with reason and judgment. This was Evatt's route to assure that justice was served. In the broader context of Evatt's life and career, so skilfully portrayed in *The Brilliant Boy*, Gideon Haigh has hopefully initiated a substantial re-evaluation of Doc Evatt's place in Australian history.

Adrian Graves



Becoming John Curtin and James Scullin: The Making of The Modern Labor Party, Liam Byrne, Melbourne University Press, 2020

This book is a history of the ideas which informed and moulded the Australian Labor Party up to its adoption of the 'Socialist Objective' in 1921. The principal bearers of these ideas were James Scullin and John Curtin, both of whom later became Labor Prime Ministers.

Byrne does not so much record the histories of their prime ministerships after 1921 as the histories of their ideas - particularly their creative contestation over socialist ideals leading up to 1921, when they came of age politically. Unfortunately, Curtin was too ill to attend the Brisbane conference in 1921, so Scullin's Right-wing goal of "ultimate" – rather than "immediate" – socialism carried the day over Curtin's Left-wing supporters, but mutual respect between the emerging factions enabled them to unite in "flying with two wings" into Government. Their elections as successive Labor Prime Ministers (Scullin 1929-32, Curtin 1941-45) have been amply recorded by many historians, but only Byrne has sought to analyse in meticulous detail the discussions and debates which had informed their actions as PMs.

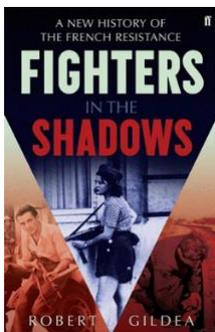
From the vantage point of the 21st century, it is all too easy to dismiss Scullin as the 'Labor rat' who supported the Premiers' Plan against Jack Lang - and Curtin as the former drinker who became a conscription turncoat in WW2. Such extreme negativism is understandable in an age of anti-politics, but the truth is much more complex, as demonstrated by the ultimate mateship between Scullin and Curtin.

In the early 1940s, when Scullin, a mere backbencher and a spent force, with his Prime Ministership destroyed by the Great Depression, was adopted as a close confidant by his former adversary, wartime Prime Minister Curtin. This creative contestation partnership bore fruit in Curtin's determination to not only win the war but also to win the peace, with his establishment of the Department of Post-war Reconstruction, headed by 'Nugget' Coombs, which began the redesign of the Australian economy and society in 1942. This redesign, implemented mainly by Chifley after Curtin's untimely death, laid the foundations of the Long Boom later enjoyed by the conservatives, who abolished the Department on taking office by transferring its economists to PM&C – rebadging the remaining staff as the Department of National Development. Thus Menzies was able to profit from Labor's work and cream off the credit for doing so.

This pattern of Labor in power – struggling to resolve a major crisis and developing a vision of a better world – has recurred, even if the do-nothing conservatives have later become relaxed and comfortable by cherry-picking Labor’s policy work. (See Howard vandalising the Hawke-Keating changes and Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison destroying the Rudd-Gillard changes as anti-politics escalates.) The lesson for today is that Labor needs vigorous and respectful policy debates within and between the factions to develop a cohesive, integrated vision to win power with a purpose in a post-pandemic world.

The Chifley Research Centre has posted a webinar interview with the author, Liam Byrne, ACTU Historian, and another author, Toby Davidson, great-grandson of John Curtin, on the Centre’s [YouTube channel](#). Toby’s book, which is equally insightful but from a literary perspective, is “Good for the Soul: John Curtin’s life with poetry” (UWA Publishing 2021).

Patrick Wright



Fighters in the Shadows - A New History of the French Resistance

Robert Gildea, Faber and Faber 2015

The story of the French Resistance against German occupation is legendary but is the story built on myths?

Historian Robert Gildea explores the French Resistance, its make-up and many of the internal conflicts between the supposedly united resistance groups. These groups represented a wide range of ideologies: republicans fresh from the Spanish civil war, German anti-Nazis, Christian and Jewish resisters, and resisters who were part of the Free French colonial forces in Africa (under the De Gaulle leadership) as well as the various factions of the communist party.

The book considers in detail how the various ideological groups had different views on how to resist the occupation as well as what sort of country would France be after the war: would it be pro-communist/socialist (nb the Communist Party had 328 000 members just before the occupation)? Or would it follow (as it did) the centre right policies of De Gaulle – whose political campaign both during and after the war was essentially “militaristic, nationalist and male”?

Gildea offers insights into the fights within the Communist community – especially regarding the Soviet-Nazi pact which split the party – but he also shows how the communists used their influence in the industrial sector to support strikes against the German war effort, where many workers and union leaders suffered terrible consequences for their actions.

But outside all these resistance groupings Gildea explores recent evidence to uncover stories of individual bravery amongst those resisting the German occupation. This is a book well worth reading.

Doug Melvin

See also: [The Guardian Review](#) (19 August 2015)

THE HEART HAS ITS REASONS: Film review of *Miss Marx* (Dir. Susanna Nicchiarelli, 2019) - Don Longo



Romola Garai as 'Miss Marx' (photo Emanuela Scarpa in *Rolling Stone* [Italian edition])

Tolstoy (or was it Hegel?) says somewhere that happy families have no history; if that's true the Marx family is a rich source of historical reflection, marked as it was by struggle, poverty and tragedy. A recent film, *Miss Marx*, on the life of Karl Marx's youngest daughter, Eleanor (1855-1898), offers a story of both rebellion and heartbreak. The film broadly follows the events and perspectives in a biography published by Rachel Holmes, *Eleanor Marx* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

Miss Marx (1h 47min) is an important addition to the drama of the Marx family. It is the fourth film directed by Italian Susanna Nicchiarelli (b. 1975). It had its world premiere at the Venice film festival in 2020 where it obtained the FEDIC (Federazione Italiana dei Cineclub) award for Best Film – not the most coveted prize, but a respectable award nonetheless. The film is in English even though it was funded by Italian and Belgian investors, probably to get maximum exposure in the Anglosphere. It was shown as part of Adelaide's British Film Festival hosted by Palace films in November-December 2021. It was only shown twice here and attracted a modest number of viewers. It is an important film in an environment where cinemas and Netflix saturate the market with mindless Marvel and escapist drivel or, worse, movies and TV series with reactionary ideologies that promote crude nationalisms under the guise of history. But that's another story.

The film's plot is simple: it begins with Eleanor (Romola Garai) speaking at Marx's (Phillip Gröning) burial at Highgate cemetery in 1883 and follows the rest of her life as she becomes romantically involved with Edward Aveling, a British socialist and spokesman for Darwinian evolutionary theory. The slow but ineluctable deterioration of this relationship is the centrepiece of the film, though there are short episodes about conditions in English factories, the abolition of child labour and women's rights. Some flashbacks provide background to her life in the Marx household and some short scenes show others in her family, particularly Laura Marx and Paul Lafargue. There are brief appearances by Engels (John Sinclair) whose role is essentially reduced to a pivotal revelation about Marx's relationship with the family's housekeeper. Eleanor dies in 1898, disappointed in politics and betrayed in love. It's left open whether Aveling had a direct hand in her demise.

Reviews about *Miss Marx* often downplay Eleanor's individuality and refer to her as an abstraction: it is a film, they say, about 'the ill-fated daughter of Marx'. And there is the rub: her historical presence was great – but not as great as it could have been because of the vagaries of 'fate'. She was an original thinker in her own right and certainly the most promising and talented of Marx's children, but in effect she added little to her father's canon. Her story is one of unfulfilled promise and great but wasted talent – a common enough story – but the film's main interest lies in the broader questions it raises about the connections between ideas and being, theory and practice, the personal and the political.

This is mostly film about interiors: of houses, of homes, of feelings, of minds. There are some visits to factories and speeches before black-coated radicals and some downcast workers

assembled in front of factory gates, but most of the significant events take place in the ornate, cluttered spaces of Victorian drawing rooms and in intimate personal relationships. At its best, the film explores the contradictions and ironies of being a feminist and a socialist in late 19th century Europe. Eleanor is a translator of progressive works on women's condition by Ibsen (*A Doll's House*) and Flaubert (*Madame Bovary*). Yet she was also the embodiment of devotion to an unworthy man and demanding father and never attains the courage and fortitude of Ibsen's and Flaubert's heroines. Why did she fall in love with a deceitful manipulator like Aveling? And more to the point, why did she stay with him, when everybody around her was warning her and telling her that he was ruining her life? Marx too had an ambiguous effect on her, cherishing her and nurturing her political and sentimental education, but this very care became something like a prison. Following Holmes, Nicchiardelli shows Eleanor as a victim of the two faces of patriarchy: one treacherous and abusive (Aveling) and another benign and solicitous (Marx). Both reduced her agency. Why, then, did an intelligent, cultured and brave feminist speak so eloquently of women's rights but was unable to claim her own?

The film excels in demonstrating this dissonance between Eleanor's head and her feelings, and the personal costs of her devotion to father and lover. Eleanor was arguably Marx's favourite child and she had a happy childhood under her parents' protective wings. And yet, as the Director intimates in an interview by Naples' *La Repubblica* (26/09/2020), this very happiness probably rendered her fragile, too trusting and devoted in her personal relationships. The heart, said Pascal, has its reasons that reason will never know. And indeed, we'll never know the truth of Eleanor's devotion in the face of a lover's duplicity and a father's fall from grace.

However... is this all there is to Eleanor's story? Nicchiardelli's perspective makes the film oddly un-revolutionary, even conservative. She works hard to connect Eleanor's personal and political struggles with those of the present by inserting scenes from the student rebellions of 1968, photographs of the Paris Commune of 1871, and the use of a punk rock soundtrack by the Downtown Boys. But this doesn't quite compensate for the largely bourgeois sensibility at its core: her beloved father's emotional and sexual betrayal of Jenny and his non-recognition of a bastard son out of a banal fear of scandal is the pivot of the film. It's given far too much importance and becomes the cause of anguish for Eleanor. Should it be such a drama? Isn't this so very... Victorian? The film is visually stunning, sometimes audacious, frequently spirited and earnestly progressive, and [one reviewer](#) wrote that '*Miss Marx* [is] our companion in struggle'. Possibly – but it does not inspire.



In Apron-Sorrow / Sovereign-Tea
Natalie Harkin unflinchingly shows the truth behind the state-orchestrated servitude of Aboriginal women in South Australia (Karen Wild *InReview* Oct)

Developed in collaboration with the [Unbound Collective](#), Aboriginal artists, academics and storytellers, this installation was set up at the Waterside Workers' Federation Hall – once a base for early Aboriginal activism in South Australia. Many of the Aboriginal women honoured in the exhibition were once domestics who were deprived of labour rights.

A set of four short films – created in collaboration with the Unbound Collective – screen on white sheets that hang on three washing lines, with backdrops of perfect blue skies, vivid sunrises and sunsets. *For All Our Women of the Sun* pays homage to the 1981 drama series *Women of the Sun*. The ironically titled *Days of Our Lives* imagines the life of a domestic from morning to night: washing, scrubbing, sweeping, dusting and sewing.

- In *Sovereign Tea* Aboriginal women dressed in long white aprons are seated at a table; briefly resting their feet, sharing laughter and sorrow, before returning to the household's demands.
- In *Domestic Waltz*, four women scrub, sweep and mop. In between they dance in colonial hoop-skirts made of copied archival records. Words written in sand, such as *Stolen* and *Sovereign*, appear and disappear as they clean the floor.
- *Memory Stories* consists of twelve women's stories printed on white tea towels that hang on clotheslines alongside sepia or black and white photographs.

Who were the women toiling over large coppers of boiling water? What happened to the women whose backs hurt as they lugged the washing and swept the floors, sweating for a household they were never really a part of?



As for *Sovereign and Tea*, tea is also colloquial for juicy gossip or real talk: someone has the tea and they're prepared to 'spill' it. *Apron-Sorrow / Sovereign-Tea* shows the truth behind state-orchestrated servitude. There is more to this story than rhythmic sweeping and washing by Aboriginal women who toiled for the white master and mistress of the house. In the sharing and spilling of tea there is also sovereignty. Aboriginal matriarchs were, are and will always be staunchly sovereign.

Local Heroes

Jim Cane



We all remember Jim Cane's stunning art: posters advertising protests rallies and Tribune dances – or the cover of his radical political history of South Australia *A Different Vision*. What's he doing now? Ken Bridge recently caught up with him over a coffee at a Goodwood cafe. Jim was a local resident years ago and often likes to ride his bike from Adelaide's north-east to go back to his roots.

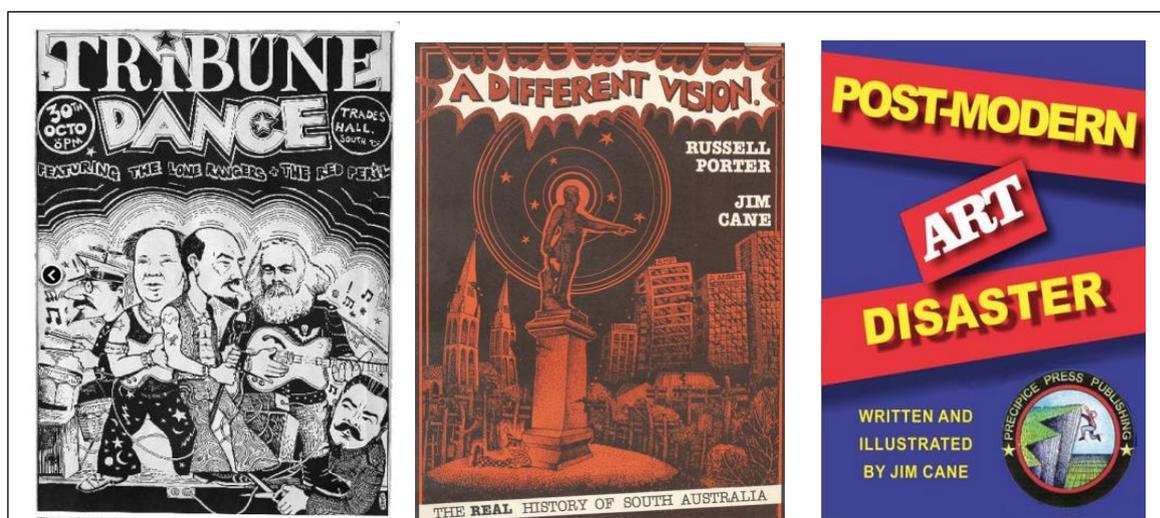
Born in 1944 while his father was away during the war, Jim Cane was raised by his conservative Presbyterian grandfather. After attending Nailsworth PS he was sent to Pulteney Grammar (he couldn't get into Scotch College) where he rowed in the Eight, attended carefully monitored school dances and became a prefect.

After one 'boring' academic term at Adelaide University (where the 'big' debates were between Atheists and Christians) he went to the North Adelaide Art School. In the mid 60s. he became puzzled by news items about the war in Vietnam - he couldn't find Vietnam on the old Atlas that his grandparents had given him, eventually discovering it as 'French Indochina'. Thus began his awareness of colonialism and what else was going on in the world. Then one day when he was walking down Rundle Street – as it was then – he was handed a pamphlet (by Don Jarrett) about the anti-conscription movement – which set his radical world view for the rest of his life.

Jim became involved in the anti-war movement, helping Andrew McHugh prepare protest artwork for *The Empire Times* on the Students Association's offset machine at Flinders University. He also joined the 1974 student occupation there, rubbing shoulders with students such as Peter Duncan, John Rau and Chris Sumner, as well as academics such as Brian Medlin (Philosophy) and Wal Cherry (Drama). He remembers Peter Hicks famously threatening to set fire to his dog as an anti-war protest.

Over the years, Jim has produced countless [posters, paintings, murals and radical histories](#) such as *Lucky for Some*, and more recently has written a cartoon book about postmodern art theory.

Jim has become increasingly concerned about where people get their news from, given the conservative news monopoly – especially the Murdoch-controlled press. Jim doesn't read the papers, watch TV news or listen to radio - he gets his information from the internet, including *Aljazeera* and *The Grayzone*.



Before you go(Brian Abbey 26 Jan 2022)

In Canberra today the top Ukrainian diplomat in Australia pointed out that of the 120 foreign legations in his homeland's capital only 4 had taken steps in the past couple of days to urgently evacuate family members of their diplomatic staff. The four were the USA, UK, Germany and Australia. His observation was more than a passing thought and certainly went beyond normal diplomatic opacities. Consider the context in which the leaders of the four early evacuating nations all find themselves:

- The newly-elected German party has long leaned towards a softer line on Russian issues than its opponents and most of its allies – a source of irritation to the US over many years. The new Chancellor has been equivocal on his own position but is facing pressures from within the SPD to take a stronger line, one more in keeping with the NATO stand.
- A report card on Biden's first year published today in Washington has not been kind to the president and does nothing to protect him from the mounting GOP push that seems increasingly to be of the MAGA type, possibly in anticipation of a Trump election campaign. Meanwhile US voters are blowing in the breeze.
- And if you just consider that the UK's PM has been hosting and attending too many illegal parties for the comfort/patience of his own Party that they are likely to rid themselves of that embarrassment before the weekend is over, well enough said.
- PM Morrison is lagging in the polls as leader of his Party and is the likely loser in an election that must occur around May – about when, I think, the Australian economy will be in poor shape, contrary to the Coalition's Treasurer's predictions (or prayers as they are coming to resemble). Moreover Morrison's numbers men, chiefly made up of his co-religionists, are under a cloud: Minister Alex Hawke, for his bungling of the Djokovic business; Employment Minister Stuart Robert, for (take your pick here) his over-claiming public money for his home media services, or his responsibility for the Robodebt scandal; Aged Care Minister Richard Colbeck – in one of the most sensitive portfolios in the Covid crisis – is in contempt for walking out of the Chamber when called on to answer a Parliamentary question, and has now been caught out at the Test Match for three days, meanwhile having refused his invitation to Royal Commission follow-up meetings with the excuse that his portfolio workload was too heavy on those days to allow him to attend to answer questions. And to foster ScoMo's anxieties, his Party hard man and wannabe successor, Peter Dutton, has just returned to the public's gaze after lying low for several months to erase from the public memory his own bloopers, and is speaking at every opportunity about hearing "the drums of war". And when he's not, he's handing out prizes at children's parties and playing bowls with the wrinklies – always with media in attendance. To make matters even worse for Morrison, his Coalition partner Barnaby Joyce is again the butt of jokes, making error after error.

It would be premature, perhaps, to recall the attractions for a harassed political leader of being able to call a "khaki election" – calling upon the troops to unite for the sake of the nation as well as those tattered ancient idols, democracy and world peace. But it is not too soon to begin keeping one's eye on the reaction of the four early 'evacuators' with a question mark lodged somewhere in the back of one's mind. Especially since it is not at all difficult to see a case for the present cross-border confrontation as more a prime example of Putin's negotiating style likely to further strengthen his own domestic grip on power rather than a firm intention to fight his way westward.

Brian