

LABOUR HISTORY NEWS Summer 2023

Labour History Society (South Australia)

*Those who do not remember the past
are condemned to repeat it (Santayana)*

From the President

Branch modernization: Members will remember that at the last AGM I recommended as outgoing Vice President that our administrative methods be updated. I indicated that this would be central to my programme if elected President. The membership gave me its confidence, and I now have the duty of implementing that mandate. This can be done without adversely affecting the experience of our current membership of veteran unionists and scholars.

It is necessary to future proof our Branch in the current era. Our membership is small and aging, as is generally the case with associations in late capitalist civil society. So, the problem of how to prosper and rejuvenate ourselves so as to discharge our mission of keeping working class traditions alive historically is before us.

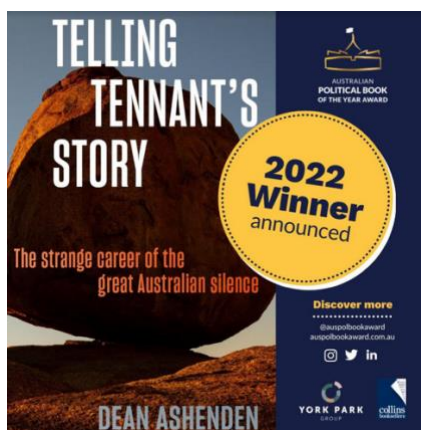
A new generation of unionists and intellectuals has grown up with information technology. Joining an organisation for them is not a matter of responding to notices and attending meetings: it is a matter of websites and keystrokes. Only if the path to membership is smoothed for them technologically and a membership drive launched accordingly will our Branch have ongoing success. Forward planning by your Executive is underway, and I undertake to keep the membership posted as modernization is implemented.

David Faber

Good news – *Telling Tennant's Story* APBY 2022 winner! 10 November 2022

Dean Ashenden has won the inaugural \$10,000 Australian Political Book of the Year Award for *Telling Tennant's Story: The strange career of the great Australian Silence*, published by Black Inc. Ashenden's book was chosen by judges Laurie Oakes, Laura Tingle and John Warhurst from a shortlist of four announced in October, which also included *Bob Hawke: Demons and destiny* (Troy Bramston, Viking), *The Game: A portrait of Scott Morrison* (Sean Kelly, Black Inc.) and *No Enemies, No Friends: Restoring Australia's global relevance* (Allan Behm, Upswell). The judges said shortening the longlist was no easy task:

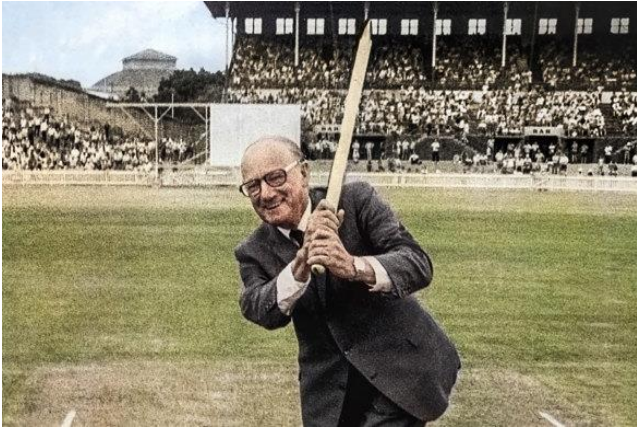
"The shortlist is a reflection of the books we believe have enriched the contemporary political landscape through their analysis of political events, context for understanding them by examination of historical events, and analysis of important policy debates," said the judges, who added that the breadth of books submitted was 'impressive'.



Worth \$10,000, the Australian Political Book of the Year is jointly sponsored by Collins Booksellers and York Park Group, and was established to highlight the 'significant role Australian political books play in better understanding politics and public policy'.

“Dear Mr Fraser” – on Bradman’s extraordinary letter to new PM

[Daniel Brettig](#) *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 25, 2022



Bradman at the SGC (Jan 1974)

Sir Donald Bradman described himself as ‘a non-political person’, but in the words of one colleague, he was ‘quite right-wing’. Now evidence has emerged of Bradman’s intervention at an explosive moment in Australian political history.

Sir Donald Bradman personally intervened at the most explosive juncture of Australian political history, stridently advising then new prime minister Malcolm Fraser on how to dismantle the platform of his predecessor Gough Whitlam.

A letter has emerged for the first time, showing how Bradman, writing just two days after the political turmoil of the [1975 dismissal election](#), bluntly instructed Fraser to take a stand against socialism, unions, the media and Whitlam’s legacy. December 15 was the penultimate day of a Test match between Australia and the West Indies in Perth, but Bradman had more political and business matters on his mind when he typed out 800 words of counsel to Fraser.

In the letter, uncovered by the Federation University academic Verity Archer and shared with *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Bradman described himself as “a passionate advocate of freedom from socialism (or worse)”, and pushed Fraser to overturn many of Whitlam’s reforms. “A marvellous victory in which your personal conduct and dignity stood out against the background of arrogance and propaganda indulged in by your opponents,” Bradman, then 67, wrote. “And if I may say so, the charm and bearing of your wife came through with great credit to you both. Now you may have to travel a long and difficult road along which your enemies will seek to destroy you.”

Principally, Bradman encouraged Fraser to remove as much regulation of capital as possible, warned against the dangers of inflation, advised on the importance of presenting the national situation accurately to the media and decried the power of unions in Australia at the time. “What the people need are clearly defined rules which they can read and understand so that they can get on with their affairs,” Bradman wrote. “The public must be re-educated to believe that private enterprise is entitled to rewards as long as it obeys fair and reasonable rules laid down by government. Maybe you can influence leaders of the press to a better understanding of this necessity of presentation.”

Bradman has often been described as sitting above the back and forth of politics, and he described himself in the letter as “a non-political person”. But it is clear from this and other correspondence, particularly with his friend and former newspaper editor Rohan Rivett around this time, that Bradman chose deliberately to get involved in steering Australia away from the Whitlam era. A few months after the election, Bradman explained to Rivett that he had felt compelled to take a stand against Whitlam for the sake of the Australian economy. “That is why I found it necessary to work for the defeat of Whitlam (though I’m sorry for the way it was done) and why I supported Fraser,” Bradman wrote.

Clem Jones, then lord mayor of Brisbane, sat on the Australian Cricket Board opposite Bradman in the 1960s and 1970s, and in 2007 offered the following description of Australia’s greatest ever cricketer. “Bradman was quite right-wing,” Jones said in *Inside Story*, Cricket Australia’s official history. “He was the best chairman of any organisation I’ve had anything to do with, absolutely outstanding. But he was a bigoted, right-wing politician. People say he wasn’t political: he was, and very much so.”

The letter was an unexpected discovery for Archer when she was searching through Fraser’s papers at the National Archives in Canberra while writing a book on the history of the term “dole bludger”. She found Bradman’s advice to Fraser among other, similar letters from the likes of Robert Holmes a Court and Lang Hancock. Archer saw Bradman’s

world view as representative of the struggle within the Liberal Party between the bigger government ideals of Robert Menzies and the shift towards more neoliberal and small-government thinking that would soon be embodied by Margaret Thatcher in Britain.

Around this time in other correspondence, Bradman also shared an article about the Austrian-British economist Friedrich Hayek, known as a major influence on conservative figures such as Thatcher and US president Ronald Reagan. "His views represent a shift in the Liberal Party at the time," Archer said. "There's two main themes: opposition to unionism, which of course was a theme in conservatism, but also his belief that capital should operate free from regulation, which actually represents a shift in the Liberal Party from a big government conservatism to a small government liberalism. He's taking that neoliberal perspective that government should only interfere with capital where it is needed to prevent fraud, which is a real shift away from conservatism and towards the neoliberal viewpoint. 1975 is quite early for that particular idea to be coming out. Bradman obviously held those beliefs really deeply, and also his idea that this would mean, for him, a freedom from socialism if we could remove any regulations on capital. That's actually a real libertarian idea, it goes a lot further than classical liberalism."

In later life, Bradman would be lionised as the most heroic figure of the type of Australia that the Liberal prime minister John Howard sculpted during his government, the first conservative administration after Fraser lost the 1983 election to Labor's Bob Hawke. Before Bradman's death in 2001, Howard often described him as "the greatest living Australian". As the letter to Fraser makes clear, Bradman was not only a peerless cricketer and an influential administrator, but also a much more political figure than many had previously surmised. "He has a particular influence in society, as a great cricketer, that business people don't," Archer said. "He's held up as a hero, so he has that element to him that will not just influence politicians but also the general public. People in that position can use that access to their advantage. "His power at the time is really important too because he had the power to influence people and he had those friendships in high places where he had that access that normal, private citizens don't have. So it tells us about him and what sort of influence he might have exerted."

Fraser, of course, left many conservative figures disappointed by how little reform he imparted on Australia's economy and society between 1975 and 1983. His response to Bradman's letter, penned a week later, was not very substantial. "I was interested to read the points you made, and am very much aware of the difficulties facing private enterprise," Fraser wrote. "My government will be introducing measures towards their alleviation." Writing to Rivett in early 1976, Bradman was already worried by Fraser's early going as prime minister. "I don't know Fraser," he wrote, "but to date, I am disappointed by his performance."

Was this great Australian a 'right-wing ideologue'? Readers' correspondence SMH December 27, 2022

Your article identifies a significant disconnect between the typical portrayal of Sir Donald Bradman as a "great" Australian, and the reality ("[Bradman to Fraser: fight unions](#)", December 26). Bradman's correspondence to Malcolm Fraser reveals a right-wing ideologue who was urging the then prime minister to trash Gough Whitlam's significant legacy of progressive changes to various institutions for the benefit of all Australians. It is about time we stopped lionising Bradman, and anyone else, just because they play sport well at a high level.

Mary Andrews, Mittagong

Some of Bradman's much-lauded contemporaries – and more recently, Australian Test cricket captains – have written of Bradman's divisive nature, selfishness and bigotry. Little wonder the game erupted into the World Series Cricket schism in 1977 after years of players voicing concerns over conditions and payments fell on deaf ears to a Bradman-led board. **Peter Snowden, Hawks Nest**

Bradman was undoubtedly the greatest batsman of all time but on tour he was an insular figure, not one to share company with his players. But he obviously didn't mind sharing his opinions with the then-prime minister. That he saw nothing unusual in directly accessing Fraser on political issues, not cricketing matters, revealed a touch of self-importance, if not arrogance. Bill O'Reilly and Jack Fingleton, to name just two out of many test players, would have evinced no surprise at Bradman offering of gratuitous advice. **Trevor Somerville, Illawong**

ROCKING THE FOUNDATIONS

FREE FILM SCREENING AND Q&A

MONDAY 28 NOVEMBER, 5:30PM - 8:00PM (SCREENING STARTS 6PM)
ADELAIDE TAFE LECTURE THEATRE,
120 CURRIE STREET ADELAIDE,
ROOM B127 FIRST FLOOR

CARP PARKING AVAILABLE AT COST BELOW THE CAMPUS

Rocking the Foundations is a historical account of the Green Bans introduced by the New South Wales Builders Labourers' Federation in the 1970s in response to community demand to preserve inner-city Sydney parkland and historic buildings. Rocking the Foundations tells of how ordinary people joining forces in union and community activism can, against the odds, bring about social change.

EVENT CHAIR
Nadine Schoen TAFE SA Diploma of English
Language Proficiency Lecturer

PANEL MEMBERS
John Wishart - long term environmental and
labour activist who took part in some of the
protests shown in the film
Steph Key - former South Australian
parliamentarian and now full-time social activist
Michael Wohltmann - labour historian and
educator

REGISTER @ [EVENTBRITE](#)

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL TERTIARY EDUCATION UNION AND THE LABOUR HISTORY SOCIETY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA)

Rocking the Foundations - Film Night and Panel Discussion

On the evening of Monday 28 November at the Adelaide TAFE Lecture Theatre a film night and panel discussion of Pat Fiske's 1985 iconic documentary *Rocking the Foundations* was held. It was organised jointly by the Labour History Society (South Australia) and the South Australian Branch of the National Tertiary Education Union. Over one hundred people comprising unionists, activists, and educators came together to have another look – or, for some, a first look - at *Rocking the Foundations* and discuss how its lessons might be put into practice today. The evening was chaired by Nadine Schoen (TAFE lecturer, activist, and film maker). The panel comprised Steph Key (former South Australian parliamentarian and now full-time social activist), Michael Wohltmann (labour historian and educator), and John Wishart (environmental and labour activist who took part in some of the protests shown in the documentary).

Although *Rocking the Foundations* was made nearly 40 years ago, it holds as much relevance today as it did in the 1970s and 1980s. The film tells an enduring story: of the ongoing struggle between labour and capital or, if you like, between the living interests of people and the dead interests of profit. But more than this, the film tells that story in a powerful way. The lives of ordinary people are revealed to us achieving extra-ordinary things as they confront the machinations of power and privilege (from both outside and within the union movement).

Rocking the Foundations offers a historical account of the 1970s Green Bans introduced by the New South Wales Builders Labourers' Federation. Work bans were placed on areas where residents faced eviction to make way for commercial developments. The film shows how the NSW BLF used their collective power in alliance with community groups to save residential neighbourhoods, public parks, and historic areas of Sydney from destruction. *Rocking the Foundations* makes it clear that the bases of the Union's demands were two-fold: industrial and social. On the one hand, their push was for better pay and conditions, recognition of skills and skill development along with, for example, adequate occupational health and safety regulations. On the other, the NSW BLF operated from the understanding that their labour had to be seen within the context of a wider social responsibility. There was an ethical commitment of social responsibility that did not see the workplace separate from living-space, social-space, or natural-space.

The Green Bans operated for nearly five years. The movement was eventually broken by an alliance of developers, the Master Builders Association, the NSW state government, and the federal Builders Labour Federation. The NSW BLF was deregistered and was ultimately dissolved. Did the NSW BLF fail? This is not a straightforward question. But two things are certain. First, the landscape of Sydney with its housing and public green space is what it is today because of collective union and community activism. Second, the Green Bans sit in collective social memory and are retold in films like *Rocking the Foundations* as examples of possibility for us all: if the foundations could be rocked then, why not now?

This was the kind of question that occupied the minds of our presenters on the night. In kicking us off, John Wishart began by outlining his involvement in the trade union and environment movements since the 1970s. He also reflected on his time as a young university student in Sydney at the time of the Green Bans. In doing so, John fleshed out the broad political developments and the particular dynamics of trade unionism of the time as a backdrop to the rise to the NSW BLF. We were provided with a historical context to the film and insights to its relevance today. Michael Wohltmann followed. Drawing on his experience as a teacher, educational unionist, activist, and labour historian, Michael spoke to the issues, strong in *Rocking the Foundations*, of industrial democracy and societal consciousness arising from labour struggles for the social good. He reflected on the history and commitments of the Trade Union

Training Authority (TUTA) as an educational means for advancing industrial democracy and consciousness raising. Steph Key concluded the panel session by bringing her vast life experience as a trade unionist, industrial officer for the United Trades & Labor Council SA, (now SA Unions), state parliamentarian, and activist for (particularly) women's rights to reflect on the contemporary relevance of *Rocking the Foundations*.

The panel presentations and audience discussion have been captured on video. Thanks to Nadine Schoen and her colleagues at TAFE for making this possible. It is hoped that people might use this an educational resource for use with the *Rocking the Foundations* documentary. To access this recording, you can contact either the Labour History Society (South Australia) or myself (grantbanners@gmail.com).

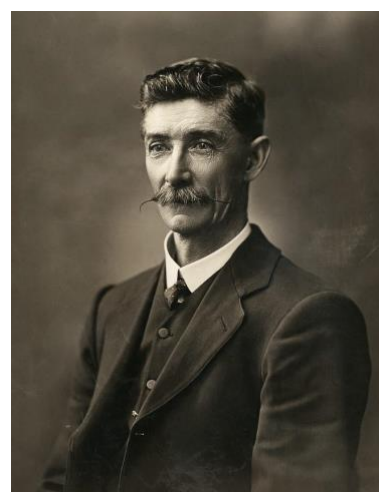
Grant Banfield
Labour History Society (South Australia)
NTEU UniSA Branch Committee

Francis Walter Lundie – in support of the worker

At the general meeting of the LHSSA on 6th November 2022, Phillip John Armanas, great-grandson of Francis (Frank) Walter Lundie (on his mother's side), presented findings from his study of "King" Lundie's life. The presentation focussed particularly on Frank's involvement with the South Australian Labor Party, as well as with the AWU and other associated unions; an interesting question time followed.

Frank dedicated his entire life to the worker. Relatively unknown these days, Frank was an instantly recognisable character during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries riding his bike on the streets of Adelaide, as well as throughout South Australia and even interstate. He earned the title "King Lundie" in the press because of his ability to control the workforce using direct action. A teetotaler, Frank provoked conservatives with his fiery temper and militancy His opposition to conscription was on rational rather than moral grounds – he argued it both injured and depleted the workforce.

Frank's first wife Elizabeth stayed at home to raise their many children, and died at the age of 35; his second wife Edie was able to socialise more, and when she died at 39 many important figures in the unions, the ALP and government attended her funeral. At his own funeral in 1933, about 1,000 people, representing all classes, several races, and many poor people attended. Frank was active on Adelaide Council for many years. As well as Lundie Gardens in the Adelaide parklands being named in his honour, an ex-prisoners' hostel in Whitmore Square was established and named after him in 1963.



For further information see his entry in the [Australian Dictionary of Biography](#)

Modern Slavery and why we need the South Australia Modern Slavery Network

Al Rainnie



Shortly before the First Fleet departed for Botany Bay, the first governor of New South Wales, Captain Arthur Phillip envisaged a future colonial society, declaring, famously, '[t]hat there can be no slavery in a free land, and consequently no slaves.' From Britain's first plans to establish a penal colony in Australia, ideas about its future were closely linked to contemporary debates about abolition. In this lecture Professor Jane Lydon will explore the complex relationship between the anti-slavery movement and the transportation of British convicts to Australia, expanding the analysis of Britain's abolition of slavery to consider global processes of emigration and settler colonialism. [RAHS Day Lecture: No Slavery in a Free Land? Anti-Slavery and Australia, Jane Lydon 2022](#)

Introduction

Around 50 million people worldwide are estimated to suffer under Modern Slavery, and this number has accelerated rapidly recently under 'poly-crisis' conditions. A growing recognition of the issue of Modern Slavery on a global scale has been driven by, amongst other things, the dominance of Global Value Chains (GVCs) and the appalling working conditions found within them. However, there has been a tendency to view this as an issue only to be found at the 'bottom' of GVCs in countries in the Global South. More recently, it has been recognised that the problem is to be found in the supply chains of modern renewable industries such as lithium batteries, solar panels and wind farms, as well as at the heart of modern economies like Australia. The major problem sectors are hospitality, agriculture, meat production, and cleaning, as well as the sex industry. The recent focus on employment conditions in Adelaide's Chinatown hospitality sector drew attention not only to the domestic nature of the issue, but also the fact that industries such as Higher Education and their International Students could become enmeshed in the problem.

In 2022, a group of interested individuals and organisations, under the initiative of Dr Katherine Christ, from UniSA, formed the Modern Slavery Research and Practitioner Working Group to provide a forum where ideas can be proposed and discussed, collaborations developed, and best practice shared etc – in short, where are we at and where do we need to go in relation to research, partnerships, practical concerns in confronting Modern Slavery. Later in the year this became the Modern Slavery Network.

The group overall decided that, in the first instance at least, two subgroups would be helpful. Broadly these were described as the *Corporate* and the *Worker* groups, although it was recognised that these descriptors are necessarily work in progress. This article emerges from the operation of the Worker group. From the outset, we recognised that: *'While each member and organisation of this working group may have differing priorities and prefer different actions, we are united in our desire to reduce the suffering of others. A desire to end all forms of modern slavery is the basis for our connectedness. We will work together to stamp out all forms of modern slavery'*.

Slavery in Australia

The history of sugar slavery highlights a national obsession with racial purity, a corollary of the dispossession that white settlement entailed. The treatment of Pacific Islanders built upon the treatment of Indigenous people, the great weeping sore of antipodean history (Sparrow 2022: 46)

As Sparrow points out, sugar owners adopted the lifestyle of new world slavery and relied on its techniques and personnel. The exploitation of Pacific Islanders in the Australian horticultural industry was followed up by the 20th century trade in domestic workers from the territories of Papua and New Guinea to work in the service of white Australia. Nevertheless, in 2020, the then Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, caused yet another furore by claiming that slavery had never existed in Australia. He retracted rapidly the next day but reflected the white settler colonial attitude that Jeff Sparrow (2022) alluded to.

Beyond the myths perpetuated by Morrison, South Australia has its own Foundational Myths (Collins & Sendziuk 2018) including the assertion 'no convicts here'. Allied to that is the belief that Indigenous people were somehow treated differently in SA, partly as a reaction to the appalling behaviours in other states, and changing attitudes in England. Robert Foster (2018) argues "South Australia's foundational story of its 'benevolent intentions' toward Aboriginal people was largely a myth. The reality was that the experience of most Aboriginal people in SA in the late 19th Century was not on the Missions (dubious as they were), but in the pastoral industry". And, as Brock & Gara (2020) point out, "South Australian aboriginal workers had fewer legal protections than those in neighbouring states so were dependant on the goodwill (or otherwise) of employers".

In 2019, Dr Marinella Marmo from Flinders University produced a report on Modern Slavery in the state. She concluded, "Slavery and slavery-like practices are a reality in South Australia (SA). These situations include cases of forced marriage; forced labour; and domestic, labour and sexual servitude in intimate partner

violence cases linked to partner visas.it is clear that forced marriage and the exploitation of partner visa holders akin to servitude are an increasing issue in South Australia".

It is worth noting that Associate Professor Marmo's report has been downloaded nearly 300 times since it was published. Furthermore, a report in the ABC (Collins 2020) drew attention to issues of Modern Slavery in horticulture and amongst international students in South Australia. The then Shadow Minister presented a motion to the SA Upper House calling for an inquiry into modern slavery and slave like practices in the state. The motion was 'shot down' by the Government of the day.

What is Modern Slavery?

There is no one accepted definition and even the title causes issues as, looking historically, Andrews (2022: 82) argues: "Human trafficking is an outrage to human decency and must end, but it has no relation to the transatlantic slave trade, which was a perfectly legal system of chattel slavery that produced the modern world".

In Australia, the range of abuses that modern slavery consists of includes: Forced labour; Bonded labour; Human trafficking; Child slavery; Domestic servitude; and other abuses including deceptive recruitment for labour and forced marriage.

The vast range defies the hunt for a simple solution. Abolition is going to be far more complex than relying on the myth of the rich white liberal abolitionist riding to the rescue (Manjapra 2022).

What is to be done?

In a recognition that the issue was gaining traction and causing growing concern, the previous Coalition Government introduced the ***The Modern Slavery Act 2018***. This echoed other countries round the world, including the UK, which had passed similar legislation.

The Coalition government subsequently initiated an inquiry into the operation of the Act. In a Submission to that inquiry, the *Workers group* of the SA Network were scathing in our criticism, echoing many others including the ACTU. Briefly, we argued that the Act was too much 'carrot' and not enough 'stick', given the following:

1. Modern Slavery is an enormous problem and growing rapidly globally and locally. We do not have the luxury of time in hand in responding.
2. The Modern Slavery 2018 Act is not working.
3. 'Transparency' is not enough, and it follows that 'Sunshine is the best disinfectant' is simply wrong.
4. A focus on efficiently operating the current legislation rather than a focus on real effectiveness in confronting the issue is unhelpful.
5. Education rather than legislation is not enough.
6. Even a revised Modern Slavery Act on its own will be insufficient. Further intervention around migration and immigration and industrial relations legislation for example will be necessary.

In a recent report (Marmo & Bandiera 2022), the authors argue that the current dominant model of confronting Modern Slavery deflects criticism of corporations and awards the corporation an unwarranted chivalric role. Thus Corporations invest in human rights-related promises that allow them to operate with impunity, even when declaring the risks in their supply chains.

We put forward a raft of proposals that go well beyond simply tightening up the current legislation. Crucially, we argued that the people at the receiving end of this travesty of justice should be empowered – given the voice, organisation, protection and legislation to be active agents in the fight against Modern Slavery.

The Inquiry is due to report in March 2023, and we are cautiously hopeful of some positive outcomes, but this will only be the start of a long and important battle. Unions in particular, and the community in general, can play a huge role in bringing pressure to bear on state and Federal governments as well as employers both large and small.

There is an important role for the State Government in ensuring adherence to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which demand that there are no incidences of Modern Slavery in the supply chains of companies providing goods and services to SA. Most importantly, we need to provide support whenever needed and demanded by the victims of modern slavery in taking up the fight against all its forms.

For more information regarding the Networks activities in general and the Workers Group in particular contact: the author: al.f.rainnie@gmail.com or Kristen.Rogers@saunions.org

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2012 International Year of the Cooperative

Mark Parnell



On the 31st of October 2022, Mark Parnell (at the time the Parliamentary leader of the Greens) raised a Matter of Interest in the Legislative Council regarding the 2012 International Year of the Cooperative, and the important role that cooperatives play in the national and global economies:

The Hon. M. PARNELL: The United Nations has designated 2012 as the International Year of the Cooperative. Since the formation of modern cooperatives in the mid 19th century in England, they now account for a significant amount of production globally and in Australia. Cooperatives take the form of credit unions, agricultural cooperatives and housing cooperatives, to name a few. They can be consumer or producer cooperatives. Co-ops differ from normal business organisations in that they have a democratic ethos without a single owner or large shareholders. Every member of a cooperative has an equal vote and share of dividends.

The South Australian history of co-ops goes back to 1864 when the British Industrial and Provident Societies Act was introduced into the colony. A Cooperative Association was formed in 1866 with early consumer cooperatives such as the Adelaide Cooperative Society being established. This co-op operated for nearly a century, providing cheaper household necessities for the residents of the new colony. The Port Adelaide Cooperative Society was formed in 1897 by railway workers running a shop, hotel and bakery. By World War I there were seven consumer cooperatives at locations including Millicent, Wallaroo, Mount Gambier, Angaston and Eudunda. In fact, it was in rural South Australia that co-ops showed their success and diversity. The Renmark Hotel is the oldest co-operatively owned hotel in the British commonwealth, established in 1897. It came out of a prohibition background when the town decided that if they were going to have a hotel, it should be community owned. It has remained community owned ever since and serves local produce and supports local community groups and initiatives.

An inspirational part of the cooperative story is the town of Nuriootpa which has been described as a cooperative township. Since 1925, the community has built a library, a cinema, a community centre and a community hotel. It established a cooperative store with a supermarket, hardware, furniture and electrical divisions, providing 250 jobs. Long regarded as the most cooperative town in Australia, Nuriootpa is a fine example of local self-government and regional development. A recent study by The Australia Institute looked at the size and scope of co-ops in Australia and found that the community cooperative store in Nuriootpa is Australia's third-largest consumer cooperative. The Australia Institute also found that the cooperative model is still alive and well in Australia and we now have 1,600 across the country with an estimated 13.5 million members. In fact, whether they know it or not, eight out of every

10 Australians are members of a co-operatively owned or mutually-owned enterprise such as roadside assistance services or mutually-owned banks and financial institutions.

Co-operatively and mutually-owned enterprises typically invest the surplus they generate into the community or return it to their members. So even though Australians may take their co-ops for granted, it seems we are happy with the services we get from our co-ops even when faced with competition from corporate counterparts. Cooperatives often attract great loyalty and regularly provide better value. For example, the average industry superannuation fund delivered \$1.50 in earnings for every dollar taken out in fees compared to an average of 40¢ in the dollar for retail super funds.

Since the global financial crisis, many Australians have lost confidence in the ability of profit-maximising firms to make decisions that are in society's interests as well as their own. In some ways it is surprising that there has been so little attention paid to emerging forms of economic structure such as co-ops and mutuals to challenge the greed and mismanagement that led to the GFC. It may well be that the answer has always been right in front of our eyes as well as in our history books.

Since 2005 in Australia, there has been a move towards the creation of a cooperatives national law to be established via mutual agreement between state and territory governments. The objective is to harmonise state and territory legislation. The cooperatives national law is designed to deliver a modern legislative environment that removes competitive barriers but continues to assure the unique nature of the cooperative structure. The aim was to have all legislation introduced in 2012—the UN International Year of the Cooperative. We may be dragging our feet in South Australia, but the Greens urge the government to bring on the legislation as soon as possible.

In conclusion, I acknowledge and applaud the contribution that cooperatives have made and continue to make in our economy and society. In the words of Wayne Elwood, writing in the July 2012 issue of *New Internationalist* magazine (which itself is run as a cooperative) he says:

We can no longer afford the free market shenanigans of the last decade, the free-wheeling state capitalist Chinese model or the dead hand of traditional communism. We will have to do much better. Cooperatives can point the way towards a different kind of economic model, where people control capital and not the other way around. A little real democracy wouldn't hurt.

BOOK REVIEW

Looking Back to see the Future: a revisionist history of Woomera 1947 - 1980

Author Michael Wohltman

The book was four years in the making; it would have been completed much earlier if it had not been for major delays with dealing with the red tape between Department of Defence and National Archives of Australia and the reluctance for government departments to release files over 50 years old (and containing no highly classified details).



In looking at the three decades after the signing of the Anglo-Australian Joint-Project in 1947, **Looking Back to see the Future** seeks to focus attention on issues that have been left out of the historical narrative. It concentrates on broader issues than just the developments in rocket, missiles and space technology. The research suggests that Australia played a much bigger role than has generally been acknowledged. It is another instance of the collective historical amnesia that has dominated the Woomera story. Key players and the Joint Project itself have been left out of the official story. The broader aim of the book is to examine the relationship between history, politics, nation building and defence science; about the way we want to see ourselves, both as a Nation and our role in the international arena; and what we would rather forget in the Woomera story.

It should be noted that Peter Morton's *Fire Across the Desert*, provides an in-depth overview of the rocket testing and is considered up to now as the 'bible' on development at Woomera, but provides little analysis of the links between the Anglo-Australian Joint-Project and the atomic testing of weapons and delivery system. Morton's research has left blank the critical issue of atomic testing and Maralinga as if there was no connection, and the Anglo-Australian Joint Project is not placed in the broader backdrop of the Cold War. The Anglo-Australia Joint Project must be placed in the context of the UK acquiring nuclear deterrents and ballistic missiles as part of the arms race, which was a feature of the Cold War. Nor is the research undertaken by Morton placed in the broader economic framework of economic reconstruction and nation building. Such omissions need to be incorporated this into the historical record. Another question raised by Wohltmann is why the cost of the Joint Project has been left out of the economic history of Nation Building.

The author is highly critical of Federal and State Governments of both political parties for the not only their secrecy, but for the downright lies they told the general population, the military personal involved and the total disregard for the local aboriginal populations like the Kookatha people of Woomera – for their sacred sites customs and practice.

In dealing with the relationship UK and US with regard to sharing of information under the Quebec Agreement signed in August 1943 and the US decision to 'go it alone' under the Truman Presidency, Wohltmann, points to how the UK sought and got the Australian government to agree to sites in Australia being used for the development of UK's own atomic/nuclear bombs for their defence purposes. He also strongly points out with the use of relevant quotes that the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan was not only to end the Pacific war (it was already near an end in any case) but also (to quote US Secretary of State James Byrnes) 'Our possessing and demonstrating the bomb would make Russia more manageable in Europe'.

James V. Forrestal, *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking, 1951), 78, cited in Alperovitz, Messer and Bernstein, "Marshall, Truman, and the Decision to Drop the Bomb," 212-213; and Paul Ham, "[Did the Atomic Bomb End the Pacific War? – Part 1](#)," History News Network, August 2, 2020.

Throughout the book there are reference points to the development and installation of the Military Industrial Complex (MIC). This is especially of relevant to South Australia which today is the major MIC in Australia even to the degree of allowing BAE to address part of our school curriculum – a very scary exposure by the author.

Chapter 4 seeks to provide a fresh account on the history of the protest movements against against rocket testing. Wohltmann again references the 1989 report *Fire Across the Desert* by Flinders Uni historian Peter Morton and commissioned by the Department of Defence, which avers that any protest movement was largely confined to communist dupes, pacifists and radical trade unionist led by Adelaide social activist Dr Charles Duguid. This chapter disproves this by pointing out that organisations such as the Country Women's Association (CWA), various Councils of Civil Liberties, The League of Freedom Aborigines Friends Association, Union of Australian Women and the scientific community itself through the Association of Atomic Scientists. According to the author there were in fact 47 groups represented on the Rocket Range Protest Committee, once again pointing to cloud of secrecy thrown over the whole all the issues relating to Woomera and the development of atomic weapons there.

The author's research also uncovered facts about the secret project (Project Flagstaff), finding that while the Australian government stated that that all nuclear testing ceased in 1963 Project Flagstaff saw the testing of nuclear components from 1969 until 1979.

The concluding chapter is simply called "Never Ending Story' and in the context of the current debate on the AUKUS submarine contract explores the similarities between AUKUS and the Anglo-Joint Project. Wohltmann also puts forward a range of areas for current and future to research and examine as a continuing exercise to lift the veil off the continuing secrecy over the history of Woomera and what real advantages are to the Australian taxpayer and society in general. Also raised is the question what real benefits does Australia get as defence spending rises above 2% of GDP. *Looking back to see the Future* pulls no punches. It tells it as it was and it still is, placing new light on the historical gaps in past. This book is well worth a read for those concerned about our past and the lack of lessons learnt by it about the UK and US war machines.

Doug Melvin

Don Longo 1952 - 2022



Don Longo, a good and valuable friend of Spirit of Eureka, passed away on the 6th October this year. He came from a poor Italian peasant family who emigrated to Australia in 1960 from the village of Molinara. Arriving in this country when he was eight, unable to speak English, Don proved to be a very capable student. He achieved a first class honours degree in History from University of Adelaide in 1979 and went on to complete a PhD thesis written in French from the Université de Paris VIII in 1985.

Don joined a number of left wing and environmental groups in the 1970s and his political orientation and interests never waned nor mellowed. He was particularly conscious of the exploitation and oppression of the working class and his solidarity with them never ceased. In 2012 Spirit of Eureka became aware of Don through an article he had written for the Carnevale brochure, entitled "Raffaello Carboni: An Italian rebel in colonial Australia". Carnevale is the annual festival for Italians in South Australia. Intrigued, we approached Don to see if he would be willing to be a guest speaker at our Eureka Day commemoration. This resulted in an enduring and productive collaboration over the next ten years. Don put in an enormous amount of work (MCing, researching, giving speeches, manual work etc) helping out commemorating and celebrating Eureka Day.

He and his life partner, Lyn, regularly contributed compelling articles to the Spirit of Eureka website. His brilliance and depth of knowledge was noted by the organisation and readers alike. Being an engaged historian, Don was particularly concerned with writing the history that he was close to. He was responsible for writing books about the migration experience, *'Terra Lasci, Terra Trovi' the history of a southern Italian community in South Australia, 1927-2007*; on soldiers from Yorke Peninsula [his wife Lyn came from Yorke Peninsula] who fought in World War One, *'The Ties That Bind': Southern Yorke Peninsula and the Great War, 1914-1919* and *'Pens and Bayonets,' letters from the Front by soldiers of Yorke Peninsula, South Australia, during the Great War*; on the conservative intellectual who lectured him, *A historian against the Current: The life and work of Austin Gough*; and on South Australian activists who opposed the Vietnam War, *Moratorium Now! Memories of protest against the Vietnam War in South Australia, 1965-1972*.

The latter book was the result of Don's and Lyn's involvement with the Vietnam War Moratorium Anniversary Committee (VWMAC) during 2020. When approached to help establish and participate in the Vietnam War Moratorium Anniversary Committee, both Don and Lyn, without hesitation, threw themselves into this task to make

it a success. Throughout 2020 they both worked tirelessly to help plan and organise a public meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the famous VMC (Vietnam Moratorium Committee). Once this commemoration was over, both Don and Lyn then launched into collating the presentations by the speakers and a question and answer session that followed at the Vietnam War Moratorium Anniversary public meeting, producing the book, *Moratorium Now!*

Work on the VWMAC made them realise that many of the radicals and activists of the 60s, 70s and 80s stories would be lost due to death, dementia or infirmity. Don and Lyn were determined to give a voice to the political activists of this era, and they planned the book, *'Days Of Wrath, Years Of Hope: Memories of Protest and Civil Disobedience in South Australia 1965-1983'* to achieve this. It is no mean feat to apply for and receive a grant from the History Trust of SA; visit, record and interview 55 people; put all this down into print and edit the interviews; return the copy to the interviewees with instructions to self-edit; and then complete the final draft of all these interviews. It was an enormous undertaking for both of them. Unfortunately and sadly, Lyn and Don had left interviewing himself to last, an interview that now can't happen. This invaluable oral history project will now be completed by Lyn alone.

Interspersed with all this work was Don's presentation to the Labour History Society of South Australia on the Paris Communards. The revolutionary in Don could not let the 150th anniversary of the Paris Commune go unnoticed, and in August 2021, he gave a gripping lecture called, *"Dancing in the snow: The Paris Commune as a paradigm for social change?"* Here he drew seven important lessons that came out of the Paris Commune: revolutionary tactics, distribution of power, democracy, the military in a socialist order, the economic and the political, women, socialism as 'a festival of the oppressed'. These lessons are eternal issues for revolutionary social change and still have relevance for today.

His vast undertakings demonstrate to us the historian in Don. He was a first-rate historian, intellectual and revolutionary. Don's life was unfortunately brought to an end too soon. He only started to experience the gentle years of retirement with Lyn, his family and especially his grandchildren. There was much more he wanted to experience and do with family and friends. However, we have been blessed with knowing a noble man whose spirit of humanity and loyalty will remain with us always. It is extremely painful to bid a final farewell to a good friend who we admired immensely but, he will live forever in our hearts and memories. Comrade Don Longo, Spirit of Eureka salutes you!

Spirit of Eureka, South Australia October 22, 2022

Eulogies for Don Longo, at his funeral in the Molinara Centre, Windsor Gardens, Adelaide 6 October 2022

Don's friend and fellow historian, Doug Munro wrote:

Don had a remarkable trajectory of life. The son of Italian parents of peasant stock, he arrived in Australia in 1960 at the age of eight with no English, but as a mature age student went on to gain First Class Honours in History at the University of Adelaide in 1979. This was followed by a PhD thesis, written in the French language, from the Universite de Paris Huit, in 1985 - his spoken French was both fluent and idiomatic.

Lyn was Don's soulmate in a marriage that was cruelly cut short just three months short of their Golden Anniversary.

In 1972 he married Lyn (nee Klopp), who was the breadwinner for 5 years while Don did Adult matriculation, and then worked towards his honours degree at the University of Adelaide. After returning to Adelaide from further study in France, Don and Lyn needed to earn a living in order to bring up a young family, as well as pay off a mortgage at a time of very high interest rates. Lyn returned to teaching, and Don went into University Administration, which gave him a certain perspective on the antics of *Homo Academicus* - or at least some of them!

Derek Burke, a fellow progressive in fighting injustice, also wrote of his dear friend:

Don, and his life partner, Lyn, regularly contributed compelling articles to the *Spirit of Eureka* website. His brilliance, and depth of knowledge, was noted by the organisation and readers alike. Being an engaged historian, Don was particularly concerned with writing the history that he was close to. He was responsible for writing books about the migration experience, such as *Terra Laschi, Terra Trovi - the history of a southern Italian community in South Australia 1927 - 2007*.

He also wrote about soldiers from the Yorke Peninsula (his wife Lyn came from Yorke Peninsula) who fought in World War One: *The Ties That Bind: Southern Yorke Peninsula and The Great War 1914 - 1919* and, *Pens and Bayonets, letters from the Front, by soldiers of Yorke Peninsula, South Australia, during the Great War*. He also wrote on the conservative intellectual who lectured him at university: *A Historian against the Current: The life and work of Austin Gough*. Don also wrote on the South Australian activists who opposed the Vietnam War: *Moratorium Now! Memories of protest against the Vietnam War in South Australia 1965 - 1972*. The latter book, was the result of Don and Lyn's involvement in the Vietnam War Moratorium Anniversary Committee during 2020.

Work on the VWMAC made them realise that many of the stories of radicals and activists of the 60's, 70's, and 80's would be lost due to death, dementia, or infirmity! Don and Lyn were determined to give a voice to the political activists of this era, and they planned the book *Days of Wrath, Years of Hope: Memories of protest and Civil disobedience in South Australia 1965 - 1983* to achieve this.

It is no mean feat to apply for, and receive, a grant from the History Trust of South Australia, visit, record, and interview 55 people; put all this down in to print; and edit the interviews; return the copies to the interviewees, with instructions to self-edit; and then complete the final draft of all these interviews. It was an enormous undertaking for both of them. Unfortunately, and unfortunately, Lyn and Don had left interviewing himself until last, an interview that can now not happen. This invaluable oral history project will now be completed by Lyn alone.

Bob Dare, a fellow historian and friend wrote:

I remember him as one of the highlights of my time at Adelaide University. I arrived in 1971, in time to see this chap with a mass of curly-black hair wandering the corridors of the Napier Building. Only later did I learn that he was the 'star pupil' of Austin Gough – a prominent member of staff! He really was one of a kind, and one of the most extraordinary people I've ever had the privilege of knowing. We worked extremely well together, and I learned so much from him – not least, humility. He used to say, that I was the teacher. How wrong he was, and being wrong was not something that happened much to him. With love and great fondness – farewell!



Ray Broomhill (29/1/48 – 21/10/22)

Ray Broomhill, a widely admired teacher, researcher and public intellectual, has sadly passed away aged 73. Ray's intellectual curiosity, passion and expertise spanned the disciplines of history, sociology, labour studies, gender studies and political economy. He was a trans-disciplinarian before it became fashionable, collaborating locally and globally with fellow social scientists on the application of class and gender analysis. This greatly enriched his teaching which was a source of inspiration to the many students he taught and supervised, many of whom went on to play key leadership roles in the public sector, community organisations and the labour movement.

Born in 1948, Ray grew up in the working class area of Port Adelaide. He studied at the University of Adelaide where he completed a PhD in history focusing on the Great Depression. His 1978 book, *Unemployed Workers: a social history of the Great Depression in Adelaide* drew strength from examining the great hardships of the depression through the eyes of those who experienced it – the unemployed and the homeless. He would draw on the methodological power of oral history and interviews again and again throughout his career to help understand the distributional impacts of crises, policy and change. With a deep understanding of the devastation caused by the Great Depression embedded in his intellectual DNA, Ray was uniquely positioned to mount powerful critiques of neoliberalism.

A highlight of Ray's career was his contribution to founding Labour Studies and the Centre for Labour Research at the University of Adelaide. He taught political economy and gender work and society, while increasingly focusing his research on the emergence and consequences of neo-liberalism in Australia and globally. His edited book, *Banana*

Republic? Australia's Current Economic Problems, published in 1991 brought this analysis to a wider audience, something that Ray was able to do better than most through his regular slots on Radio 5UV and Radio Adelaide.

Ray's critique of neo-liberalism intersected with research undertaken in conjunction with his partner, Rhonda Sharp, on gender and inequality. Their trail-blazing book, *Short Changed Women and Economic Policies*, published in 1988, has helped to provide an intellectual and policy foundation for gender-responsive government budgets to this day. Over the following thirty years, Ray and Rhonda continued to publish jointly on gender and economics. Their recent work on gender, retirement incomes and the experience of households in Australia is testimony to their commitment to helping us understand inequality and the distributional impacts of public policies, always offering alternatives to remedy the problem.

Involvement in an international network of political economists was centrally important to Ray's work and personal life. With Paul Bowles, Stephen McBride and Teresa Gutierrez-Haces, Ray co-edited the book, *International Trade and Neoliberal Globalism: Towards Re-Peripheralisation in Australia, Canada and Mexico?*, published in 2014 in the [Routledge Studies in Governance and Change in the Global Era](#) series. Collaborations like this cemented Ray as one of Australia's foremost researchers on globalism and regulation theory.

Ray was a consistently generous mentor and supportive colleague. We have lost a wonderfully compassionate person, someone whose warmth and wise counsel made the world a much better place for so many of us. Not everyone remains intellectually and personally committed to the pursuit of a fairer and more just world throughout their life. Ray's commitment to those goals only intensified along with his care for others.

John Spoehr, Professor and Director of the Australian Industrial Transformation Institute (AITI) at Flinders University
From the Journal of Political Economy (JAPE) #90

Vale Ray Broomhill

Recently the scholarly community observed the passing, after a long battle with illness, of the distinguished scholar Dr Ray Broomhill, historian of Great Depression unemployment in Adelaide. Ray's origins in working-class Rosewater, informed his lifelong scholarly interests and political values. He was a pioneer of oral history technique in Australia, an approach inspired by Stud Terkel's trail blazing study *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*. More recently with his partner, the eminent feminist economist Rhonda Sharp, Ray sustained a searching critique of neo-liberalism theoretically and as exemplified in this State. His loss will be deeply and widely felt, but his legacy will live on. His most cited papers were those co-written studies on socioeconomic matters.

Ray touched many lives with his research and his teaching over many years. One of his post graduate students, Anne Burger, recalls his supportive supervision style, attention to detail and critical standards. I remember when in 1980, as a guest lecturer, Dr Broomhill addressed the University of Adelaide First Year Australian History course on the scourge of unemployment in Adelaide during the Great Depression. His research placed great reliance on harvesting qualitative testimony by oral history interviews, giving the lie to those who denied the possibility of labour history on the specious grounds that there was too little documentation; oral history gave voice to much working-class culture. I recall musing that I might like to specialise in labour history and deploy oral history methods in my work and forty years ago later I am about to embark on my third oral history research campaign. That is the kind of effect his calm address could have on an undergraduate student.

David Faber

Remembering Ray at Labour Studies

Pat Wright

I met Ray Broomhill in 1978 when I joined the Sociology Department at Adelaide CAE. He was particularly welcoming and generous with his time in inducting me into the world of academia. I thought at the time that I must have been stretching his patience, but later discovered that it was inexhaustible.

The Head of Sociology, Ross Shanahan (our own Studs Terkel), was really into Work, I was heavily involved in the Union movement and IR, and Ray Broomhill and Greg O'Leary were 'full bottle' on national and international Political Economy. It was a happy coincidence, then, that we invented Labour Studies over a Sunday barbecue in our back garden, with Work Studies, Union Studies, Political Economy as core subjects, a Practical Project as applied research, and several elective subjects. For more than twenty years the Labour Studies program grew – in the number of students enrolled (both in house and external studies); in courses, such as the Bachelor Degree, Graduate Diploma, Masters by coursework and PhD; and with Ken Bridge, Kathy Muir and Barbara Pocock joining the teaching staff.

Ray's contacts with PSA Job Reps and our links with AMWU Shop Stewards through Ted Gnatenko provided seed enrolments for an Associate Diploma of Labour Studies, with work, life, or union experience - and the capacity to benefit from the course - as the only requirements for entry to Higher Education. Ray was a driving force in this revolutionary transformation of workers as students and the establishment of the first Labour Studies program in Australia. His particular contributions were the cultivation in the Labour Studies program of research and the involvement of women and feminist perspectives.

A feature of the Labour Studies program was the involvement of people in the union movement, as guest speakers, part-time lecturers, and students. Ray got Mick Gallant from TUTA involved in an OH&S subject, Karen Jennings on the Media, as well as Clare Thomson, Jude Elton, Kathie Muir, Michelle Hogan, Kathryn Moyle, and many others. All of these staff members were ably assisted by talented Professional Staff, such as Judy Barlow, Josie Covino and others.

Ray also drove the founding of the Centre for Labour Research with John Spoehr as its director, and produced a number of publications such as his '*Banana Republic? Australia's Current Economic Problems*, the *Labour Studies Bulletin*, which compiled reviews of journal articles and books, a *Workers Weekly* radio program with Julia Lester on 5UV, the *State of the State* series edited by John Spoehr, and *Jobs for Young Australians*, edited by John Spierings and funded by the Australian Youth Foundation, to mention but a few. His major pre-Labour Studies publication, 'Unemployed Workers' continues to inspire researchers today. Its portrayal of the shanty-town of tents and humpies behind the Zoo during the Great Depression is indelible – and explains why my uncles in my teenage years knew all the best spots along the Torrens for catching yabbies!

Ray reached out nationally and internationally, to the Political Economy school at Sydney University, the Labour Education and Research Centre in Eugene, Oregon, the Feminist Economics conferences in Scandinavia, Canada and elsewhere, and collaborations with like-minded researchers all around the world.

In all this activity, Ray was remarkable for his generosity, his encouraging attitude, his quiet wisdom and his gentleness. He had the happy knack of convincing people that they were better than they thought they were - I can attest personally to that, and have heard it from scores of his students. If he needed a motto, it would be "You can do it!" All who met him thought he was a gentleman and a scholar. I think Ray Broomhill was a working-class saint.

Prominent participants in the Labour Studies program at some level include Greg Ogle at SACoSS; Kevin Purse (WorkCover expert and the first PhD by Publication at the University of Adelaide); Anne Burger from British Columbia; Grace Grace, (Director of Education in Queensland); Trish Crossin (former NT Senator), Jeannie Rea (former NTEU President), Jennifer Rankine (former SA Labor MP), Mark Kenny (former Canberra journalist, now at ANU), David Pope (whose cutting cartoons appear regularly on *Insiders*) Stephen Spence (former MEAA Secretary) as well as hundreds of other frontline workers and unionists.

Conservation SA honours first woman President and Environment Hall of Fame inductee Betty Fisher
(Conservation Council media release 28 November 2022)

The state's peak body for the environment honoured former President and Hall of Fame inductee Betty Fisher AM, who died last week aged 97. Betty was a champion for SA's environment, serving as the very first woman President of the Conservation Council of South Australia in the 1970s. Throughout her life, Ms Fisher was a fierce advocate for the rights of women and girls. She served as International Women's Day president for eight years and received a Flinders University medal for services to women. Her advocacy for Aboriginal people and the environment came into the spotlight during the 1995 Hindmarsh Island Royal Commission, where she produced notes and tape recordings from the 1960s which confirmed "secret women's business".

As an author, Betty acknowledged the remarkable achievements of over 2,000 South Australian women in a publication she produced in 2001 in conjunction with the International Women's Day Committee. The document is an important record of the achievements of some of the remarkable women in our state and represents Betty's ongoing work to publicly acknowledge the role of women in our community.

A colourful character, she invariably found ways to track down the people she wanted to influence, including politicians from all parties, bureaucrats, community leaders trade union officials and business leaders. Or she'd set up meetings and lead delegations. And she was a regular caller to talkback radio: "Betty from Somerton Park is on the line".
The Advertiser 17 Dec



Betty Fisher: From *Movers and Shakers*, Jim Douglas (ed) SA Unions 2007

My family had always been strong on workers' rights. My grandfather established the first "closed shop" in the steel industry in Sheffield. He believed in the right of workers to belong to a trade union and that there was no other way to achieve reforms in the harsh conditions of the early 20th century legislation. We migrated to Australia in 1927 near the start of the Great Depression. I first joined a trade union [Federated Clerks] when I worked for Gibb and Sons at Port Adelaide. My next job was at the Actil Cotton Mills where I joined the Textile Workers' Union and I got into a bit of trouble organising the women workers! Later I decided to make a change in career and worked for Summit Press which printed the Communist newspaper, Tribune.

During the war my father worked in a munitions factory and became a shop steward for the Federated Iron Workers' Union. Like many others of that time my parents had struggled against the deepest poverty, and the trade unions were led by men and women whose memories of the Depression fired them with the vow "Never Again" would they agree to accept appalling conditions and impoverished wages.

*Troops returning from World War II were radicalized - they had been promised good jobs, housing and education for their children only to find that the promises fell short of reality. Two of my brothers **became** members of the Communist Party and later I also joined. We also remembered the outcomes of the nuclear bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki where hundreds of thousands were killed in the blink of an eye and millions suffered the effects of radiation sickness. These things greatly influenced my life.*

There were plenty of jobs postwar so I worked for the South Australian Railways in the sweets shop at first, and then I decided to sit for the exam to become a ticket collector. I joined the Australian Railways Union and was elected on to their State Council and became a delegate to the United Trades and Labor Council (UTLC).

I have always been concerned about the issues for women at work and I was determined that women should have a voice and be supported. I was active in the Women's Electoral Lobby and we found an office in Gilbert Place just down the hallway from the new office of the Working Women's Centre. This was at a time when I was working closely with Indigenous women and was privileged to record their stories. That led me to giving evidence to a Royal Commission into the building of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge. Recording & writing about the lives of Aboriginal women, their philosophies and their wisdom, changed my life.

Marcia Pearl Munn 17/04/1928 - 19/10/2022



Vale Marcia Munn

Marcia was well known in her own right as a communist, feminist and activist. She was first married to Jim Mitchell and had several well-known daughters to the Labor movement. Later in life she married the love of her life the 'Singing Socialist' Rex Munn, a renowned member of the Waterside Workers Union.

*Jamie Newlyn, Assistant National Secretary,
Maritime Union of Australia*

My parents met when my mother (a photograph re-toucher and tinter) visited Broken Hill where my New Zealand-born father was working as a miner. After some years in the mid-north of SA they later shifted to Adelaide where my brother, sister and I were born and grew up. My mother was an invalid for all of my life and this was very difficult, but the family always pulled together and we had a happy childhood, although the family was split up for the duration of the war – while father served in the army my mother went into the RAH Magill wards for long term chronic patients. When I was 16 years old I went to Kimba on the West Coast as a trainee nurse. After about 18 months I transferred to the Royal Adelaide Hospital to complete my training.

My brother returned from the war a communist, as did many servicemen. It was around this time that I met Jim Mitchell, who I later married. My mother also became a committed communist and did whatever she could from her chair (despite suffering continuous pain). For example, she kept the Party's financial books. In 1949 the miners went on strike. We worked very hard to win support for them but history shows that it was one struggle we lost, thanks to the then Labor Government who put the troops into the mines - that was a bitter time. Jim was recruited into the Waterside Workers' Federation in the early 1950s. It was a prolonged anti-communist and union-bashing period. This was the period of the Menzies government's anti-communist bill. We had to unite and fight. I really feel the job that the party did at this time was what decided that victory - it was a victory for all people.

It was around this time that the Watersiders' Union Women's Committee was formed. The activities of this committee of about 30 women were originally about supporting the struggles of the Union, mostly organising food and cooking for families. The 1956 strike went for three weeks and things were very tight. After the strike the Women's Committee broadened its activities. We became affiliated to the Union of Australian Women which was a very active women's organisation and through that we became affiliated with the Women's International Democratic Federation.

This helped us to be involved in both national and International campaigns and I was fortunate to be sent to the WIDF Congress in Helsinki in 1969. It was a wonderful thing to join with women from all lands and to know that we were there to help each other. We used to organise International Women's Day then. We suggested that Irene Bell would be a good President and she continued in that role for a long while. The present day IWD activities are not the same. I think it is very elitist now and somehow I never feel comfortable there. I never feel welcome.

The Women's Committee at Port Adelaide used to hold and cater for wonderful IWD luncheons in the Wharfies' Hall and honoured some terrific women, for example, Annie Rennie the first woman Mayor of Port Adelaide (if not the first in Australia). We also held a luncheon to honour Freda Brown who was the President of the WIDF and renowned internationally. The Union held many social functions in those days - people had a great time. The Women's Committee also organised and funded basketball teams and ballet for the children. This was important because we were so poor in those days. Our children would not have been able to participate in these activities otherwise.

We had some wonderful women on our committee. I remember them with great affection. Unfortunately my activities ceased on the Women's Committee when I left my marriage with Jim in 1977 and went with Rex Munn. I'm afraid the women were of the old school. 'Mrs Fitz' (Thelma Fitzgerald, President) whom I still admire, was very upset and never forgave me. Other women didn't exactly 'cut' me, but it wasn't comfortable.

Our home was the centre of political activity. We were very open and known as communists. This was certainly easier for us - we didn't have to hide anything. I think, in retrospect though, that our children suffered at times. I'm sorry that we were not more aware of their difficulties at that period. They are OK about it now. In fact, they think their experiences of those times have made them stronger. They are certainly politically aware if not actually active in organisations.

Marcia Munn (*Movers and Shakers*, ed Jim Douglas, SA Unions 2007)

Christine (Chris) Anne Waugh (5/4/54 – 26/11/22)



Chris Waugh passed away recently after a 3 year battle with Metastatic Lung Cancer.

Chris trained as a Primary School Teacher at Wattle Park Teachers College and taught both in Adelaide Metropolitan Primary Schools and also did her country service at Stirling North in Port Augusta. While she was born into a relatively conservative family, her forthright and no-nonsense attitude to life soon became evident. In her teaching appointments she usually became the SAIT workplace rep and was elected as a district rep to SAIT State Council. She was selected to fill a temporary short term position as an Organiser in SAIT in the late 1980s and after returning to teaching, she was soon successful in winning two consecutive 3 year tenured Organiser positions in SAIT/AEU from 1990 to 1996. As an Organiser she worked in both metropolitan and country regions and took on specialty areas of responsibility such as OHS&W. Chris had a strong commitment to the principles of equal opportunity and feminism and was passionate in her support of Union members in the workplace.

Always believing that teaching was her first career choice Chris returned to teaching in metropolitan primary schools but after a couple of years was again approached by Union Officials to consider running for the position of Female Vice President in the early 2000s and was duly elected for two 2-year terms for a total of 4 years. As VP, she had responsibility for a number of areas including Early Childhood Education, Women and Girls, OHS&W.... She also took a lead role in Enterprise Bargaining negotiations and was a confident and articulate public speaker at Union rallies and the Anti War Rally. After standing unsuccessfully for the position of President, she returned to classroom teaching for several more years before retiring as a permanent teacher and taking on some temporary relief teaching for a couple more years.

In retirement she took a keen interest in the environment, working as a volunteer in Conservation Parks and on properties managed by Nature Foundation. She also volunteered at the OXFAM Bookshop in Adelaide where she worked up until deteriorating health prevented her from continuing. Throughout her life she lived by the principles of a fair go and always took an active interest in left wing politics.

An active life cut far too short.



**Celebrating the life of Bruce McFarlane,
Pearls and Irritations, Dec 23, 2022
By Guest authors Berenice and Chris Nyland**

Bruce McFarlane (2nd from R) at a 1986 trade union conference in the Philippines, with Chris White (then head of SA's UTLC)

Humphrey McQueen started a tribute to Bruce McFarlane two years ago with the following paragraph:

Few people have two songs written about them. Few are arrested three times in anti-war protests. Few are threatened with castration by a member of parliament. Few are burnt in effigy. Few publish dozens of learned articles and a score of books, translated into Chinese, Dutch, Italian, Japanese and Norwegian. Few co-edit two academic journals. Few hold chairs in politics and in economics. Few work with four state Planning Commissions, Belgrade, Warsaw, Delhi and Hanoi.

Bruce was 84 at the time Humphrey McQueen wrote the following tribute: [Bruce McFarlane: noble protagonist of the proletariat and the peasantry](#) – and he has now died at the age of 86. McQueen gives a comprehensive description of Bruce the man, his life and his contribution to Marxism. He was a remarkable man and as friends from Adelaide we wanted to acknowledge Bruce the Marxist, thinker, political activist, the man and good friend. Bruce was larger than life, loyal, brave and extremely clever. He was also a man of parts. He knew his way around a race course, could gamble at cards and was a member of Australia's only political party that could fit into a Volkswagen, the Adelaide Revolutionary Marxists (ARM). The anecdotes are endless. We will share a few.

At Adelaide University, where Bruce was a professor of politics, the students would produce a counter calendar each year designed to provide frank appraisals of the lecturers and subjects for the new student body. One year, Bruce got such rave reviews the editors decided they needed a second opinion. The second opinion claimed the first person didn't know what they were talking about - Bruce was much better than described!

He was a brilliant lecturer. He would say that a lecture should only have three points and these would be intertwined to produce a cohesive story. No Powerpoint for Bruce. He would jot his three points on a scrap of paper and tell a rollicking and powerful story. A lecture we attended as students traced the history of the West from Stalingrad to the end of the War in Vietnam centring on the Soviet T-34 tank which - he told us with increasing excitement - smashed the fascists in Europe, liberated China and then in 1975 broke through the gates of the presidential palace in Saigon. By this time, he appeared to be growing increasingly exhausted and paused, then lifting his head and raising one finger insisted: "It was the same tank." He brought the house down.

Bruce was the only Marxist to ever hold a chair in an economics department in an Australian university. This in itself gives him a claim to fame. Bruce was a fighter. There were many occasions when his powerful use of rhetoric was an advantage. He could also, as McQueen points out, be physically brave. On one occasion when there was a factional fight on an editorial board the faction associated with Bruce asked Gabriel Kolko how they should respond to the opposition. The telegram reply they received was legendary, two words, "Unleash McFarlane".

On his deathbed Deng Xiaoping is said to have murmured "I'm going to meet Marx". We hope Bruce can make the meeting.

A Noble Protagonist of the Proletariat and the Peasantry: A Tribute to Bruce McFarlane Humphrey McQueen

At all times, Bruce McFarlane lived the Wobblies' injunction: Organise! Educate! Agitate! Born in 1936 in Wollongong, Australia, his Marxism was nurtured by his father. After high school, he studied economics at Sydney University and taught in Wollongong, Australia. After high school, he studied economics at Sydney University and taught Economics at the University of Queensland, Politics at the Australian National University, and went on to the Chair of Politics at Adelaide University and the Chair of Economics at the University of Newcastle. He also held posts in Yugoslavia and India, studying and working on economic planning and worked at Cambridge University with Maurice Dobb, Michał Kalecki, Piero Sraffa and Joan Robinson. He authored dozens of books and articles, mentored and collaborated with a range of colleagues including Melanie Beresford, Robert Catley, Steve Cooper, Peter Groenewegan, Geoffrey Harcourt, Peter Limquenco and many more. He was the co-editor of the *Journal of Contemporary Asia* from 1980 to 2005.

[Journal of Contemporary Asia Volume 51, 2021](#)

The following link to a page in [Surplus Value: a network for Australian thinkers and activists](#) contains a tribute to Bruce McFarlane that Humphrey McQueen wrote in 2016, as well as a selection of Bruce's publications.

PS: Just in case
you'd forgotten....

Gough Whitlam 21st Prime Minister of Australia 1972 to 1975 Leader of the Labor



Illustration

- 1 ended Conscription,
- 2 withdrew Australian troops from Vietnam,
- 3 implemented Equal Pay for Women,
- 4 launched an Inquiry into Education and the Funding of Government and Non-government Schools on a Needs Basis,
- 5 established a separate ministry responsible for Aboriginal Affairs,
- 6 established the single Department of Defence,
- 7 withdrew support for apartheid-South Africa,
- 8 granted independence to Papua New Guinea,
- 9 abolished Tertiary Education Fees,
- 10 established the Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme (TEAS),
- 11 increased pensions,
- 12 established Medibank,
- 13 established controls on Foreign Ownership of Australian resources,
- 14 passed the Family Law Act establishing No-Fault Divorce,
- 15 passed a series of laws banning Racial and Sexual Discrimination,
- 16 extended Maternity Leave and Benefits for Single Mothers,
- 17 introduced One-Vote-One-Value to democratize the electoral system,
- 18 implemented wide-ranging reforms of the ALP's organization,
- 19 initiated Australia's first Federal Legislation on Human Rights, the Environment and
- 20 established the Legal Aid Office,
- 21 established the National Film and Television School,
- 22 launched construction of National Gallery of Australia,
- 23 established the Australian Development Assistance Agency,
- 24 reopened the Australian Embassy in Peking after 24 years,
- 25 established the Prices Justification Tribunal,
- 26 revalued the Australian Dollar,
- 27 cut tariffs across the board,
- 28 established the Trade Practices Commission,
- 29 established the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service,
- 30 established the Law Reform Commission,
- 31 established the Australian Film Commission,
- 32 established the Australia Council,
- 33 established the Australian Heritage Commission,
- 34 established the Consumer Affairs Commission,
- 35 established the Technical and Further Education Commission,
- 36 implemented a national employment and training program,
- 37 created Telecom and Australia Post to replace the Postmaster-General's Department,
- 38 devised the Order of Australia Honors System to replace the British Honors system,
- 39 abolished appeals to the Privy Council,
- 40 changed the National Anthem to 'Advance Australia Fair',
- 41 instituted Aboriginal Land Rights
- 42 sewered most of Sydney.