

The Queensland Journal of Labour History

*No. 15
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The Brisbane Labour History Association



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Butchers posing in front of their Labor Day float, Brisbane, 1920 (State Library of Queensland)

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The latest issue of *Labour History* (September 2012)

This issue also continues the journal's well-established tradition of combining a collection of contributions dedicated to a special theme – in this case the rise and record of the federal Fisher Labor government (1910-1913) with articles on an array of topics.

The eight articles in the thematic section, guest-edited by Mark Hearn and Nick Dyrenfurth, do much to rescue the second Fisher-led federal Labor government – the first social democratic government elected in its own right anywhere in the world – from the relative neglect of labour historians. They serve to remind us both of the significance of Labor's electoral achievement in April 1910 and of the importance of its ambitious legislative program.

The four articles in the non-thematic section also offer insights grounded in scholarship of the highest standard. For instance, Michael Quinlan's study of pre-unionate shipboard protests over health and safety in Australian waters during the colonial era makes masterful use of newspaper reports to document both quantitatively and qualitatively the widespread nature of collective protests by ships' crews. Quinlan argues convincingly that examining both informal and formal organisation, protest and resistance offers a more rounded understanding of worker mobilisation during the colonial period.

The issue also carries a feast of book reviews guaranteed to enhance your understanding of the historical experience and agency of labour movements and those who labour.

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Editorial

Howard Guille, Ross Gwyther and Bob Russell

To say the least, there were many disappointments under the ALP in Queensland. The privatisations and the failure to make a decent settlement with Indigenous people about stolen wages head our list. Even so, after the wipe-out of the ALP in the March state election, the LNP seems to us to be systematically working through all state agencies and all state funding looking to remove what it thinks is the taint of progress. While no one in Queensland has yet been treated with the severity of the members of Pussy Riot in Russia, community organisations with public funding have been told they cannot lobby or advocate for legislative change. Funding has been cut and changes imposed on health, housing, environmental and advocacy programmes. Wholesale changes have been made to the membership of boards and statutory authorities. Much of this seems petty and little more than bullying to show who is in charge. One small example is the removal of the Secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions from the Board of WorkCover.

At the time of writing (August 2012), public servants are taking the brunt of the attack with, it seems, 20,000 people to lose their jobs. The State Government

has usurped award and enterprise agreements by deeming that clauses on job security are without effect. There is little justification for this even in the self-evidently politically partisan review of state finances led by Peter Costello.

Workers and their industrial and political organisations have had to deal with conservative regimes before. The BLHA seminar in October is a chance to look at some of the history and perhaps draw some lessons about strategy and tactics. However, it is also salutary to realise that people who were voters under Bjelke-Petersen regime must now be over 43 years old. This is much less than half the current Queensland population since the median age is 36 years. Hence, we need to have a history that can tell the stories of what happened before. Moreover, we need to make such stories attractive to school and tertiary students, workers and activists. This is a matter for social media as well as mainstream media, magazines and journals.

In a modest way, we hope that some of the articles in this issue of the journal will help start such discussion. Di Zetlin traces the struggle for equal pay from

the Harvester decision of 1907 to the Equal Remuneration Order made in the SACS Award in 2011. She shows that equal pay remains unfinished business with even some members of the Fair Work Commission unconvinced of the principles. Muriel Heagney's caution is extremely important, 'equal pay must be fought for as a wage justice issue on the basis of working-class unity, rather than as a means of protecting men's jobs at the expense of women workers'.

This is an appropriate lead to a short piece reporting on a seminar to mark the 40th anniversary of Women's and Gender Studies at UQ. The struggle to establish Women's Studies represented a significant step towards recognising the role of women in Queensland labour history. The same applies to Aboriginal history and the article Mil Binnung reports on an exhibition built about the life of Bob Anderson. The exhibition, first presented on Minjerriba / North Stradbroke Island combines material on his Ngugi identity and history with his labour and union activism.

In June, the Queensland Government pushed its 'Fair Work Harmonisation' Bill through Parliament. The changes directly affect those public service and public sector workers who remain under Queensland awards. John McCollow provides a careful and clear analysis of the changes and concludes 'It appears that "the war against public sector collective bargaining" in Queensland may just

be getting started'. This provides a fitting introduction to the next major piece in the Journal an interview with Alex Scott, General Secretary of Together. This is the union created by the recent merger of the Queensland Public Sector Union (QPSU) with the Australian Services Union — Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and Administrative Branch.

This interview and the piece by John McCollow show how the Journal can cover recent events as well as more conventionally historical ones. We canvassed this direction for the Journal in the previous issue, the first under our joint editorships. In undertaking, what we hope will be an on-going series of interviews, it is our aim, in the words of the late Paul Sweezy, to try and deal with 'the present as history'. We view this as very much a dialectical exercise. That is, while the study of labour history is an invaluable intellectual tool for informing our analysis of current forces, trends and strategies in the labour movement, serious consideration of current events can also aid us in our analysis and interpretation of the past. The editors welcome any submissions that attempt to build bridges between our understandings of labour's past and the current challenges that confront it.

Ted Riethmuller's account of starting work on a large site in London in 1964 is history writing 'from below'. It is a rich piece using the everyday

BLHA

President's Column

Greg Mallory

President's Report — September 2012

The Association held the Annual Alex Macdonald Lecture in May. It was addressed by Dr Iain Campbell from RMIT University who spoke on the topic of combatting insecure (or precarious) work in Australia. He approached the topic from a historical perspective and examined the causes for its resurgence in recent times. It was a timely topic given the recent sackings by the Newman Government of temporary workers in the Queensland public service. The lecture was well attended and the audience participated in the question time. Both Alex Macdonald's daughters, Lynette Trad and Margaret Liessa attended the lecture. I would like to thank the Executive for their work in making the event a success and in particular Doug Devonshire for the catering. Long-time union activist and Aboriginal Elder from Stradbroke Island, Bob Anderson, opened the proceedings and made an acknowledgement of country. He made the telling point that the very night

this important lecture in the labour movement was being delivered the traditional owners were struggling to assert their sovereignty by maintaining a tent embassy in Brisbane, against the combined forces of the State government and the City Council.

The BLHA also hosted a presentation on the National Museum of Labour and the Australian Workers Heritage Centre. The BLHA has direct representation in the National Museum of Labour by way of our Federal Treasurer, Anthony Mcloughlan, being a Board member. Speakers from both these organisation pointed out the difficulties in keeping their respective organisations running but reinforced the point how important it was in the preservation of labour history to keep these organisations viable.

The next major activity of the Association is the October Symposium. The title of the symposium is 'Back to the Future — The Shape of Things to Come — The Queensland Labour Movement Under Conservative

Governments — Then and Now!
As I write this a ‘Call for Papers and Participants’ has been sent out to members, ASSSLH branches, labour history academics and unions. We are expecting a good response to this given the current state of industrial relations in Queensland under the new LNP Government.

At the recent Executive meeting the committee discussed the issue of the need for developing broader links with the membership and also with the community. Some of the ideas canvassed were regular meetings with a speaker, a regular newsletter with reference to labour history events that have occurred over the years. If members have any suggestions could they please email the secretary.

The next Federal Conference will be held in Sydney either in July or September next year. It will be organised by the Federal body in partnership with Unions NSW. Finally after a lengthy process that involved many drafts being written, ASSSLH has finally a working constitution. Thanks goes to Nikki Balnave, Federal President, Anthony McLaughlan, Federal Treasurer and Peter Ellett from the Canberra Branch.

Greg Mallory

The episodic character of privatisation — one sector being sold, then a pause, then another — has hidden a meta-privatisation that’s passed the halfway point. The essential public good that Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair and now Cameron sell is not power stations, or trains, or hospitals. It’s the public itself. It’s us.

The commodity that makes water and roads and airports valuable to an investor, foreign or otherwise, is the people who have no choice but to use them. We have no choice but to pay the price the tollkeepers charge.

James Meek, Human Revenue Stream, LRB Blog, 20 Mar 2012

Pay Equity: Still Some Way to Go

Di Zetlin

This paper started as the Alex McDonald Memorial Lecture for 2011. I was honoured to be invited to give this lecture because of the high regard I had for Alex McDonald when I knew him in the 1960s. It was a timely topic on two counts. 2011 marked the 100th anniversary of the celebration of International Women's Day, a day that drew its inspiration from the struggles of women workers. It was also timely because it coincided with the decision of May 2011 that caring work, predominately carried out by women, is undervalued. This was a major turning point in the long-running case for pay equity for the female dominated community care professionals. In this paper, I will sketch the landmarks in equal pay determinations in Australia and review the findings of the majority of the bench of Fair Work Australia in the application of an Equal Remuneration Order to the Social and Community Care Services (SACS) Award.

History of pay equity in Australia

There is little doubt that the Harvester judgement of 1907 stamped a characteristic seal on the conduct of industrial relations in Australia.

The establishment of the principle of a minimum wage set to support workers' families in frugal comfort and the determination of this rate by an independent umpire are seen as a central triumph of labour. It is a less glorious story that this 'family wage' applied only to the wages rates of men. This story started with the Fruitpicker's Case¹ (1912) where it was concluded that women's pay could be lower than men because women, unlike men, did not have to support a family. A female wage was subsequently set in the Clothing Trades at fifty-four per cent of the male rate².

Justice Higgins did make an important exception that women working alongside men doing the same job should be paid at the male rate since to do otherwise would encourage the undercutting of the male family rate. The result of this has been a sharp differentiation between 'men's work' and 'women's work' so that Australia has a strongly sex segregated occupational structure. This itself has become an obstacle to the achievement of pay equity³. It also influenced how the trade union movement took a restricted view of pay equity in the form of 'equal pay for equal work'. Regrettably, defending Harvester and the family wage too often meant that trade union support for pay equity was limited to defending male labour from the threat of cheaper female labour.

Women's wages were stuck at fifty-four per cent of the male rate until the Second World War. The war effort necessitated that women join the workforce in significant numbers and in areas that had been male domains. This move of women into areas of male employment facilitated an uneasy alliance between feminist organisations such as the Council for Action on Equal Pay (CAEP) led by Muriel Heagney and the trade union movement. The unions were motivated to demand 'equal pay for equal work', by a fear that women working at cheaper rates in the male dominated workforce would undercut the family wage⁴. Heagney, in comparison, argued that equal pay must be fought for as a wage justice issue on the basis of working-class unity, rather than as a means of protecting men's jobs at the expense of women workers⁵.

The Women's Employment Board (WEB) was established in March 1942 to review rates for women workers entering previously male domains. The Board was to assess award rates for women on the basis of their relative efficiency and productivity. In 1944, the WEB gazetted a rate of 75 per cent of the male rate to apply to all women, although in most of the occupational cases brought to it, the rate set was ninety per cent⁶. Employers were strident in their opposition to this wartime Board and its decision favouring 90% pay rates, launching six separate High Court challenges against it⁷. The prevailing mood of the Government

and unions was that movement towards pay equity during the Second World War was a temporary measure, necessitated by the war effort. Prime Minister Curtin reflected this saying that 'the home remains her citadel, but the factory and the workshop have become her arena...' and that after the cessation of hostilities 'most women will ultimately be absorbed into the home'⁸. Nevertheless, the experience of women's work during the war did move the Commonwealth Arbitration Court to follow the WEB and set a



Factory Production Italian women at the 'Golden Circle Cannery' in Queensland in 1967. The Golden Circle Cannery or Northgate, a suburb of Brisbane, handled 80% of Australia's pineapple crop; and many workers were migrants. Here were 5 former Italians and one migrant from Poland: Mrs Elsa Antoloni, Mrs Maria Pasqualone, from Italy, Mrs Marie Plichta from Lemberg Poland, Mrs Elda Vascotte, Mrs Josephina Bennet nee Scipenzi and Mrs Eva D'Alessandro all from Italy.

female ‘basic pay’ rate at seventy-five per cent of the male rate in 1950⁹.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted an Equal Remuneration Convention (100) in 1951. This Convention was rhetorically supported by the Menzies government, although they hid behind the ‘inability’ of the Commonwealth government to exercise an industrial relations power and an argument about relying upon the Commonwealth Arbitration Commission in such matters¹⁰. There was some action at a State level during this period. New South Wales passed the *Female Rates (Amendment) Act* in 1958 followed at a leisurely pace by Victoria (1968) and Western Australia (1969)¹¹. By the time of the 1969 equal pay case Australia had still not ratified the ILO convention.

It is generally acknowledged that the equal pay cases of 1969 and 1972 represented the next landmarks in the history of equal pay at the national level. Even so, the 1969 decision was quite narrowly framed around the principle of ‘equal pay for equal work’ and found the more general concept of equal pay difficult to define and to apply¹². The 1972 case elaborated the new principle of ‘equal pay for work of equal value’¹³. The determination of this new principle was to be through an evaluation of the work value of the awards for occupational groups or classifications. Ideally comparisons were to be drawn between males and

females within the same award, but with an acknowledgement that, where work is performed exclusively by females, comparisons between female and/ or male classifications in different awards might be contemplated.

Cases under the 1972 decision were difficult to establish as the Commission was reluctant to place pay equity outside or above its own principles of wage fixation. The intransigence of the Commission meant that most cases initiated under the pay equity principle of 1972 were either dealt with by negotiated consent agreements or referred to the Commissions’ own Anomalies and Inequities provisions. These provisions were continually narrowed before being dropped¹⁴. In 1986, the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission refused to accept the principles of comparable worth as a test of pay inequity. In



Title : Women — Female workers at Shay Gap iron ore mine in 1978

1989, the Commission adopted a new set of principles known as the Structural Efficiency Principle or award restructuring. To the extent that these principles encouraged the resetting of minimum rates against skill benchmarks, low paid workers (including women) benefitted. However, given that most women's work had not been subject to rigorous work value assessment, employers tended to compress 'women's work' into the lowest levels of a classification structure¹⁵.

In 1993, the Commonwealth government, having ratified the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention and the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) relied on the external affairs powers to enshrine an equal remuneration principle in legislation. This principle reflected the language of CEDAW, using the concept of remuneration as a broader term than wages and specifically referring to the measurement of work of equal value. But the utility of this principle in a context where federal industrial relations were increasingly turning away from industry-wide settlements and awards in favour of enterprise bargaining was questionable. There were really only two cases where it was specifically relied upon. The first involved the Sydney-based electrical component manufacturer, HPM Industries. The Commission refused it as a pay equity claim on the grounds that

a threshold of discrimination had to be established. The case was later resolved without recourse to arbitration. This stance was confirmed in application for an equal remuneration order for clerical workers at David Syme & Co Ltd, proprietors of The Age newspaper in Melbourne.

The combined influence of the conservative approach of the Commission, the obstacles presented by the requirement to strip awards to basic conditions under the 1996 Workplace Relations Act and the decentralisation of industrial relations turned attention to what could be achieved in State jurisdictions. Here Labor governments were in power and significant numbers of women workers were covered by State awards. Of the five States to conduct pay equity inquiries, the New South Wales and Queensland inquiries were arguably the most important. Generally, these inquiries established that the critical determination in the inequality in women's wages was the simple fact of undervaluation. In everyday terms this means that unless other factors intervene, the work of women will not be valued as highly as that of a man, because it is done by women. In addition, both New South Wales (1998) and the Queensland (2001) Inquiries adopted Equal Remuneration Principles that provided indicators of the factors that could contribute to this undervaluation. These principles broke new ground in the history of pay equity

in Australia. They posited a capacity to establish rates for women's work that did not rely upon establishing discrimination or direct comparisons with male rates. They allowed reference to a broad range of indicators including occupational segregation and, in the Queensland case, low capacity for industrial bargaining. The Queensland Services Union succeeded in a claim before the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission in 2008–09 using the Equal Remuneration Principle developed by the Queensland inquiry. This was a crucial starting point for the subsequent national proceedings for an Equal Remuneration Order for the SACS industry.

Fair Work Australia and the SACS Case

In 2010, the Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union (ASU) and other unions¹⁶ lodged an application for an Equal Remuneration Order for the Social and Community Care Services Award (SACS). This Award covers workers, mainly women, who are non-government workers providing care in community-based disability services, child protection, youth work, women's services and some mental health services. This sector emerged from charitable work and remains strongly infused with the ethos of volunteering. The sector has grown as governments have sought to outsource front-line caring simultaneously with

increasing the regulatory framework for the provision of such services. The workforce has become increasingly professionalised although volunteers still make a significant contribution. Partly because of its charitable and voluntary origins, and partly because its employees are mostly women, the sector was slow to unionise and to this day workers in the sector express anxiety about the potential for conflict between their dedication to their vulnerable client base and the pursuit of their 'self interest' through wage claims and unionisation.

In May 2011, the Full Bench of Fair Work Australia (FWA) handed down an Interim Decision¹⁷. This Decision has important implications for the future prosecution of pay equity. The Decision takes a broader based view of the thresholds for determining an Equal Remuneration Order than previously accepted by national tribunals. There are two significant elements to the Decision. The first is that discrimination does not have to be threshold tested before consideration can be given to an Equal Remuneration Order. Indeed FWA acknowledges that in an industry as diverse as the community care sector, it would be almost impossible to establish such a fact¹⁸. The second element is that while a case would be easier to establish by reference to a male comparator group, this is not, as a matter of logic, the only way to establish that work is undervalued because of gender¹⁹. These principles,

while to some extent no more than a reiteration of the legislative provisions, are important given the conservative history of tribunal decisions on pay equity.

Of tremendous importance is the recognition in the Decision that ‘caring work’ is undervalued because it is work performed by women. The Bench’s view was that:

There is much to be said for the view that work in the industry bears a female characterisation. In our view the applicants have established the following propositions:

- (a) much of the work in the industry is “caring” work
- (b) the characterisation of work as caring work can disguise the level of skill and experience required and contribute, in a general sense, to a devaluing of the work
- (c) the evidence of workers, managers and union officials suggests that the work, in the SACS industry, again in a general sense, is undervalued to some extent, and
- (d) because caring work in this context has a female characterisation, to the extent that work in the industry is undervalued because it is caring work, the undervaluation is gender-based²⁰.

Although the groundwork for this was set in the case before the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, this was an important finding. And although this proposition received support from some of the employer submissions, it had been a matter on which the Australian Government had not expressed a view²¹.

Less encouraging was the approach the Bench took towards the measurement of the undervaluation. Not unreasonably, the Decision pointed out that in the challenging circumstances where a male comparator was not relied upon and the application was not on the basis of discrimination, the application ‘can only succeed if the applicant establishes that the remuneration paid is subject to gender-based undervaluation’²². The Applicants had argued that the work of the non-government employees for whom they were seeking an ERO was comparable to work in state and local government employment. This had been the approach accepted in the Queensland SACS case. The decision of Fair Work Australia conceded:

there has not been an item by item comparison of job requirements for all of the many classifications covered by the industrial instruments concerned. The case has been put at a more generalised level and is concerned with comparing the nature of the work in the SACS industry and the programs and services it delivers,

with the work of employees delivering similar programs and services in state and local government. We have no doubt that at that level the value of the work is, generally speaking, comparable. The lack of detailed evidence is not fatal to the applicants' case. As we have noted the applicants need only to establish that remuneration in the industry results from gender-based undervaluation²³.

In addition to the comparable worth component of the claim on gender undervaluation, the Applicants had relied in the indicia approach adopted by the NSW Pay Equity Inquiry, an approach that had been adopted with some revisions by the Queensland Inquiry. This approach was to identify a number of characteristics that could be observed in industries where undervaluation on the basis of gender appeared to prevail. The specific indicia were that the industry was female dominated; the work was characterised as 'female'; often, no work value test had been conducted by the Commission; equal pay principles had not been applied; the union was weak and there were few union members; the industry was dominated by consent awards; there was a large component of casual workers; qualifications were poorly recognised or aligned; there were poor career paths; numerous small workplaces; potentially a new industry or occupation; and it was often

in a service industry or home based occupations²⁴.

Fair Work Australia accepted few of these indicia as demonstrative of gender undervaluation, arguing that many were gender neutral and could adversely affect male rates of pay as much as female rates. Thus small workplaces and low rates of unionisation could affect male employees undervaluation²⁵. Alternatively, the Bench was not convinced that some of the indicia such as consent industrial agreements could be taken as indicators of undervaluation.

This left the parties in a somewhat curious position. On the one hand, the existence of gendered factors of undervaluation had been found, but the Bench had discounted most of the indicia by which quantification of gender undervaluation might be attempted. Additionally, they had made it clear that their final decision would be strongly influenced by funding implications of any decision they made.

What followed this decision was a campaign by the applicant unions to highlight the imperative of resolving the funding issue, combined with a sustained collaborative effort with the Australian government to devise a methodology to justify the quantum of gender-based undervaluation. The ASU organised a National Day of Action to support its claim in

June 2011, increasing the pressure on governments to 'pay up'. By November 2011, the ASU and the Australian government had reached an agreed position to submit to Fair Work Australia that included a funding commitment from the government of \$3 billion over the life of the phase-in period of the proposed Equal Remuneration Order.

On February 1, 2012, the Full Bench handed down its final decision²⁶ and in June 2012 orders were issued that were in-line with the joint position of the ASU and Australian government except that the phase-in period was extended from six years to eight years.

The Full Bench decision was a majority decision with Vice President Watson dissenting. Although the Decision was supportive of the case, elements of the Decision are concerning in relation to the prosecution of further cases.

The Decision failed to elaborate principles for the determination of future Equal Remuneration Orders, confirming the conservative tradition of national industrial tribunals in relation to pay equity. The Bench expressed dissatisfaction with both of the principles in the Joint Submission of the ASU and the Australian Government. On the attempt to align rates in the non-government sector with



Workers join together during the historic struggle for pay equity in social and community workers jobs in 2011.

comparable rates in the government sector, the Bench noted that ‘there is no justification for establishing a nexus between an equal remuneration order and market rates in state and local government’²⁷. Although they noted some utility, ‘in a general way’, in making comparisons with rates in the government sector, the Bench rejected the methods used to estimate rates based on assessment of the ‘caring’ component of the work by reference to government sector rates²⁸. Thus, in the end, the basis on which the Decision supported the Joint Submission was largely based on the fact of agreement of many of the parties, the funding issues having been in large measure resolved by the commitment of the Australian government. Additionally, the Bench argued that the lengthy phasing in arrangement would not only ease the burden on employers and State governments, but would allow market factors to re-establish relativities over that period of time.

Vice President Watson in his dissenting judgement opposed the granting of an Equal Remuneration Order. Where the Bench took a fairly pragmatic view of industrial relations as a process of agreement making, Watson demanded a heavy onus from applicants, arguing that international and Australian experience demanded a much narrower view of comparators:

...the claim in this matter (*needs*) to be based on the establishment of a

reliable benchmark or comparator and the elimination of any factors not related to gender from any comparisons that can legitimately be made. If a benchmark is sought to be utilised, it must be reliable. It must constitute equal or comparable work in every respect. Generalised comparisons of work between industries are insufficient. Comparable roles must be fully assessed against work value criteria²⁹.

Looking forward, looking backward

This pay equity case genuinely establishes a new benchmark in the history of pay equity. Recognising ‘care work’ as feminised and undervalued is particularly important in Australia as the history of wage fixation has itself encouraged a high degree of occupational segregation on gender lines. It would be a mistake, however, to rely upon this case as a solution to future pay equity claims. The determination of the case rested more on the industrial principles of agreement making than on establishing principles that would guide future applications. Ironically then, this case is as much about industrial principles as it is about pay equity. In that sense, it brings me back to a reflection on Alex McDonald.

When I first met Alex McDonald, he was the leader of what appeared to be a powerful trade union movement and

I was an extremely naïve student on the margins of the student radicalisation of the late 1960s. Alex had taken the extremely bold move of employing the student leader, Brian Laver, because he recognised that bridging the gap between the traditions of labour and the novelty of student protest was a challenging priority for a union movement that had become ossified in old patterns of thinking. I was part of a small group that developed the project that became FOCO, a youth centre centred in a conservative Trades Hall, run by young radicals whose idealism far outstripped their pragmatism.

Every Sunday night, Trades Hall was converted into a hub of rock and left-leaning cultural events, attended by thousands more young people than had ever attended a union meeting. Every Monday morning, Alex McDonald would carefully negotiate the complaints from union offices that Trades Hall had not been returned to a pristine state, and the organisers of FOCO would meet with him and discuss how we could ‘behave better’ next week.

What I learned from Alex McDonald in those sessions was that your vision was central. Alex believed in the labour movement with an unshakeable passion. But at every point, Alex embraced challenges to his passion. He accepted that young people saw the labour movement as ossified and self-serving. He understood that meetings where

union leaders delivered monologues on their glorious achievements alienated young, impatient workers. And yet, he also staunched our radicalism as we sat in those meetings. Learn to respect the history of the labour movement. Bridge the divide between your ideals and where people live their daily lives. Nurture and develop the passion you have for justice — it will come about not only through the force of your argument, but also through the hard work of building alliances and understanding other pressures that daily life brings.

Alex McDonald would have embraced the agreement making process of this pay equity claim. The struggle for equal pay remains one that requires prosecution before it becomes reality. Given that we are one hundred years on from the denial of equal pay in the Fruit Pickers Case, it is frustrating that we do not have a precise measure that would equalise pay between men and women. Pay equity remains a residual category; that which is left over after other factors have been accounted for. This is the challenge that remains.

Endnotes

- 1 Fruit-pickers Case (1912) 6 CAR 61 — Higgins J. Judgement, 20 June 2012
- 2 Clothing Trades Case (1919) 13 CAR 347
- 3 Pocock, B. 1999, ‘Pay Equity Thirty Years On: The Policy and the Practice’ *The Australian Economic Review*, 32:3, p280
- 4 Johnson, P. 1986, ‘Gender, Class and Work: The Council of Action for Equal

- Pay and the Equal Pay Campaign in Australia During World War II' *Labour History*, No. 50, p.133
- 5 Symons, B. 1998/99, 'Muriel Heagney and the Fight for Equal Pay During World War Two', *The Hummer* 3: 1, Summer. Available at <http://asslh.org.au/hummer/vol-3-no-1/muriel-heagney/>
 - 6 Ibid. p. 142
 - 7 Symons, B. 1999, 'The Wartime Women's Employment Board' *Workers Online* 14: 21 May Available at http://workers.labor.net.au/14/c_historicalfeature_bev.html (Accessed August 3, 2012).
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 - 22 [2011] FWAFB 2700: para. 233
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 - 24 Pay Equity Inquiry, New South Wales, 1998, *op. cit.*
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 - 29 Ibid. Para. 99– my addition in brackets

Retrieving Women's Lost and Silenced Histories

Lachlan Hurse

A second seminar to mark the 40th anniversary of Women's and Gender Studies at University of Queensland was held on May 18, with a series of presentations which explored various aspects of uncovering women's history through art and archival research.

Senator Claire Moore opened the session with comments about Emma Miller and the need to keep alive knowledge of the role of women such as Emma Miller in the origins of organised labour in Queensland, to inform the present day.

"Beauty and Power", the presentation by Adjunct Professor Fiona Foley discussed how her identity as a Badtjala woman (from Fraser Island) informs her artwork which examines the dynamic interaction of sex, race and history, and the ongoing struggle for Aboriginal women in the face of racism and particularly racist violence.

In "Armed to the Teeth and Ready for Any EVERY Emergency" Dr Deborah Jordan looked at the contribution of Emma Miller to Queensland labour history and the status of women, noting how little archival material is available (but showing in public for

the first time the petition for women's suffrage, presented to the Queensland parliament in 1894). Dr Sharon Bickle presented the findings of archival research on the poet "Michael Field" — the pseudonym adopted by two women Katharine Harris Bradley and Edith Emma Cooper — analysing their life writings.

Dr Margaret Henderson spoke about the "Australian Feminist Memory Project" which aimed to collect 40 objects which represent key themes in the history of Australian feminism from 1970 to 1990, and the development of a feminist museum. The project coordinators received favourable replies from a wide range of leading women such as the offer of Elizabeth Evatt's Handbook of the *Family Law Act (1975)* and Germaine Greer's paisley coat.

Margaret Reid spoke about the challenges of archiving material now deposited in the University of Queensland's Fryer Library from Women's House, and creating a sense of history in the ephemera of the times, reminding the audience of the harsh reality of women's struggle during the 60s and 70s.

Louise Denoon and Jo Besley presented "Women in Queensland Collections," which looked at exhibitions in the State Library of Queensland and the Museum of Brisbane which featured women and their contribution to Queensland. They

discussed women’s participation in the *Queensland Memory* project, and the Margaret Lawrie collection with a focus on the Torres Strait, and then from the Museum of Brisbane they commented on the exhibitions “Taking to the Streets 1965– 1985”, “Prejudice and Pride”, and “Behind the Seams: The Women who made Can’t Tear Em”.

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Merle Thornton and Rosalie Bogner chained themselves to the bar of the Regatta Hotel in Toowong, Brisbane in 1965



Lost and hidden objects: The original 1894 petition for women’s suffrage in Queensland

The petition is held in the Qld. Parliament House, and the photograph, the first ever published of the petition, was taken by John McCulloch.

**INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DAY**

march on
MARCH 6th

assemble King George Sq. 10.30am Sat. March 6

Poster for International Women's Day



Participants in a UQ Women's Studies Seminar in July 2012 join Merle Thornton for her return to the Regatta Hotel.



Women workers march in the 1912 General Strike in Brisbane

Mil Binnung

Notes by Elisabeth Gondwe, North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum

Mil Binnung Exhibition, (Observe and Listen), is a portrait of Dr Robert Anderson OAM, known widely as Uncle Bob, Gheebelum, Ngugi Elder. This exhibition explored the cultural identity and heritage of the Ngugi people of Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) of the Quandamooka Nation, (Moreton Bay region), South East Queensland. Through visual imagery, the stories of Ngugi man, Uncle Bob Anderson unfold.

In September 2010, Mil Binnung was installed at the North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum (NSIHM). In July 2012, a condensed version of the Mil Binnung exhibition was installed at kuril dhagun at the State Library of Queensland for Black History month.

"Identifying as an Aboriginal person is a political act. (Bob Anderson)

Bob Anderson identifies as a worker and a trade unionist. In recent years, he has received two honorary Doctorates from the Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University and an Order of Australia Medal. In 1988, he was awarded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

South East Queensland Aboriginal Elder and Person of the Year and in 2001, he became one of the five inaugural Queensland Greats and was named Brisbane Citizen of the Year by Lord Mayor, Jim Soorley. He is the patron of the Brisbane Labour History Association.

Images brought together for this exhibition include photos, paintings, video and books held in private collections across the state. Now in his 83rd year, this retrospective exhibition of his life's achievements is a tribute to his children, grand children, great grand children and his Country.

"Owning the country is a social act that is a spiritual act. Acknowledgment of this defines and symbolises the great strength and dignity of Aboriginal people now, as it did throughout the whole crucible of colonialism." (Mary Graham)

In 2009 Uncle Bob and artist Joane Kaspari approached the North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum (NSIHM) with an exhibition proposal. The NSIHM liaised with the Redland Museum and decided to apply for grant funding to develop the exhibition. Uncle Bob worked with NSIHM ethnographer Elisabeth Gondwe to record stories, photographs and documents and to develop exhibition themes.

The following are Uncle Bob's stated aims of the exhibition

- To inform about Ngugi culture and language and connection with our lands and it's stories.
- To inspire, to raise consciousness, impart knowledge, connection to that latent spirit that is themselves.
- To be a legacy for children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and future.

The exhibition was designed to immerse the visitor in country with light and color.

In 2010 the NSIHM successfully applied for a Regional Arts Development Fund grant to make films with Uncle Bob on Moreton Island. Dr Christine Dew was contracted to make the films and the filming took place on Moreton Island in April 2010.

The process of Mil Binnung included Dr Robert Anderson re-visiting many of the significant sites of indigenous heritage on Moreton Island. Artist Dr Christine Dew shadowed the journey, capturing the stories en'route, as people of local aboriginal descent walked with *Uncle Bob*, listening and participating in the collection and recording. The content was then edited into 13 short films and over 200 images of the journey. The films are a statement of significance.

Uncle Bob's family archive was deposited at the NSIHM, in

accordance with the intellectual property protocols established with the Walker family for the Oodgeroo Collection. The establishment and practise of this protocol represents a significant outcome for Indigenous people Australia wide, in regards to custodianship and the rights to intellectual property for Cultural groups when dealing with historical collections. The intellectual property protocols established by the NSIHM represent best practice and are a living example of the Australian common law principle of equity.

The exhibition and process also resulted in the breaking down of mainstream Australian racial stereotypes of Aboriginal identity. For the first time in both the NSIHM and the Redland Museum, a Ngugi man, Uncle Bob, could define and present Ngugi identity and history.

“Developing this exhibition has been an enriching experience for me personally and the NSIHM. Uncle Bob's stories and photographs are now archived at the NSIHM and we have developed an ongoing relationship and connection with his extended family. This is what museums are all about. Serving the people and being adaptive to their particular needs.” (Elisabeth Gondwe 2012)



Elected State Organisers of the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU) attending the State Delegates Convention in 1968. Bob was an elected State Organiser for the BWIU from 1963 to 1978.

Left to right: Kevin Loughlin, Artie Stevens, Robert Anderson, Tom Chard, Coyne Ferguson and Jim Peterson.

*“It is union business to look after the interests and welfare of our members both on and off the work site. There should be a peaceful environment to raise families. Wars do not benefit everyday people and so the union adopted the slogan: World peace is union business”
(Bob Anderson)*



In 1990, Nelson Mandela visited Australia to thank the people who supported the South African people who fought against the apartheid system. This photograph shows Nelson Mandela surrounded by Aboriginal activists who were invited to meet him.

Understanding the struggles of our Aboriginal peoples for Land Rights, we see the parallel struggle of other Nation States like South Africa and that of the Irish people.” Bob Anderson

l to r

Robert Anderson, *Ngugi Elder, member of the Aboriginal Council for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, delegate to the Federal Council of Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, (FCATSI) during the 1960's and first President of the Quandamooka Lands Council.*

Nelson Mandela, *an extraordinary and gentle man with no bitterness or anger in spite of spending 28 years in a white South African prison. On release, he became President of South Africa.*

Joe McGuinness, *a Kungarakan man from the Northern Territory was President of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCATSI) for many years.*

Yami Lester, *a Yankunytjatjara man. from northern South Australia*

“He lost his eyesight as a result of British atom bomb testing on his traditional land. He has received no compensation, nothing. ...The authorities put up signs of the impending testing but if Aboriginal people did not read English or were walking the country and following the seasons and cultural practices of traditional movement, they were unaware of the dangers.

Barbara Flick, *an Aboriginal woman of the Yawallyi nation who has spent a lifetime working across Australia in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.*

Ben Moffat: *son of Tracy Moffat, artist.*

Rumours of War? Recent Changes to Queensland Industrial Relations Legislation¹

John McCollow

In a recent article in *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, Freeman and Han describe what they call ‘the war against public sector collective bargaining in the US’.² Last year, the O’Farrell Government opened an Australian front in this war, legislating to allow the NSW state government to unilaterally dictate wage outcomes for its public sector employees (as well as other measures making life tougher for public sector unions).

As Freeman and Han point out, the alleged rationale for such anti-public sector interventions is that high salary and wage outcomes in this sector hamper the capacity of government to respond effectively to economic hard times and, in particular, to address state government deficits and debt. However, Freeman and Han conclude the real reasons are ‘political opportunism and ideological opposition to government’s bargaining with their employees’. In Australia as in the USA, union density is much higher in the public sector. The global financial crisis and its aftermath have provided a useful pretext for pursuing an anti-union agenda.

In this context, it is interesting to consider the amendments to the state’s Industrial Relations Act in the aftermath of the sweeping election victory of the Newman LNP government in Queensland. The government itself called attention to this context in a somewhat peculiar way. In announcing the proposed changes to the Act, the Attorney-General, Jarrod Bleijie, made ‘the very important point’ that the government had ‘not adopted the approach of New South Wales’, since the ‘amendments still allow the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) the discretion to determine wage outcomes’.³ He also highlighted that a number of the proposed changes mirrored provisions in the Commonwealth Fair Work Act.

So, the announced changes fell considerably short of an all-out declaration of war. Key provisions of the Act left substantially unaltered include those relating to bargaining and representation during bargaining, individual flexibility agreements, unfair dismissal, demarcation and right of entry.⁴ Nevertheless, as noted by the public sector unions and the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU), a major thrust of the changes was to weaken the bargaining position of state employees.⁵

The QIRC will now be specifically required to take account of the ‘financial position of the State and the relevant public sector entity and

the State's fiscal strategy' in making a wage determination. It is arguable that this already occurs; the QIRC takes into account 'capacity to pay' arguments by employers and is bound to assess the economic implications in coming to a decision. However, as noted by the QCU, what is notable is how the new provisions elevate economic over social justice considerations and allow government-determined policy decisions to be invoked in support of the government's submissions to the QIRC. In essence, the government gets two bites at the cherry: it puts its case as an employer/party to a dispute and it puts its position (i.e. its economic/fiscal strategy) as the government of the day – and the Commission is required to give weight to the latter in assessing the former.

Additionally, information on the state of the economy and on the state's fiscal strategy is to be provided as a briefing rather than in the form of evidence that can be cross-examined and tested by parties to a dispute. This gives the government as an employer a significant advantage and runs contrary to any notion of procedural justice.

New provisions relating protected industrial action restrict to any such action to 30 days of the declaration of a ballot of employees. The Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) argued that this constitutes a 'use it or lose it' approach to protected action that is unlikely to enhance bargaining.⁶ The balloting of

union members for protected action will be carried out by the Queensland Electoral Commission and require that 50 per cent of members vote and that 50 per cent endorse the action. This will make the carrying of such a ballot more difficult. In the case of the QTU, for example, the minimum number of members participating would be in the order of 22,000 and this includes teachers across the state (including many in rural and remote locations) and many casual, part-time and temporary members and members on short, medium and long-term leave. Timely contact with these latter groups can be quite difficult.

The new provisions allow the Minister unilaterally to terminate protected industrial action and to determine and invoke penalties for non-compliance. The LNP argued that this provision mirrors that in the Commonwealth Fair Work Act, but there is an important distinction. In the Commonwealth context, the Minister in the overwhelming majority of cases would be intervening 'in the public interest' in a dispute between unions/employees and an employer, that is, the Minister and the Commonwealth Government are interested third parties. In the Queensland case, however, the Minister/government will almost always be a direct party to the dispute as the employer.

The new provisions also allow an employer (i.e. the state government or

relevant agency) to bypass the QIRC and unions and ballot their employees directly on a proposed agreement. While employer balloting of employees is not in itself objectionable, as the QCU points out, unless it is accompanied by safeguards relating to the role of the QIRC and unions, it can result in a diminution of workers' capacity to bargain both in terms of the quality and breadth of outcomes and can be used to deny these workers access to collective representation.⁷

Besides its current exercise of public sector job shedding, the state government is currently involved in the enterprise bargaining process with several public sector unions (including Together Queensland, which represents public servants, and the QTU). With its new legislation, it has handed itself some additional advantages. Will it consider that these are enough? If things don't go the government's way, will the NSW or US approach be adopted? It appears that 'the war against public sector collective bargaining' in Queensland may just be getting started.

Endnotes

- 1 Thanks to Thalia Edmonds who developed the QTU submission in relation to the proposed amendments to the Industrial Relations Act, which was very useful in preparing this article.
- 2 Freeman, R.B. and Han, E. (2012) 'The War Against Public Sector Bargaining in the US', *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, 54(3), pp. 386–408.
- 3 WorkplaceInfo (2012) Qld Govt tightens control over public sector wages, 21 May, <http://www.workplaceinfo.com.au/legislation/payroll/qld-govt-tightens-control-over-public-sector-wages>.
- 4 Queensland Government (2012) Fact Sheet: IR Act (Fair Work Harmonisation) Amendment Bill.
- 5 For specific information on the legislative changes discussed below, see Queensland Government (2012) Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, <http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/Bills/54PDF/2012/IndRelFWOLAB12.pdf>.
- 6 Queensland Parliament (2012) Finance and Administration Parliamentary Committee Report No. 14 re: Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, June. <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Documents/TableOffice/TabledPapers/2012/5412T209.pdf>.
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Union Mergers Mark II: The Formation of ‘Together’, An Interview with Alex Scott, General Secretary of Together

Bob Russell

Editor’s Note: *The period between the late 1980s and the early 1990s witnessed a considerable amount of merger activity amongst Australian unions. At the time this was portrayed as a modernization drive that was part of a larger agenda to rationalize industrial relations in Australia. As such, the union amalgamations of this era were a top down affair, driven by the peak organizing body in Australia, the ACTU. Fast-forward twenty years and the issue of union amalgamation and greater centralization once again seems to be on the agenda. A notable example of this trend is the recent merger of the Queensland Public Sector Union (QPSU) with the Australian Services Union — Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and Administrative Branch into the new union entity ‘Together’. In order to understand the renewed interest in inter-union amalgamation, QJLH editor, Bob Russell, undertakes a wide-ranging interview with Alex Scott, the General Secretary of Together. The following is a transcript of that interview.*

The following interview was conducted by Bob Russell at Together’s union office on Peel Street, Brisbane on May 15, 2012.

The Origins of Together

Bob: We are interested in how Together came to be. Personally I remember someone telling me that there was talk of an amalgamation or that something was in the works but I don’t think that unless people were actually involved in that, that they would have a very good idea of the factors that brought about the amalgamation. So, maybe if you could just begin by telling me what you think the main impetus for the amalgamation of the QPSU and the ASU was.

Alex: After the 2009 state election our executive went through a reasonably extensive program of strategic thinking, but looking primarily at how



Alex Scott

we could build workers' power outside of an institutional environment. We had a series of plans that had been put in place since about 2004–5, looking at adopting a range of strategies to try and improve our capacity to win but certainly building up around the possibility of a hostile employer — change of government — given that we had a reasonably lengthy period of Labor party control, so thinking about how we could build up power outside of relying upon the current legislation. So some of those programs had been about building up some of our internal capacity, but after the 2009 election, which was closer than we thought it was going to be, that certainly focused our mind on what a change of government would mean to us and clearly the major issue that we were seeking to try and resolve was increasing capacity by size but also to reduce competitive unionism where it existed. So we went through a range of unions and looked at where we overlapped with them, where we conflicted with them where irrespective of the national considerations we felt that we had the best capacity to build a relationship and hopefully then move towards an amalgamation. The two unions that came up through that process were the old LHMU, which is now United Voice and the ASU. The ASU, primarily because of significant demarcation problems in relation to Queensland Health, where we competed significantly in an aggressive way, both sides, in relation to administrative staff and health care

workers. We had about 9000 members in the old QPSU in health, but also we had similar coverage in a range of sectors including the university sector. We also felt that challenges around privatization for public sector unions was an inability to follow their memberships into the private sector, so the ASU coverage in the private sector was significantly attractive to a public sector union. We could have a combined industry strategy that was less reliant on the employer and protected us against privatization. There were a lot of joint activities in the schools where there wasn't so much demarcation with United Voice, so we entered into discussions initially with United Voice and our federal counterpart the CPSU. Those fell over for a variety of reasons, internal to the CPSU. And then we had extended negotiations with United Voice and the ASU. We weren't able to put together a platform for a three-way amalgamation, which was our original preference, so we ended up proceeding with an amalgamation between the ASU — Southern and Central Queensland Clerical Division and the old QPSU.

Bob: Ok, the overlap with the ASU was primarily in the healthcare sector?

Alex: Half the membership of the old ASU was in health, so it was a big area for them and it was a big area for us.

Bob: So in terms of occupations would that be groups like ward clerks, kitchen staff?

Alex: Occupations like payroll, HR, of which there had been a significant growth in health under the previous government in terms of increasing funding and so both the administrative and some of the professional areas increased significantly as well as some of the clinical areas. But given the nature of competitive unionism, this had significantly damaged our ability to campaign amongst our members so that was something we were keen to resolve. But also in terms of our ability to build workers' power independently of institutional support we felt that wherever we could reduce conflict between unions, the more chance we would be able to withstand legislative or policy attacks from conservative governments. Every year from 2009 was one year closer to a LNP government being formed so we were keen to look at what happened down south and try and build some internal capacity ourselves rather than rely on other structures.

Bob: so in some ways very much a pre-emptive strategy?

Alex: yes, we had been doing a range of strategies since 2005–6, which from the QPSU point of view have been building up our campaign capacity. Our public sector defense fund is now over \$5 million. But also in terms of

our delegate engagement trying to rely less and less upon institutional structures and more on workers' internal capacities. At the 2009 election it was kind of a wake up call to us in terms of focusing on bringing about the changes more quickly. The big thing that we thought we could do in terms of larger scale unionism would have been a three-way amalgamation. We couldn't quite get there, but things still moved. The QPSU went from 32000 to Together being 39 or 40000 members, so that's a significant jump. But it also provides us with a lot of rationalization.

Bob: When did the amalgamation discussions first commence?

Alex: It would have been late 2009 and the start of 2010

The Process of Amalgamation

Bob: And to get something like that [amalgamation talks] going is it as simple as picking the phone up and asking somebody if they want to have lunch?

Alex: There was an emphasis for change, certainly, the closeness of the 2009 election, provided an impetus for change. Also we had been actively working in terms of our strategy of trying to work more closely with other unions, so we had been building a platform for conversation for a period of time. I think the challenge was more around overcoming the

organizational obstacles and the micro details, which often became the largest issues in relation to cultural change mobilization. It was unfortunate that the LMHU weren't able to put that together, but in terms of the ASU there were still significant obstacles. Both executives were committed to trying to make it happen and driving through some of the change. So compared to some of the amalgamation processes from the mid 1980s that were more top down, this was very much driven by our executive and our members wanting to find ways to make it happen and removing those obstacles.

Bob: How long did the unity talks continue for?

Alex: The executive of the old QPSU made the decision that we couldn't make the LMHU United Voice work as a three-way amalgamation in May 2010, I think we then got to moving towards a straight discussion between the two unions involved [QPSU/ASU]. This took on a different focus because after that we tried to put together a jigsaw with a two way structure which is not as difficult as a three way structure. So the amalgamation discussions between the two unions probably started in earnest in May 2010 and we had the formal approval processes by our executives, our council and the Industrial Commission by November of that year and the ballot occurred in February 2011. The amalgamation was then finalized by 1 July 2011, so it was

less than 12 months from the decision for a two way amalgamation to actually being a legal entity and that would have been quicker except for some intervention by the national offices of the various unions in relation to trying to slow it down, stop it in late 2010.

Bob: What were those obstacles; the national objections that were being registered, what kinds of concerns were being raised?

Alex: So while we were able to get a workable model for the two organizations to come together, part of that was challenging around the fact that the old QPSU had operated in the state jurisdiction while elements of the old ASU had operated through the federal jurisdiction so we were actually trying to get an amalgamation across jurisdictional boundaries which caused issues around governance. But the main challenge was in relation to coming up with a model that the national structures of ASU and the state branches of the union were comfortable with, plus also getting some guarantees to other unions around that there would be no changes to existing demarcations. And then we ran into a further series of obstacles in the middle of 2011, just before the amalgamation because we had been working on a name of 'Unite' for our union, which had been approved by our councils in September 2010. The national intervention delayed the ballot until February, but by the time we went back to the Industrial Relations



together

Logo for the amalgamated union, Together

Commission in 2010 to register and formally move on the process the United Voice had changed their name from LMHU to United Voice and so they intervened in the last couple of days before the amalgamation took place to seek a change to our name. They had notified us of that in early 2010 and we'd gone to membership and said that the name 'Unite' wasn't going to be legally possible. So we changed our name to 'Together'. The Industrial Commission was reluctant to allow us to change our name that late in the process. And so we then went forward with the name 'Unite' and then there was court action taken against the amalgamation on the 29–30 of June before the amalgamation on the first of July to stop us using the name 'United Voice'. And that was successful. In the interim, for a period, we had to go back to the original name of the host union, which was the smaller entity, so we ended up being called the ASU-AMACSU for the first few weeks of our

existence. We then took court action against the commission as well to try and give us the name, which was our second choice, which was 'Together' rather than being put in the situation of the amalgamation carrying the name of one of the amalgamating partners, which culturally we felt, wasn't particularly good. And also the name didn't particularly suit us as it was the ASU Central and Southern Queensland branch and we weren't just central or southern Queensland, we were across the state. So there was a level of confusion and not being able to move culturally or with the membership to rebrand ourselves because we had a name we didn't like and so we took action to get rid of it.

Bob: Just as a footnote that explains some of my confusion, which you have now clarified. Interesting that it sounds as though most of the obstacles were just these kinds of bureaucratic hurdles rather than political opposition within one union or the other.

Alex: There was certainly political opposition within the QPSU and there was some opposition within the ASU. The ASU historically has been affiliated to the ALP so there were some concerns around that from the old QPSU membership, so some of the deeds arranged with our national offices included some limitations on the fact that the branch would remain affiliated with the ALP, but the state union might not be affiliated with the ALP. The closer you are to an amalgamation the more you care about it, so members who are not particularly active do not care that much about what our name is, or who else is in the union. The more

active you get in terms of delegates or executive, or staff, or leadership roles, they have more interest in it. We had a reasonable workable model from very early on. Both leaderships were committed to it. Given the speed of the amalgamation, we took the view that we had to crash through because we wanted to have a significant period of time amalgamating prior to the state election where we assumed there was going to be a change of government. That meant that we put off to some extent some of the internal union office type structural and process questions. We still have a bit of catch-up around some of that stuff, but getting the office



Old Government Christmas Party, Survey Office, December 1952

right is not a limitation to actually having a fait accompli, whereas if we had taken three years we could have had a lot more reasons to disagree. The process and the quite short process between the LMHU component of the amalgamation falling over and the formal votes were a matter of two or three months. The broad structures were quite similar, we had quite a few cultural similarities in terms of white-collar membership, the majority of staff are employees rather than elected officials, strong cultures in relation to product structures were the kind of basic blocks for the amalgamation. The most controversial issue is the late change to the name, which was outside of our control and then other significant issues are things like union colours, logos, and letterhead. Those things get worked through.

Outcomes of the Merger

Bob: What would you say the most important outcomes of the merger have been to date?

Alex: I think we haven't seen the full value of the merger yet. We had EB8 last year and a significant round of bargaining for our members in the admin part of public health and I think having the combined membership deal was the first time we have been able to start to properly organize that industry so that while we both had large memberships there, we had a very successful bargaining strategy and also

built a lot of union strength by having an increased membership, so we picked up 1500 members through that program which would not have been possible if we had been at each others' throats. I think now in terms of our ability now to respond to significant challenges within Queensland Health, we will be in a much better position where we will be speaking as one voice for workers in areas where previously the competitive environment had met that often we took different positions industrially for the sake of competition rather than trying to find ways of working together. Further we've got some significant increase in resources and that means we are able to put more work into campaigning to build a stronger union, and build more resources into recruitment and organizing and some of those things. I think we will see the real value probably in the next 12 to 18 months.

Bob: So when it gets tougher with the new government and their agenda

Alex: We also had a period where with the rush to amalgamation, we've spent a fair bit of time still playing catch-up in terms of some of the important but minor details, so the first six months we've still been doing quite a lot of work around getting the internal systems right. I think that will start to kick in more in terms of that process with a few reviews going on about some of our organizing strategies and things to provide maximum value, so



Public Service Commissioner's Department office flooring — Brisbane, March 1962

the change process isn't finalized yet. I think we will still continue to see more improvements as we settle those processes down. I think we have been remarkably lucky at this point in time compared to the amalgamations of the 1980s. There hasn't been the level of disputation or disruption that there has often been in failed amalgamations.

Bob: My sense, I wasn't in Australia then, was that in some cases those were more amalgamations in name than in fact

Alex: Some of them were amalgamations in name and other ones that were amalgamations in reality

often ended up in significant political and internal disputation. I think that's been lacking in this amalgamation. I think that there has been a high level of maturity and vision from the rank and file executives and power sharing and those sort of things have been a strong point of the discussions where other amalgamations there has often been a kind of jockeying for power and those amalgamations have unraveled so I think that the commitment of the members to seeing why this was going to be good for the union has met that that stuff has been put to one side. We still have political debates but those debates aren't on an ex-union, ex-QPSU, ex-

ASU positions. There are strong and healthy debates amongst members on issues which concern them as was true of both unions prior to amalgamation, but we haven't seen that kind of debate within the membership revert back to an 'us' and 'them' orientation.

Bob: So you are almost suggesting that some of the amalgamations of an earlier era actually served to bring inter-union competition into the new structure

Alex: My personal experience with an amalgamation of the old Queensland State Services Union and the Queensland Professional Officers Association in the mid 1990s was one where there was certainly significant disruption at a leadership level where there were three general secretaries in six months which was played out because of the disruption of the rank and file executive levels and those sort of power plays that can be the downside of strong democratic structures at times.

Unions and Politics

Bob: Just coming back to the one EBA with Queensland Health under the new union, did you have any sense that the employer was either happier with negotiating with one entity instead of two or would have preferred to have maintained the old status quo?

Alex: Well I don't think they were keen to negotiate with amalgamated union, but I think that was more because our relationship with the previous Labor government was strained by that point in time. So I think that having two unions would have made it easier for them to play favourites. By that stage there was a range of areas where we were in conflict with them, which they were keen to not engage with us in this round.

Bob: would that have been around things like the use of casual labour and temporary contracts that I know Queensland Health makes ample use of?

Alex: there was a significant redundancy program rolled out under the previous Labor government in which there were 5000 redundancies last year. There were significant cuts to our membership in the Queensland Police Service to pay for the sworn officers' arbitrated outcome, which caused significant problems. The previous government wasn't a big fan of our public position in relation to the health payroll debacle when we called for the deputy premier to be sacked, which didn't engender a great relationship with the government. There were a series of those sorts of issues. And we also engaged in the last state election with Katter's party, with the Greens and with the LNP around some of their policies, which also caused a level of anger from the

government. Various, I was either in bed with Katter, then I was in bed with the Greens, then I met with the LNP. I'll talk to the devil if I'm required to but they didn't take well that we were talking to anybody other than the ALP. That was another cause of tension the closer the election got the less happy they were that we were talking with other political parties and treating them with an even hand in terms of policy development.

New Challenges

Bob: Would you say that the merger has involved any changes to the ways that the previous unions operated either strategically or just in terms of the way daily business is carried out?

Alex: Certainly, we've tried to pick the best of both worlds in terms of the process. We haven't handled the organizational change process as well as we could have given the speed of it. We're still working through a range of our organizing strategies, our delegate development and training strategy and those things. So we are trying to primarily focus on what is best practice rather than trying to pick one side or the other in terms of that process, so we've come a long way, but there's still a fair bit to go in terms of what we do in the next three or four months. We've got a review going on at the moment to try and work out what is the best way of doing things rather than trying to think through one group did it this

way and one group did it the other way, so we are seeing some significant change over internal processes. We're also having to change and raise the bar in relation to internal governance, primarily because of the HSU debacle. Unions, historically, have had to have a connection between governance and operational efficiency. Our unions have always been at the end towards more governance and higher levels of accountability than other unions may have been. But in terms of the damage being done by the HSU to the reputation of unions generally, we're looking at becoming less efficient and more focused on governance than we otherwise would be. We went back and did a complete audit of our credit cards and those sort of things, which we got a complete bill of health. Now we are going through and thinking about the balance between governance and efficiency, trying to think through what are the extra steps we should be looking at, particularly in relation to the focus on the secretary about conflict of interest and provide more documentation about the fact that I don't own the printer that we do business with and those sort of things, thinking about the level of corruption that is alleged to have occurred within the HSU, trying to work out what steps our executive could have been given to insure that they would have caught a corrupt secretary earlier than might have been the case in the alleged corruption in the HSU.



Staff and new vehicles for the Survey Office Topographic Branch — Brisbane, August 1961

Bob: Just in terms of other internal processes that you are working on, can you give me one or two other examples?

Alex: We have certainly redone our web site and thought through our on-line strategy both in terms of our Facebook presence and twitter, which I think is different to both previous unions. I think our data base management and the basics of direct debit credit card type stuff, which is micro detail but fundamentally important to our financial viability has been rewritten from scratch. We're now going through

a much more detailed process for industrial planning and making sure that the industrial plans that we have for employer engagement and our more real documents that change, how we do them. Both unions previously did all the planning but didn't spend as much time focusing that with other input into the plans rather than just writing the plans, so we're trying to do some work around making the plans real in terms of initial assessments but also in making them more useful as longer term processes that drive our daily activity rather than something we go back to every twelve months and think

about what we thought we were going to do. And staff training, we're trying to get more time for our paid officials, paid organizers talking to non members around why being part of the collective is important, so we're trying to focus as much as possible in relation to that. We've integrated our membership service centre and we're rebadging some of that in terms of providing a higher quality of professional support to individuals. The focus has always been about building the strength of workers and the more we can spend time or the more staff time we have talking to non-members and making our members more active the more chance we've got of converting that into real strength on the ground.

Using New Communications Technologies in Organizing and Servicing

Bob: Is your membership services centre a call centre?

Alex: We have an inbound membership service unit, which we changed from a centre to a unit. That was part of the rebadging so it takes inbound calls but also provides a professional single point of support for members, so we don't refer to it as a call centre any more although it takes inbound phone calls. So, in terms of industrial work, we specialized our industrial representation to individuals and quarantined that from our collective strength activity for our other organizers and we also

run an outbound call centre, which has increased significantly. It runs 25 seats a night, four nights a week, that's the organizing call centre, which runs the outbound service.

Bob: So the outbound centre is about getting new members?

Alex: Well getting members active in terms of better communications with them, and we do some community outreach as well, including community campaigning, but in terms of a communications strategy, activism strategy, we have people in the workplaces, but clearly we don't get as many people as we would like there, so it complements our e-mail and other processes. We're trialing recruitment through the outbound call centre, but getting a phone call and being asked for your credit card details over the phone isn't necessarily as productive as meeting someone face to face. So we do more of the turnout, activism building, direct communication with our members through the call centre rather than our recruitment activity.

Bob: With the existing call centre, do they do any opinion gathering with existing members?

Alex: yes; since the amalgamation we haven't done any polling on the question of the amalgamation, but we do regular polling, we have a rolling program of focus groups and regular program of surveying members but

also surveying the broader community as well, but I don't think we have asked the amalgamation question as part of those activities.

Rank and File Feedback

Bob: Do you have any indications of what the members think of the merger? Anything from the extent to which they are aware of it to feedback about whether it's been successful or had a positive impact or made a difference?

Alex: I think it depends on the areas. Like certainly in health, we've seen significant support for it and that's brought the union strength because that was clearly the sharp end of the engagement between the two unions. But if you look at the more extremes such as our members in Qantas or our members in corrections who would have little to do with the other union, they might be aware of the name change but not so much about the amalgamation. Certainly we have a state council now of 350 people. We've had support from that, there's been some nervousness around the internal organizational change, but overall we still get positive feedback. The 5000 redundancies affected our membership, we dropped members at the beginning of the financial year, we're now back to growing again, so that's kind of the key test in terms of our ability for members and workers to see that amalgamation has been a positive rather than a negative.

Bob: and those redundancies were mainly in Queensland Health?

Alex: mainly in the public service — about 1000 in Queensland Health and 4500 elsewhere.

Summing Up

Bob: Do you see any lessons for other unions from this whole experience of the last three years?

Alex: I can only think that the movement has too many unions and not enough members. I think that the experience of the 1980s was that amalgamations didn't deliver the results that they were supposed to in the time frames they were supposed to. I certainly think that it's hopefully an indication that like minded and structured unions can potentially amalgamate for rationalization purposes, I think it's going to have to be as unions confront the continuing challenges, particularly in the white collar environment, we're not going to be able to maintain the number of unions otherwise we'll end up with a number of small boutique unions. I think in terms of our amalgamation, we've been going for almost a year now, I think people would say that we've been successful and it's going to reinforce the value of amalgamation.

Bob: and those main challenges, I am thinking privatization, outsourcing ...

Alex: I think at the end of the day it's going to be, we're facing a conservative government that's got a budget deficit and will be wanting to reframe the public sector to a different beast than under a Labor party for 20 years, so we're going to face work intensification, we're going to face challenges around privatization, outsourcing, general challenges around collective bargaining whereas with the Labor party, we faced those challenges under the Labor party as well, I think the biggest difference is likely to be some removal of existing institutional structures that are supportive of unions. But with the Fair Work Australia Act, it's not clear how much a new government will want to rewrite the state legislation that only affects public sector workers. But you have to look overseas at what's happening to the public sector over there.

Bob: America?

Alex: and Europe and a range of other places. I think the kind of stripping of public sector bargaining rights in the states in particular is reinforced, certainly in terms of what's happening in Wisconsin and elsewhere, the need to have workers' power that is capable of being directed independently irrespective of what legislation might be passed, because in the public sector the government has significant capacity to help or hinder us.

Bob: and more generally, the future of the Australian labour movement, what do you see as the main challenges and opportunities and the balance between challenges and opportunities in the next few years?

Alex: I think there's been some sensational statements made by Paul Howes and others about the future of the movement. I think certainly in the short term, we have to re-engage credibly around the role of paid officials in managing members' money in terms of the HSU which has caused significant damage in terms of our reputation within the community. I think that the strength of the union movement is shown by the 'You're Rights at Work' campaign in terms of engaging with a broader community. I think we've lost our way a bit since then in terms of getting sidetracked into the ALP delivering rather than workers delivering. So I think there's going to be enormous challenges facing the Australian economy with the nature of the two-speed economy and the high Australian dollar. This is going to certainly put pressure in relation to the kind of manufacturing base we have and hopefully the dollar coming down more will mean that we can re-establish the ability to have a real industry base outside of mining in Australia because unless we have a stable economic base, workers won't have jobs and therefore there's not much future for unions without jobs. That then flows on into the public sector, which, I think

has the capacity to be well organized. We're going to face significant periods, certainly in Queensland of conservative government and we need to be showing that we can fight and win and make a real difference to our members' lives and to promote the services that they have. If you look at the strong unions in terms of density, the teachers, the nurses, the others, Queensland has now got the capacity to lead the movement as long as we spend more time talking to workers and less time talking about internal issues. I think there are still some structural questions about getting unions working with each other and also structural issues around the smaller number of unions without the resources to win and organizing those industries that we can organize. Paul Howes has said that we need to organize IT, I am not sure if that's necessarily the easiest area in the world to organize, there are large areas that can be organized. Workers will get better lives through unions, which just need to talk to them more about it and make sure they see the value in that. Certainly, one of the things that struck us recently is that we did some demographic modeling and what we are finding is that we are getting younger and younger as a union and more and more female dominated. So that kind of bucks the traditional perceptions of how unions are going. Young people aren't anti-union they just need the opportunity to get involved and I think unions need to rethink their traditional models of member engagement to make sure that

we are open to new workers coming in and seeing unions as relevant and having an opportunity to forge real change in the workplace because the younger generation is certainly deeply committed to change and getting involved. The challenge is making sure that unions aren't seen as a 1950's dinosaur rather than something that is relevant to them.

Bob: Are there any particular sectors or occupations that you think 'Together' will be turning its attention to?

Alex: We need to look after our own backyard first, so we need to get the public service properly organized. We haven't got the density we would like to in terms of our comparison with other groups. We don't have the opportunities that the teachers and nurses do in terms of specific occupational groups so we need to get that depth right. We need to organize a range of other areas such as the airlines and private sector call centres. As a broader movement we need to reduce the wage differential between public and private wages to reduce the financial incentives for privatization and ensure that we can have a kind of industry plan. I think that is where the amalgamation will help us, having that holistic vision and we are closely working with some other unions in terms of United Voice and the Services Union to make sure that we don't have existing union organizational obstacles as the reason we can't get workers to

join a union and have a real voice in the workplace.

Bob: Thanks Alex. I am sure our readers will enjoy learning about the formation and recent history of 'Together'. Clearly, as you point out, this has important implications for the broader Australian labour movement.

Working Holidays in the UK in the Sixties

Back in the fifties and early sixties, before the World Wide Web, before cheap air-line tickets, before the opening up of Australia to suit the needs of trans-national companies, the sense of Australia being isolated from the rest of the world was still strong. However many young Australians sought to widen their experiences by travelling to Britain. Often they booked berths on passenger ships that were returning to Europe after delivering immigrants to our shores.

Many of these young Australians were from the professions and artistic circles: Clive James, Germaine Greer, Rolf Harris. But many young working class Australians, like the author of the following piece, saw travelling to the capital of Empire as a rite of passage. These were the days when Britain was still often thought of as home and Australia still reflected an essential British-ness.

Attitudes to "the old country" varied and were often ambiguous; on the one hand there was a respect for the cultural heritage and on the other hand there was a disdain for assumed pommy narrowness and class bound conservatism.

Britain was experiencing a post-war boom and the needs of industry

led to the acceptance of large scale immigration from the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent. To exercise some control over this influx the Immigration Control Act of 1962 was passed in the House of Commons. Until then Australians were British but after that they no longer had automatic right of entry. Even though a system of working holiday permits meant entry of Australians was essentially unimpeded, a sense of parental abandonment meant that the turn towards the hegemonic pull exercised by the USA rather than Britain, already initiated during the war, was hastened.

Ted Riethmuller was one of these young Australian travellers in the early 1960s. As an electrician in his early twenties he worked in various jobs in London, Clydebank and in the construction of a new nuclear power plant being built at Sizewell in the south-east of England. Here is one of Ted's short stories set in that time and place.

I Meet Old Wally

Ted Riethmuller

I felt very pleased with myself as I made my way onto the site. Sizewell Nuclear Power Station was being built. This was in 1964. I had managed to get a start with James Kilpatrick and Sons who had the major electrical contract. Prior to this I had been working for a small jobbing contractor in Shepherd's Bush and the whole meanness of that environment — the low wages, the money grubbing landlords we worked for, the unending tedium of wiring lights and power-points — had depressed me. I wanted to be involved in big jobs. The bigger the better. There was a romance in large



Ted Riethmuller's passport in 1962

construction projects — the bending of Nature to Man's whim. That sort of thing. Awareness of the destruction of the Environment was only just on the horizon. These were the days of "The Friendly Atom" and although I was aware of the close relationship between nuclear power and nuclear weapons, the idea of cheap electricity seemed a good one and in any case my desire to work on a large industrial project overcame any ethical doubts.

As I approached the car park I could see that a mass meeting was in progress. I went over to see what it was for. I had an interest in all manifestations of the class struggle and would gladly contribute to it if the opportunity presented itself. On the periphery of the group was an old man wearing a long overcoat with the collar turned up and his cap pulled right down over his grey hair. He needed a shave and his watery pale blue eyes were dull. The set of his jaw suggested disapproval of the activity that he was a reluctant participant in.

"What's this meeting all about mate?" I asked.

"I don't know. They're always on about sumfink. I'm not interested."

I realised I would get no help from him so I had to find out for myself. It seemed as though the meeting was getting a report back on wage negotiations. In any case, as I listened, the meeting was

wound up and the men began to move off. I asked my new workmate how to find Steve Matthews — he was the person I had to report to.

"I'm in his gang," the old man told me, and he allowed me to assume that if I followed him I would meet this bloke who was to be my leading-hand. Wanting to be seen as amiable, I introduced myself but he did not respond. Neither did he offer his own name and with hands shoved deep in the pockets of his greatcoat he plodded on, allowing me to follow if I so chose.

Our destination was not the huge windowless monolith that was the power station proper but one of the temporary buildings that littered the site. Inside was a large gang-box that was the centre of attention for a number of electricians and their off-siders. When they collected their tools and necessary materials they wandered off. The young man supervising this activity was the person I was told to report to. He was a rather stout comfortable looking fellow in his early thirties, about ten years older than me. He radiated affability and goodwill but in due course I found him to be very shrewd and quite capable of acting decisively, even ruthlessly. His confident manner fitted well with his cockney accent. I also found that he sometimes forgot to use his accent but on this occasion, after learning the essentials about me, he said, "Well, old cock, we'll 'ave to call you *Aussie*. And

May 22, 1964

EVENING STAR



Sizewell Camp. Accommodated about 600 men in long narrow buildings consisting of a passage way on one side with rooms leading off from it. The rooms were small able to house two men. Spartan — the beds were k wire bases. Linen was changed once a week. Plenty of hot water in the showers.. The camp had a bar, billiards and snooker, two TV rooms. No drunkenness allowed. Taxi cost four shillings for the two mile journey to Leiston.

I fink I'll get ya to help old Misery Guts 'ere. 'Is name is *Misery Guts* but e'll only answer to *Wally*." Wally, who was the taciturn old bloke I spoke to at the meeting, made no comment and lit up a Woodbine.

Steve got us to load our tools and two step-ladders, together with a number of cardboard boxes containing light fittings, onto the back of a ute. "Ok lads, 'op in the back an I'll take you to the job." I leapt into the back of the ute but Wally got into the cabin uninvited. I

think this is what was expected because nothing was said.

We were taken to a four-storey administration building with internal stairs on opposite ends. I had one stair well and Wally had the other. They were already wired and all we had to do was mount and connect the light fittings. Easier said than done. For safety reasons the circuit was wired in a heavy gauge wire and as a consequence it was difficult to connect the conductors into the terminals that

were made for smaller conductors. Also, the stiffness of the wires meant it was hard to get them into position. I became quite anxious. It was evident that by giving the two of us identical jobs Steve could form an opinion as to who was the faster. I did not want to be slower than an old bloke like Wally. I found a solution though. By removing the terminal block I could more easily connect the cable. Then by enlarging the cable entry of the light fitting with my pliers I was able to pass the terminal block through the base of the fitting and so mount it on the ceiling. Now all I had to do was force the block into position and reattach it. Having worked out how to do it I worked my way up the stairs, quickly completing my part of the job. Then I made my way down the other stairwell. I found Wally still on his first one. He had given up and was sitting down smoking, looking glum.

“It can’t be done,” he said. “Have you done any of yours?”

When I said that I had finished he mounted the stepladder for another try. His eyesight was poor. When he moved his head back to get in focus he was too far away to see the terminals and in any case, the bare bulb of the temporary lighting in the stair well cast a shadow that he could not avoid. I could see that standing up there with his arms up above his head was very tiring and he had to lower his arms and rest.

I said, “There’s a trick to it. Let me show you.”

He agreed reluctantly and climbed down. I took his place and did it quickly. He helped by handing up to me what I needed. When I finished I said, “I’ll give you a hand with the others if you like. You take your ladder and a fitting up to the third level. When I finished the second level he had removed the fitting from its box and dismantled the terminal block ready for me. He did the same on the fourth level and came back to hand things up to me as I worked. I noticed that climbing the stairs left him breathless. He had to rest to get his breath.

But we finished in plenty of time and when Steve came back on the job to check up on us we were sitting on our toolboxes, having a smoke and waiting for him. Such a situation would ordinarily be a chance to get to know each other but Wally was not saying much. In fact it was some time before I became aware that he spoke with a local Suffolk accent. He lived in the nearby town of Leiston and came to work on one of the many buses that serviced the site.

When we got back to the gang-box Steve sent Wally off on some errand and then said to me, “So you two got the job done, eh Aussie. You must ‘ave given Old Wally a hand?”

“Well, he’s a bit old for carrying step-ladders up and down the apples and pears and I think his eyes aren’t too good.”

My mention of *Apples and Pears* reminded him that it was he who was the cockney. “Yeah, there aint nuffink I can think of him ta do. He don’t earn his Rock of Ages. ‘E’s got a bad Jam Tart, ‘e carn’t see for nuffink, an e’s Mutt and Jeff. I know the Pitch an’ Toss would like to give him his cards an’ coppers. But e’d never get another start nowhere, so I’m stuck wiv ‘im.”

I believe that Steve’s reluctance to sack Wally was genuine enough but Wally’s job security was due more to the fact that the union had control over labour. Only union members could get a start and generally, if anyone was sacked, no one else could be employed. So Wally was tolerated. No one wanted to work with him, not only because he was so slow but he had no redeeming social skills. In fact his wide-ranging awfulness as a workmate was such that he attracted a certain sympathy. He was like an old dog that was loved and appreciated, not in spite of, but because of all his manifest faults and inadequacies. He was our pet, our mascot.

Wally didn’t thank me for helping him that day but that was ok by me. Acting as an apprentice for a young tradesman would have been hard for him to take and the fact that he didn’t resent me for the indignity he was subjected to was good enough. And if it is thought

that the arrogance of youthful vigour deserved a reprimand, the passage of the years has well and truly seen to that.

Remembering the University of Queensland Forum

compiled by *Brisbane
Discussion Circle members*

During the 1960s, significant protest movements were erupting on university campuses around the world. In the early 1960s, attention focussed on the University of California, Berkeley campus as thousands of students demonstrated in support of civil rights and against the escalating war

in Vietnam. In May 1968, France was brought to a standstill as students and workers took part in demonstrations and strikes aimed at increasing participation in the running of their institutions.

Influenced by world events, a substantial protest movement began in Brisbane in the mid-1960s. After the introduction of compulsory conscription (National Service) in Australia by the Menzies Government in November 1964, students at the University of Queensland started to organize and demonstrate against conscription and the war in Vietnam.



Humphrey McQueen speaking at a rally in Centenary Park at the conclusion of a march organized by the Vietnam Action Committee on Sunday afternoon 27th March 1966. Photo: Copyright Frank Neilsen.

In 1966, a student named Brian Laver started addressing the crowd of students at the Refectory (the student cafeteria, usually referred to as The Refec). Laver simply and unceremoniously stood on a table as a makeshift podium and started addressing the lunchtime students. This was to become a pivotal event.

Laver's initiative followed in the tradition of the Soap-box Speaker already established in the early 1960s by Humphrey McQueen and many others at Brisbane's Centenary Park (now Centenary Place) in Ann Street.

As one might expect, Laver met with some hostility to his lunchtime addresses at The Refec, but interest grew as he repeated the exercise over the following weeks. He would discuss issues such as the Vietnam War and restricted civil liberties in Queensland. His efforts slowly won acceptance and eventually a following. These impromptu addresses became more formal when Laver moved a short distance away to an area better suited to public debates.

The new location between the Relaxation Block and the Student Union offices had a slightly elevated and shaded area for speakers to stand (a covered walkway). It looked out over a grassy area with shrubs and trees where people could assemble to listen to the proceedings. Students had to pass through this area in order to reach The Refec making it hard to

ignore anyone speaking publicly at the time. Gradually other speakers, both students and academic staff, joined in and the lunchtime forum became a regular event. It was known as simply "The Forum" and before long began to grow in popularity. In time, it became a phenomenon in itself and a vehicle of profound political influence.



The Forum in session. Fryer Library Collection: Papers of Eva and Ted Bacon, [195-]-1992, Box 18 Image 265.

On 5 October 1966, about 40 students protesting against conscription attempted to march to central Brisbane only to be met by a contingent of Queensland police who proceeded to violently break up the demonstration as it left the university grounds. Similar treatment was given to protesters at a follow-on rally in the city centre held later that same day. Both clashes resulted in many arrests; a majority of the demonstrators. The excessive use of



Mass meeting in the Forum area before the 1967 Civil Liberties March on 8th September 1967. Photo: Garry Redlich.

police force at those events was widely condemned by students regardless of their political orientation. Events like this fuelled a growing discontent among students.

A film of these events can be seen via this link: <https://vimeo.com/23139946>

Demonstrations in the mid-1960s were often quickly broken up by police, with everyone being arrested. A permit was required to march on the street, which proved to be next to impossible to obtain in many instances. As a result, the focus shifted to campaigning for civil liberties in Queensland (the right to free speech, the right to protest publicly, the right to organise, the

right to march, etc.). Through the open debates taking place in the Forum these specific issues started to garner support from more moderate students. At first a trickle that turned into a torrent.

By 1967, people were attending the Forum in their hundreds and eventually in their thousands. On 8 September 1967, a huge crowd assembled to listen to speakers advocating a march to the city without a permit. The assembled crowd was so large that it spilled across the roadway spreading back to the library.

A vote was taken, and 5,000 people chose to support the march that day. After the vote, about 4,000 students



The overflow crowd spreading back across the road from the Forum area listening to the debate about the proposed march for civil liberties on 8th September 1967. Photo: Garry Redlich.



Demonstration leaving the Forum area marching to the city. Believed to be the start of the 1967 Civil Liberties March.

(Fryer Library, University of Queensland Union Records, 1911–1988)

and staff, approximately half the campus population at the time, set out to march the 8 kilometres from the St. Lucia campus up Coronation Drive towards Brisbane's city centre. Several thousand more showed their interest and support by following behind the main demonstration on the footpath.

Close to central Brisbane at Roma Street, the marchers were confronted by hundreds of police who ordered them to disperse. In response, the marchers linked arms and sat down on the road in an act of peaceful defiance. Newspaper accounts at the time described police punching, kicking and threatening students as they forcibly removed the protesters from the roadway. Many were dragged by their clothing and hair. There were 114 arrests.

A film of the clash with police in Roma Street can be seen via this link: <https://vimeo.com/20105643>

The Forum area took on a special significance after this historic march. Compared to earlier marches, the surge in the number of protesters that day was certainly significant, as was the broad base of support by a politically diverse cross-section of the student body.

This celebrated march in 1967 proved to be a pivotal event that inspired and helped propel a new decade of protest in the years that followed. It was a tipping point in deepening levels of commitment and expanded

support for a wide range of social and political action-campaigns in that era. The Forum helped to set in motion an invigorated and widening push for reform around the important issues of the day.

When Joh Bjelke-Petersen became Premier in August 1968, things took a turn for the worse. Clashes between police and demonstrators were more frequent and more violent. The 1971 rugby union test series between the South African Springboks and the Australian Wallabies saw Bjelke-Petersen impose a State of Emergency in Brisbane to quash any demonstrations against racism and South African apartheid. Once again, the Forum became a focal point and a launching pad for the counter offensive.

Eventually in September 1977, street marches in Queensland were effectively banned altogether when Bjelke-Petersen proclaimed: "*Protest groups need not bother applying for permits to stage marches because they won't be granted.*" People were outraged and, once again, took to the streets in a series of *Right to March* civil liberties demonstrations, leading to further police violence and arrests.

A video of the Forum in action featuring a speech by Dan O'Neill in 1977 can be seen via this link: <http://youtu.be/J4Gep63wXwo>

Activity in the Forum kept pace with all these events. The Forum effectively played an organizational and leadership role in a multitude of events and campaigns that exposed and directly challenged the police-state-minded politics of the Queensland State Governments in the 1960s and 1970s.

Most large-scale demonstrations assembled and started out from the Forum area, most notably the massive Moratorium marches of 1970 and the



Brian Laver addresses a Forum in the Great Court during People's Park in May 1970 which was a prelude to the first Vietnam Moratorium march. Photo: Peter Gray.

anti-Springboks demonstrations during the State of Emergency in 1971.

The Forum continued at that same location until the early 1980s. For well over a decade, it was a place where politics, ideas and tactics could be debated and developed in the public domain of the university campus. The Forum was both a physical space and the conceptual manifestation of the political responses of a generation. Through the dynamics of the Forum, an increasingly mobilized student population had the opportunity to sort through the significant issues of the day...and take effective action.

Recollections from those who were there...

The following personal accounts reflect the memories of those for whom attendance at The Forum was a regular, even daily, event in the 1960s and 1970s.

“The Forum at UQ St Lucia was an experience as much as a space. In a precinct at the eastern end of the campus, where the Union had constructed the Refec, the Relaxation Block and its admin offices, was our very own Agora, under the eavesdropping windows of the Semper office. Crossing that space, the ant-line of students heading for hamburgers and coffee was detained, half-unwilling. There, they might be invited to consider the merits of some arcane thing of which they'd never heard, while Hare Krishnas spread

vegetarianism around them and loopies spread love; or urged by in-your-face speakers to direct action on Brisbane streets. People hesitantly tried out their own rhetorical talents. Munching students digested ideas rawer and more exciting than those they were fed in the lecture halls. Heroes declaimed there: Brian Laver, Dan O'Neill and countless others. Jack Thompson, before he was famous, contemptuous behind amber-coloured, John Lennon granny glasses, explained our location on the bottom of a pond being pissed on by Capital. People massed and listened, cynical and outwardly unmoved in their Australian way. But in September 1967, four thousand pairs of feet set out from there and marched to take on the Dragon."

Michael O'Neill, 2012

"My earliest memory was the day I saw Brian Laver take out a Refectory table and stand on it and address the students who were eating their lunch inside. A group of heavy looking male students (rumoured to be engineering students) proceeded to throw oranges and apples at him. Nevertheless Brian would come back the next day and repeat the exercise again. As the opposition to this action lessened the 'forum' moved to the area between the Student's Union Building and the Relaxation Block."

Greg Mallory, 2012

"If we designate the height of the movement in Australia as roughly 1966 through to the mid-seventies,

there was a shared cultural ethos for much of that time. A crucial element in this was the Forum Area where very frequent debates happened from an open platform. In the earlier period the audience would gather on the grass under a tree and on the surrounding paved areas and covered way. Changes to the area seemed to express a kind of architectural hostility to its use as a Forum. By the time of the second Civil Liberties struggle in 1977 the audience area had been built out. The speakers still occupied the covered way but faced east." (i.e. in the opposite direction.)

Greg George (Fryer Library online), 2011

"There was a fascination in listening to the speeches in the forum area in those early years. People would stand around for hours of the afternoon watching as their fellows stood forth and began to exist in a new way, listening as the spoken word broke a long enchantment, moved us day after day to a new vision of the world in which we as individuals and as groups seemed, for the first time to have a part."

Dan O'Neill (Semper Floreat), 1976

"I started at UQ in 1972 arriving from a small catholic girls school on the south side of town. The UQ lunchtime forum was definitely an event that changed and shaped my life.

I can still recall the tenor and rhythm of Dan O'Neill's voice as he argued with



Dan O'Neill speaking in the Great Court. The forum moved to the Great Court for mass meetings, for example during the Springbok / State of Emergency events in July 1971. Photo: Bruce Dickson.

such force and clarity on the issues of the day — a brilliant orator the likes of which I have not heard since. I was excited and inspired by Carole Ferrier as one of the very, very few female voices heard during the lunchtime debates, and I was deeply inspired by her passion and courage.

So successful were the speeches given by Betty Hounslow that I signed up straight after to go to the protests at Bowen Hills — and was there the day of the filming of that poor protester shoved up against the fence and thumped by police.

I heard Dennis Walker speaking / shouting his anger and never again forgot about the monstrous lie I had been taught at high school; that all we could do now was 'smooth the pillow'

as the Aboriginal Australian was a dying race.

Life changing moments all ... informing my understanding of Marxism, of feminism, of grass-roots activism and of the perniciousness of racism. I learnt way more at those UQ lunchtime forum events than I can recall of my three years at UQ of 'formal' education."

Debra Beattie, 2012

"I was a first-year student in 1966. I had joined the Liberal Club, and the Forum was the home of the student radicals, the 'enemy'. In October, I helped organize a counter-demonstration to the first anti-Vietnam War demo to leave campus. It began with speeches at the Forum of course, but when they got to the edge of the campus, the Police beat, harassed and arrested the protesters without warning.

I was so shocked by their treatment that I ended up working on the Civil Liberties campaign that culminated in the September '67 march by 4,000 students. I began to attend the Forum to hear speakers talk of things other than civil liberties, and before long I was radicalized on those issues as well."

John Stanwell, 2012

Yossarian Lives

Who stencilled that name on the concrete?

Thank you. It found me first day on campus.

And therefore the Forum found me, before I met the faces,



Jim Prentice addresses the Forum, circa 1971. Left to Right: Jim Prentice (with microphone), unknown, John Wilkinson, Errol O'Neill. Photo courtesy of Errol O'Neill.

Caught the feverish threads,
The loud-hailer breath of rhetoric.
Dancing, damning words.

The tree, smell of light and shade and
heat; that passionate brooding.
Met my lover listening there,
Sitting on the grass, just as the nuns
feared would become of me,
Became of me, and for the most part I
loved it.
Male dominated world of course,
But no different to the rest of my
limited life.
A foot soldier to hand out pamphlets
and yes, I read them.
Over the top with vitriolic splendour,
A surfeit of preposterous
juxtapositions and mangled
metaphors.
Why not? When armies were over the
top with bombs
And hearts with grief, despair,
revenge ...

When there was such a lack of
remorse in heaven.

Read the Red & Black's dangerous
books
Fell for Fromm, Chomsky, Angela
Davis and the Soul on Ice.
Abbie Hoffman dared *Steal This Book*.
Ah she said.
The Wizard, Pot Smoke-in, Guerilla
Theatre.
Hunt Sharp, tapped phones, bail outs
and beat ups.
The seriousness and the boredom;
There was no music.

Loved the rampage, the follow-on
from words to action.
The momentum, the possibility of
possibly changing something,
A disharmonious scream of
opposition, or just that whimper
To somehow express the Not
Rightness of it all.

Anne Richards, 2012

“Brian Laver, Phil Richardson and
Tony Bowen would speak about
Vietnam in an international context
and Brian would use the book ‘From
Yalta to Vietnam’ as his major source.
Tony Bowen was an interesting
character, a fair bit older than the rest
of the students; he would turn up with
his briefcase, dressed in a tie and give
a very well researched analysis of the
Vietnam War.

The debates at the Forum occasionally
became very intense particularly when
students from the Democratic Club or
Liberal Group turned up. I remember a
physical altercation occurring between
one of the ‘left’ students and a leading
member of the Democratic Club over

the placing of NLF flags in the area. A fairly lengthy debate took place one Friday afternoon when a then future Liberal Party politician and a number of leading left figures were engaged in debate (without microphones) until 4.30 pm.”

Greg Mallory, 2012

“I found the passionate expression of radical politics at the time of my arrival in Brisbane pretty daunting and intimidating to say the least. I was fresh from five years ‘locked up’ in boarding school. Everything with my new life in Brisbane was totally overwhelming to me at first, yet wondrous and amazing.

I think the influence of the Forum was profound in many respects. I’d even go as far as calling the lunchtime Forum a life changer. I believe it was in my case. I hung out in the Forum area for pretty much my entire first year at Uni, failing all my courses in the process. This was 1970. Without a doubt, the Forum was a powerful force in my politicization, which I still feel was worth the ‘price’.”

Peter Gray, 2012

“For many present, just attending became an act of defiance in its own right, because prior to arriving at university, students had often been



Halftone photo from an article “A Decade Reviewed — Being a Reflection and Prophecy Upon The Long March of the Radical Movement Within the University” by Bruce Dickson published in Semper Floreat, November 1974 (Volume 44 No. 16).

repeatedly warned by parents and other ‘authority’ figures that any politically leftist views (expressing positions outside of the societal norms and media mythologies) were more than likely ‘communist’ in nature and to be definitely avoided.

Signs of the relative democratic health of the UQ forum discussions were not only that speakers frequently came at issues with differing perspectives and strategy positions, but that over time the leading speakers were joined by many newcomers willing to get up in public and speak their minds too — for the first, and often very nervous time.

If there was a downside to the forum, it had to be the clear evidence that it was mainly men and not women doing most of the talking. Many feminists were raising and pursuing their own issues in other, quieter ‘forums’ around the campus in even more democratic modes! The role of male ego in it all was probably never really sufficiently put under the microscope. But it certainly became more apparent at some points, particularly when the ‘demagogue’ aspects of some speakers’ approach finally became a serious public talking point on its own.”

Bruce Dickson, 2012

“The morning after the Police riot at the Tower Mill (Springboks Rugby Tour 1971) I joined Mitch Thompson walking towards the Refec. He said we were going to move a Strike motion for

the whole Uni, but he was not sure how it would be received.

A decision was taken to move the Forum inside the Refectory, which turned out to be an inspired judgement. As well as the Forum regulars, a large number of ‘ordinary’ students got up to tell their stories of violence and chaos from the night before. The large numbers of staff and students present were visibly affected by the reports, and the Uni Strike motion was passed overwhelmingly.”

John Stanwell, 2012

“Fresh faced, conservative, Christian, the first of our family ever to go to the university, I entered UQ with excitement and fear. I was most terrified of going to the Refec on account of that was where those ones my father had warned me against — the baby eating communists and radical students — gathered and spoke loud and strong.

But one could not avoid the Refec, nor the environs of the Forum. One could not ignore the voices, could not help but hear the arguments, nor not read the pamphlets thrust forward. So it was that I sat and listened and read. This is where I learned that one could be both a Christian and against the war. In fact it was those who refused to sign up for conscription **because they were Christians**, David Franken, Jim Varghese, and David Martin, who convinced me that it was imperative to stand against the war. I learned

that communists were many and varied, and far from putting out lying propaganda actually had truth to tell about what was happening in Vietnam, Cambodia and also South America. It was where I heard my economics tutor Peter Thompson wearing a National Liberation Front flag as a cape, explain about the money-making business that is war. The horror of that convinced me that capitalism was/is truly an evil on the earth.

This is where I heard from young Aboriginal men, Dennis Walker and his mates, that their people, their families were imprisoned in places such as Cherbourg, well known to me as I came from the bush, from near there. How could we white fellas want to stop Apartheid in South Africa and not be with Black men and women in their struggle against the perditions of the Act under which they lived? How could we not see that we had apartheid right here in Queensland?

It intrigued me that the speakers on the opposite side could not answer the arguments put by the radicals. They resorted to personal attack, jingoism and rhetoric, and I began to see the invalidity of their positions.

Around the edges of the Forum the booksellers set up their tables and it was from these that I found out about liberation theology and ultimately the story of the women's movement. I found myself becoming friends with

many of those who at first had terrified me, intimidated me.

For me the Forum was exciting, exhilarating, and ever present. It became the norm for what should happen at a University. It was pivotal in my change from a conservative Christian bush girl to a woman in the struggle for liberation from the Church, State and the Military, and importantly it provided a space where I could make new friends and comrades who have remained in my heart ever since."

Jennie Harvie, 2012

This project was coordinated by Peter Gray, Greg Mallory and John Stanwell.

Brisbane Discussion Circle

*In an effort to develop and preserve the historical legacy of an era, political and cultural activists have formed the **Brisbane Discussion Circle (BDC)**, an email group that exchanges information and resources about the events and activities spanning the period 1960 to 1985. The circle is comprised of a diverse group of individuals who achieved amazing things in Brisbane during this time. The aim is to preserve our history for posterity with sophistication and accuracy. This article is an example of a document arising from such joint effort by BDC members. Requests for membership to BDC (including full name and brief details of your activism in this period) can be e-mailed to: <BrisbaneDiscussionCircle+subscribe@googlegroups.com>*



Draft-resister's Union table set up in the Forum area. (Left to Right) Facing away (unidentified), ;Bill Denham, Errol O'Neill, Colin Beasley, Craig Davenport, John Jiggins. Photo taken Monday 20th September 1971. Sign top right reads: "Fines to be paid by 21st Sept. Total of \$300 needed. Please give generously." Photo courtesy of Errol O'Neill and Colin Beasley.



Vote at a Forum in the Great Court in July 1971, during a widely-supported, general strike at the University of Queensland. Photo: Peter Gray.

Welcome to Mecca: Organising During the McCarthy Years — A Communist Party Story from North Queensland

Peter Whalley Thompson

Australia in the post-war decades of the fifties and sixties was a difficult place to be an activist member of the Communist Party. Following the lead of McCarthy in the United States, the federal government of Bob Menzies, and a series of conservative state administrations meant that the progressive movement became the target of the police. Phone tapping, the presence of ASIO informants within the Left (derisively known as ‘stooges’) and the constant surveillance by Qld Police, particularly Special Branch, monitored the comings and goings of active unionists, and Communists in particular, as part of an overt strategy to intimidate militant workers.

The CPA held Regional Conferences across the state, feeding into State and National conferences, which set policy and articulated positions on matters domestic and international. These were far simpler gatherings than the events held by modern political parties. Grass roots participation was encouraged and sought out by many who were disillusioned by the post-war regime.

The Communist Party did not confine itself to members-only meetings. They organized community-wide events around specific issues, such as the referendum on indigenous citizenship. Many of the participants in these events were shocked and surprised to find themselves being photographed by plain clothes policemen, and their vehicle registration details being collected. Associating with a communist or attending an event where a known communist spoke was enough to make anyone a person of interest to the authorities.

So trust was an issue, as was the need to be able to travel without drawing attention to oneself, and the natural response was to develop a network of safe houses where activists could stay, be fed and sheltered, and be introduced to local members of the movement. This network was discovered mainly by word of mouth, and most visitors came with a recommendation of party members elsewhere.

One such safe location in Townsville was the home of Communist Party members Fred and Loma Thompson. Fred was the Northern Organiser for the Amalgamated Engineering Union, one of the forerunner organisations to the current AMWU. Loma had given up a career in nursing to raise their children, as Fred’s work took him away from home for considerable periods of time. Both of them were active in the organisation of the CPA

in North Queensland, which expressed itself through their participation in the peace movement, womens liberation, indigenous rights and the arts.

Their house was open to people they met through all those social movements. Often the task of support for workers who had been injured and were being represented through the union in compensation claims fell to activists like these two in a world which had not yet accepted the necessity of post-injury rehabilitation.

Sometimes, as was the case after the Mt Isa dispute of 1965–66, they provided shelter to union activists who were on the move looking for work after being blacklisted by previous employers for their pro-union stance. The AEU District Committee in Townsville decided to build a six metre flat-top trailer to be used as a Labour Day float and meeting platform, but which was regularly lent to union members to help them relocate their families when such discrimination occurred.

As part of the organizing strategy for Left unions, it was not uncommon for other Brisbane-based union officials to come and stay. Cyril Boland, the organiser for the Painters Union coined the expression “Welcome to Mecca”, as he said that was how the Thompson household was known amongst their Brisbane comrades. Unions were not wealthy during this time, and it was regarded, at least among the

Left unions, as an unnecessary waste of members’ funds, as well as a lost organizing opportunity if an official stayed in a hotel when they could stay with delegates or comrades.

The Thompson household in Townsville was Mecca, not just to union organisers, but to many of the returning leadership of the CPA who had gone overseas prior to the Menzies referendum to ban the communist party in 1951. Many of those party members stayed in either China or the Soviet Union for several years, and when they returned they travelled extensively to try and rebuild the membership of the CPA. Figures such as Ted Bacon,



Fred Thompson address a mass meeting of workers in Mt Isa during the Mt Isa dispute in 1964

Claude Jones, Gerry Hennessy and Cup Southwell came with stories of foreign lands, strange food and customs in 50's Australia, and an obvious joy at being back on home soil. Funds for such travel were tight, and the hospitality of comrades was an essential element of the campaign.

People came because of the political connection, they stayed to take advantage of Fred's extensive knowledge and contacts in North Queensland and the Northern Territory, and they called it Mecca because of Loma's hospitality and keen intellect.

Fred's work took him in and out of all the big new mining developments to the north and west, he had a good working knowledge of current and proposed developments, and he was a keen researcher of the publicly available information on the companies involved. This brought him into contact with a whole new group of activists who were engaging with the struggles of Indigenous Australia.

Professor Fred Rose, an anthropologist from Humboldt University in East Germany, came with his research assistant Hannah Middleton looking for assistance in meeting with Indigenous custodians of rock art in the Northern Territory. They contacted Fred and Loma on the recommendation of CPA members who had links to Germany. Writer Frank Hardy came north to profile the emerging land rights

struggle and travelled with Fred and a group of CPA members and union officials to the NT where they were met with fierce resistance from pastoralists where ever they attempted to engage with Indigenous station workers.

As active party members they helped plan campaigns to raise the profile of Indigenous rights, and in early days were involved in the campaign which resulted in the 1967 referendum. Visitors to Mecca during this time included wharfies Joe McGuinness, and Tiger O'Shane, who were Indigenous CPA members from Cairns. Tiger O'Shane's wife, Gladys, was a regular visitor to take part in the CPA Regional Conferences of the party. Loma was deeply impressed by Gladys and her efforts to be heard as a black woman. Using Gladys as an example, Loma later mentored Evelyn Scott to pursue her ambitions as an activist.

Kath Walker, later to become Oodgeroo Noonuccal, stayed with the Thompsons when she came north in 1964 for the launch of her first book of poetry 'We Are Going'.

Fred met Koiki Mabo when he came with his family to a Communist Party meeting at the Wharfies Hall to ask for assistance, because no other political group would support the struggle for Indigenous rights. They became firm friends and when Koiki decided to participate in a Labour Day march to promote the cause, he borrowed the

Thompson family's red sailboat to use as a float.

Other less politically radical figures also came to Mecca. Father Alf Clint, an Anglican Minister from the Australian Board of Missions needed assistance when investigating brutality towards Palm Islanders. Senator George Georges, Don Dunstan, and well known Brisbane barrister, Max Julius all passed through in their travels.

One of the more significant non-party activists who took advantage of the Thompson contacts was Helen Caldicott. She had come north to spread the word about the imminent dangers from uranium mining. Fred had organised the mine at Mary Kathleen, near Mt Isa, and his members reported significantly higher rates of birth defects than other communities in North Queensland. After going to meet the families in Mary Kathleen, she came back to Townsville and was introduced to all the relevant unions and environment groups which went on to successfully oppose the development of a uranium mine at Ben Lomond, near Townsville.

Another international visitor was Madame Francis Katz who came to Townsville as a guest of the Union of Australian Women, to speak out against the French atomic tests in the Pacific. The local paper wasn't interested in her message — they only reported about

her time in the Resistance during the German occupation of France.

The sixties was the era of music as a tool for revolution. Mecca was a convenient stopping point for musicians and political theatre groups on their tours of North Queensland. Songwriters such as Don Henderson and Geoff Wills made contact via the CPA network, coming to gather material for their songs and perform at union or Party sponsored concerts.

Others were simply invited to partake of the hospitality when they arrived in town and were discovered to be of the right political ilk. Margaret Kitamura turned up with songs from a young American called Bob Dylan when there were no recordings of his music available in Australian shops.

In the 1970s, the Popular Theatre Troupe performed political satire written by Richard Fotheringham always on issues which were topical for workers and students. These artists came looking for introductions, both to gather material and find audiences for their work. By this time, the influence of the CPA had dwindled as a political force in Australia, but the network of which Mecca was a part was still strong, and helped bring their performances to people hungry for an alternative cultural experience.

There were also visits from writers — Betty Collins, author of *The Copper*

Crucible, a novel set in the Mt. Isa lockout made a number of visits. Betty had lived in Mt Isa as a miner's wife in 1957, and she came to Mecca collecting details of the 64/65 strike for the context of her book. When Alan Marshall of 'I Can Jump Puddles' fame came looking for background material for his stories, he intrigued Fred and Loma's kids by presenting the three of them with a hair of a mammoth, and a story to go with it.

Journalists and left wing writers, such as Pete Thomas, from the Tribune, Mavis Robertson and Betty Riley from the Communist Review, and Cec Holmes of the Northern Territory Advocate were guests, and guest speakers at local gatherings.

These names are just a sample of the visitors to the Thompson household. Most were workers, comrades in the labour movement or strugglers and stragglers. In Loma's words, the custom of dropping by was not part of a highly organised strategy, rather, it reflected the combination of a need born out of the attempts to repress the activities of the communist party in the 1950's and Fred and Loma's natural inclination to hospitality.

Many of the connections led to deeper friendships, rich cultural experiences, and an ever-evolving political awareness of the world that helped this couple move on when the CPA folded to express their activism in many other avenues.



Fred Thompson addresses workers during the MUA dispute at Patrick's wharf in 1988

In Memoriam

Harry Hauenschild and the Queensland Trades and Labour Council

Lindsay Marshall

26 July 2011

Old habits died hard for former Trades Hall boss and senior state Labor Party figure, Harry Hauenschild.

A key figure in Labor's ruling "old guard" at the time of intervention and reform by the party's federal executive in the early 1980s, Hauenschild died never having changed his mind about some of those he blamed for Trades Hall losing its dominance within the party.

Hauenschild was described at his funeral as the "Workers' Warrior" — a union leader who took no prisoners when it came to protecting workers and their families.

In what was likely his last formal interview, Hauenschild showed he never lost that attitude.

Mention of the late Dr Denis Murphy, academic, party reform advocate, and briefly a state MP, provoked a bitter response more than a quarter-century after Murphy's early death in 1984.

"I often go out to Lutwyche [Cemetery] to make sure he's still in that bloody box and hole in the ground," Hauenschild said in a February 2010 interview as part of an oral history project being developed by the Queensland Chapter of the Don Dunstan Foundation and the National Library of Australia.

In it he also revealed he had little time for Murphy's fellow party reformer from decades past, Peter Beattie.

In the gruff voice that was seemingly standard issue to Trades Hall bosses of his era, Hauenschild dismissed the



Harry Hauenschild

former ALP state secretary and premier as being “two-bob-each-way Peter” at the time of intervention.

On Beattie’s record as leader of Queensland from 1998 to 2007, Hauenschild was equally curt.

“What’s his monument? What’s the monument that’s left to Peter Beattie’s memory? Bugger all. He wasn’t bloody interested in anybody but him-bloody-self really.”

Only a slight softening came with the admission: “I got on all right with Peter because he didn’t have the ideological bloody anti-union bent that a lot of the bloody leaders bloody seem to get and develop.”

The former president of the Trades and Labour Council and senior vice-president of the state ALP said party reform had been driven by “academic bloody bullshit” and his union-based old guard that once ruled the ALP had in fact been “the bloody real bloody guard”.

The interview showed Hauenschild was more than linguistically bloody-minded.

In it he frankly considered the possibility that the Bligh Government might have suffered the same fate as the one led by Vince Gair that split and fell more than five decades ago after Labor’s administrative wing

expelled its own premier for refusing to introduced three weeks’ annual leave.

In the interview, recorded at the height of the controversy over Bligh’s push for privatising a string of state assets, Hauenschild said if the party’s formerly all-powerful Queensland Central Executive (QCE) still existed, there would be nothing wrong with it issuing a directive to Bligh and Labor MPs to change their approach.

A similar directive was the catalyst for the ALP shattering and losing the 1957 election to the then Country Party/Liberal Party Coalition led by Frank Nicklin and later by one of the trade union movement’s biggest threats, Joh Bjelke-Petersen.

Luckily for Bligh the QCE disappeared as part of party reforms. But Hauenschild was willing to entertain at least hypothetically the idea of a modern-day QCE telling the elected government what to do, despite the lessons of history.

“Well, they’d try to avoid the split part of it, but they would take the step,” he said, adding the QCE would again not be put off by the possibility of the government losing an election as a result.

“Well, it’s more than a point of principle, it’s bloody our assets that they would lose the bloody election on.”

In the interview Hauenschild traced his movement up through the ranks of the

state's union movement after joining Queensland Railways in Rockhampton in 1948, working as a lad porter and later accepted as an apprentice within the "close-knit brotherhood" of boilermakers.

"I joined the Labor Party in 1960 in Rockhampton as a... well, as a believer, as I believed it was the only way to go for workers. And as a trade union official I could see that we had to have a political voice. And to have a political voice you had to be in it."

But despite a funeral notice for Hauenschild published by the Labor Party, he had left the party by the time he died because it no longer represented

"the beliefs that I had about what should be Labor Party principles".

To him it was being run by people who "hadn't proven themselves to be bloody Labor people" and was too much in the grip of the higher levels of its parliamentary wing rather than its rank and file.

"If you're not a parliamentary leader you've got no say in the Labor Party anymore, it's not the Labor Party I joined," he said.

An edited version of this obituary appeared in The Courier-Mail on August 2nd, 2011

Decades of Division Oral History Project

Much of the material in this article about Harry Hauenschild is from the Decades of Division oral history project by Lindsay Marshall and Greg Chamberlin. This includes 20 interviews of people actively involved in Queensland politics in the 1970s and 1980s. The National Library holds audio and transcripts of the interviews at at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn4803257>

The project was supported by the Don Dunstan Foundation and done under the auspices of the Queensland Branch of the Oral History Association of Queensland see <http://www.ohaaqld.org.au/index.php?/projects.html>

Queensland Speaks

Queensland Speaks is a project of Centre for the Government of Queensland, the University of Queensland. The general editors are Professor Peter Spearritt, Dr Marion Stell & Dr Danielle Miller. The project includes some 60 interviews of Queensland politicians, public servants and observers including former Premiers Ahern, Cooper, Goss, Borbidge and Beattie. The interviews are at <http://www.queenslandspeaks.com.au/> including one with Harry Hauenschild.

Diane (Di) Menghetti

1940–2012: An Appreciation

Howard Guille

Di Menghetti was a passionate historian. She was exceptionally good and one of the school of North Queensland historians who have documented and argued the distinctiveness of North and Far North Queensland history. She was a tutor and then lecturer at James Cook University from 1982 and she retired in 2003 as Associate Professor. This was broken by a couple of years at the Commonwealth Schools Commission, a year as visiting lecturer at the University of Papua New Guinea and one as Visiting Fellow in Australian Studies, Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest. She was heavily involved in volunteer work at the Townsville History Museum and the National Trust of Queensland, serving as President for a term, and was also on the Queensland Heritage Council. Her 'retirement' was the beginning of a new career as a consulting historian. Her second retirement was spent in Tampa, Florida to be close to her daughter and grandchildren, where she promptly joined the local historical society as a volunteer.

Di's first major work was *Red North* published in 1982 from her honours thesis. This documents the strength

of the Communist Party in North Queensland including among Italians, Maltese and Spanish immigrant farmers and workers. It details the anti-Fascist struggles of the 1930s and the level of union organisation and militancy among sugar, rail and meat workers. The strikes over Weill's disease which led to cane being burnt before it was cut was one of the biggest health and safety disputes in Australia. The high level of support for the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War is covered in an early article written for *Labour History*.¹

Her writing is always generous to its subjects. It is political in the best sense. The introduction to the *Red North* shows these qualities:

A political episode in which North Queensland differed from the rest of Australia in showing itself better informed about international events, more committed to democratic values, more generous in sympathy, less obsessed with local issues and factional jealousies...²

What a fine way to respect activists.

She also had a very fine eye for hard data and its interpretation. Her careful examination of health and safety and hygiene in Charters Towers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century exemplifies this. There were 157 mines on the Charters Towers field in 1887. Death and accidents from poor mine

construction, narrow shafts, explosives and dust were accentuated by typhoid from wells polluted by cesspits. The rates of death and injuries between 1891 and 1910 ranged from a low of 9.1 per thousand workers to a high of 30.6. The rate was consistently higher than that in metal mining in the rest of Queensland.³ For comparison, SafeWork Australia reports 12.0 ‘serious claims’ per thousand workers in metal mining in 2008–09.⁴

Not surprisingly, she says that ‘there can be little doubt that low managerial standards caused many of the safety problems’. Even so, management escaped responsibility and accidents were treated as ‘inevitable hazards of gold mining’ or the ‘carelessness’ of the victims. Even more insightfully, and very relevant to the present, Di writes that the real victims of the mines included the victims of typhoid and tuberculosis. As she says, ‘In matters pertaining to health and well-being, the mining community consisted of every member of the mining town’.⁵

Like all the best history, these pieces say something to people today. They should be essential reading for anyone looking at occupation health and safety. Likewise, her research on what she called the ‘suburbanisation of Mt Isa’ should be essential reading for those engrossed in the fly-in-fly-out debate. She documents how in the 1950s ‘American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO), embarked

on a project of Social engineering to change Mount Isa ... into the epitome of suburbia’. Of course, it was a mixed blessing for the workers — the company got reduced labour turnover but ‘Eight hundred kilometres inland from Townsville, more than twelve thousand people were as effectively chained to their washing machines and lawn mowers as any suburban Sydney-sider’.⁶

Di was incisive. One example is her account of the shift from underground to open-cut mining at Blair Athol. The first two paragraphs are a superb primer on the long debate about whether employers used mechanisation to primarily reduce workers skills or to break their control of the work. The piece is a great description of underground and open cut mining that would leave many a sociologist gasping. She concludes that ‘the change from underground to open cut mining did not really involve deskilling’. However, they lost control ‘over the training and socialisation of new workers into the practices, customs, rituals and beliefs that underpinned their concept of skill’. This led them to feel ‘there could be no skill; “we were just labourers”’.⁷

Two other examples are equally telling. They come from what may have been her last published piece, a short review of the Museum of Tropical Queensland. One is a comment on the ethnic make-up of the sugar industry of which she says ‘the trusting visitor would leave

with the impression that no “Anglos” worked in the industry’. The other is a comment on the Torres Strait exhibit. It is worth quoting in full:

Another section describes the Torres Strait army experience as ‘egalitarian’. The following paragraph informs the visitor that Torres Strait soldiers received half the pay of non-Indigenous soldiers.⁸

Both are examples of enough said.

My favourite piece is *Coal and the Cold War*, her account of the CIA, Blair Athol and Queensland Premiers Hanlon and Gair. This involved various proposals to invest an initial sum of \$25 million (in 1947 dollars!) to develop the Blair Athol coal field and build a conveyor from Blair Athol to Mackay (around 240 km) for export. The purpose, in the words of ‘Wild Bill’ Donovan, founding head of the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS), was ‘an assured and unlimited supply of power and fuel with which to combat the advance of communism’. The coal was for Japan and Korea as a bulwark against the red peril of China and USSR.

Premier Gair took the proposition to State Cabinet in August 1956. However, it almost fell through when the US companies said they wanted mining and mineral rights for 2.5 million hectares stretching from Blair Athol to the coast! It did fall through

because the US companies had failed to do basic research. The Japanese and Koreans wanted coking coal not the steaming coal of Blair Athol. Also the Commonwealth would not guarantee the international loans that the US proponents thought the Queensland Government could seek. The whole story is fantastical and has all the elements of a film script. The OSS/CIA proponents were shady and had some form including a war-time ‘disinformation campaign designed to deter the Germans from landing by spreading word that Britain had dropped 1,000 huge Australian sharks off the coast of Tunisia.’ As Di writes,

Grandiose schemes backed by poor research were not beyond the scope of these cold war warriors. However, the possibility that they were also acceptable to the American State Department and the Queensland government is a matter for more sober reflection.⁹

One could hardly make such a story up. Even so, it might just be one instance of the gullibility of state and commonwealth leaders.

Di was an active unionist in James Cook University. We started off in somewhat opposed positions when I came to know her in the mid-1990s. Di along with Marilyn Mayo and Marie-France Mack ran the JCU Academic Staff Association which as part of FAUSA was amalgamated into what they saw as the behemoth of the National Tertiary

Education Union. I came along with several deficiencies — from the CAE sector, part of the push for an all-grades industry union and as State Secretary of what they saw as an unnecessary and unwieldy superstructure. Worse still, perhaps, I was from Brisbane — the little Moscow.

Suffice to say we resolved our difficulties; the first enterprise agreement in the entire university sector was concluded at JCU though the skills and efforts of the three strong women. Di, in particular, became a very strong ally against James Cook management and within the union. Indeed she was formidable when we took on the real Moscow in Melbourne. In 2003 the NTEU nominated her for the Emma Miller Award of the Queensland Council of Unions. The speech about Bush's America that she gave in accepting her hat-pin transfixed the large after-dinner audience. It was a memorable moment.

Like many of us of her generation, Di believed in scholarship and the 'university'. However the later years at JCU were unkind to her and others. In the 1980s and early '90s, James Cook was an exemplar of a regional university in and of its community. It was savaged in the later 1990s and 2000s partly by mismanagement but more as a consequence of the market-based policies started by Labor and intensified by the Coalition after 1996. The basic disciplines including the humanities and pure science were the hardest hit with staff cuts, amalgamation of schools, scrapping

of courses and decimation of specialist subject areas. James Cook was in an almost permanent state of restructuring with a consequent emphasis on survival rather than scholarship. This is an atmosphere that seems to breed in-fighting as people scramble for an every decreasing pie. Certainly Di felt the changes keenly and deplored them, particularly the loss of the Department of History and Politics, of which she was the last Head.

Moreover, I think she would have been even more incensed by what seems to be the lack of style and rank opportunism of the most recent of many incumbents as Vice-Chancellor who is a member of the clearly politically partisan Commission of Audit established by the new Queensland LNP Government. I can hear Di telling us it is not an appropriate task for a scholar. But then, she might well say, perhaps scholarship is no longer a criterion to become a Vice-Chancellor. She was always incisive and always candid. Vale comrade.

Endnotes

- 1 Diane Menghetti, 'North Queensland Anti-Fascism and the Spanish Civil War', *Labour History* 42, May, 1982, 63–73
- 2 Diane Menghetti, 'The Red North: the popular front in North Queensland, Studies in North Queensland history; no. 3, History Dept., James Cook University of North Queensland, 1981.
- 3 Menghetti, D., 'The motherlode of Yes votes: gold and the Queensland referendum', *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum, Cultural Heritage Series* 2(2), 2002, 171–77.

Contributors Notes

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- 4 SafeWork Australia, Australian serious claims by industry, <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhatWeDo/Statistics/Pages/Statistics.aspx> (serious claims are fatalities, permanent incapacity or temporary incapacity with at least a week off work)
- 5 Diane Menghetti, Mine and Town — Health and Safety on Charters Tower, Paper read at the International Mining History Conference, Melbourne, August 1985
- 6 Diane Menghetti, Mount Isa: A Town like Alice? *Australian Historical Studies*, No.109, October 1997, pp.21–31. Also in John Murphy & Judith Smart (eds), *The forgotten fifties : aspects of Australian society and culture in the 1950s*, Melbourne University Press 1997.
- 7 Diane Menghetti, From Underground to Open cut: the deskilling of the coal miner?, *Journal of the Royal Queensland Historical Society*, Vol.16, No.8, November 1997, pp.353–370
- 8 Margaret Allen, Chilla Bulbeck & Diane Menghetti (2002): Exhibitions, *Australian Historical Studies*, 33:119, 193-96
- 9 Diane Menghetti "Coal and the Cold War: Queensland as another "bastion against the Red flood"", *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol.26 No 104, April 1995, pp.438–52



Di Menghetti and Carole Ferrier at the Emma Miller Dinner in 2003

Peter Gray is an independent filmmaker, and an award-winning director of photography, with a career spanning 40 years with international experience across four continents: Australia, Asia, Europe and the USA. Graduate of the *Australian Film and Television School* (1975-1977). He has lived and worked in Brisbane and Sydney (Australia), Penang (Malaysia), Berlin (Germany), Amsterdam (The Netherlands), and Seoul and Pusan (Korea). Currently domicile near Los Angeles, California. Peter manages the online forum *Brisbane Discussion Circle*. <snowflaketrails@gmail.com>

Lachlan Hurse is working as an organiser with the National Tertiary Education Union at the University of Queensland. He is actively trying to build grass-roots participation in his branch of the NTEU, including reinvigorating the Women's Committee. He believes that re-engaging with feminist struggles may add a new layer of activism in the union; and inform other campaigns aimed at building the capacity of workers to determine their own destinies.

Previously Lachlan had been an QPSU delegate in the Environmental Protection Agency, with a particular interest in developing union

perspectives around Indigenous and environmental issues.

Apart from his day job Lachlan is a member of Leftpress Printing Society, President of the Brisbane Branch of the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society, and is a songwriter and bass player in the group Jumping Fences as well as being a member of the Brisbane Labour History Association.

Dr Greg Mallory was a political activist on the University of Queensland campus in the 60s and 70s. He currently works as a tutor at the University of Queensland and Griffith University and is President of the Brisbane Labour History Association and on the Executive of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History. His book, *Uncharted Waters: Social Responsibility in Australian Trade Unions*, was published in 2005. He has co-authored *The Coalminers of Queensland, Vol 2: The Pete Thomas Essays* with Pete Thomas, published in December 2007. *Voices from Brisbane rugby league: Oral histories from the 50s to the 70s* was published in September 2009. He is currently working on biographical studies of Harry Bridges, Ted Roach, Jack Munday and Pat Mackie.

Lindsay Marshall is a Brisbane journalist and coordinator of an oral history project on Queensland politics of the 1960s, 70s and 80s being undertaken by the Don Dunstan

Foundation (Queensland Chapter) in conjunction with the National Library of Australia.

Dr John McCollow is a research officer with the Queensland Teachers' Union. He has also worked as an acting industrial officer and as an acting research officer with the Australian Education Union federal office. His areas of responsibility include the funding and organisation of education, Indigenous education and the education of students with disabilities. He has also worked as a casual academic at the University of Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology in the area of education policy studies.

Ted Riethmuller was born in Kingaroy. The year was 1939 and so he was an observer of the tumultuous events that shaped the second part of the 20th Century. He is optimistic about the future but agrees that such hope is hard to justify.

He served his time as an electrician in Bundaberg and Brisbane. During his apprenticeship he joined the ETU and became interested in politics. In the early sixties, like many other young Australians he travelled to the UK and it was there that the class nature of society could not be ignored and it hastened his move to the left. Although the radicalism of his youth has been tempered by age and experience he still embraces the ideals of universal peace,

fraternity and the emancipation of the down trodden.

His interest in social history and labour history comes with a strong belief that the experiences of the common people deserve to be documented. In particular he wants to see the struggles and sacrifices of activists of the past acknowledged, honoured and their successes and failures learned from.

In his retirement, Ted is writing a collection of *Workplace Sketches* as an exercise in autobiography and a contribution to social and workplace history. He invites others to do the same.

John Stanwell was radicalized by Civil Liberties, Conscription and the Vietnam War at Queensland University in the mid to late 1960's. His resulting activism took him to places as diverse as Boggo Road Jail (the "Stock-Exchange Eight"), the Counter Culture (HARPO and Peoples Park I & II) and the founding team of 4ZZZ-FM. He left Brisbane when Bjelke-Petersen destroyed Cloudland Ballroom. John became an arts administrator and theatre manager, and now lives in Melbourne.

Peter Whalley-Thompson is one of three children to Fred and Loma Thompson. Born and raised in Townsville, North Queensland, and trained as a primary teacher before taking up the itinerant life, working

in construction and mining and travelling between jobs on a motorbike and sidecar, accompanied by his dog. Eventually he settled in South Australia, where he worked as a youth worker in unemployment projects and secure care facilities.

After taking a degree in Public Policy and Economics at Griffith University, he returned to Townsville with his partner, where they raised a family, and he embarked on a career as an activist in the Community and Public Sector Union. In 2005 he took up as the JCU Branch Organiser for the NTEU.

Peter and Fred shared a passion for woodwork and boatbuilding, something they had done together when Peter was young. In later years the roles were reversed, with Fred becoming the very capable offsideer to house and boat projects they pursued together. It was over coffee in the shed that Freddy told Peter his history of an activist's life.

Diane Zetlin teaches in Peace and Conflict Studies within the School of Political Science and International Studies. She has published in the area of gender and employment. She has a long history of involvement in the trade union movement, including having served as General Secretary of the Federated Australian University Staff Associations (a predecessor to the National Tertiary Education Union) and as President of the NTEU.

Back to the Future?...

The Queensland Labour Movement under Conservative Governments

The Struggle for basic rights under Country/National Party Governments

- some historical examples - eg. Mt Isa Dispute, SEQEB dispute
- contemporary examples
- lessons for the immediate future



9:15am to 5.00pm

Sat. 27th October

West End Club

2 Vulture St

South Brisbane

admission free

lunch and beverages available
for purchase

The recent election of the Newman LNP Government with its accompanying repressive measures against Queensland workers have revived memories of former Country/National Party Governments and their relationship with the labour movement. The symposium will examine this relationship from a historic and contemporary perspective.

Program includes:

The Moore Tory Government 1929-32

The Trades Hall Group & the ALP 1957-80

Pat Mackie & the Mt Isa dispute

Gladstone Power workers & the SEQEB dispute

Qld in the 80s, early experiments in Work Choices

Challenging the politics of austerity in Europe and Qld

Will Campbell Newman destroy public service unionism?

The Political Economy of Conservative Governments in Qld

The Newman Government & the Qld labour movement
speakers

Brian Costar

Sue Yarrow

Greg Mallory

Barbara Webster

Howard Guille

Adrian Skerritt

Emma Tovell

Rob Nicholas

QCU & other union

9:15-9:45am

10:00 - 11:00pm

11:00 - 12:00pm

1:00- 3:00pm

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Registration

Political dimensions

Industrial Disputes

Qld Govt Reaction

Trade Union responses

October Symposium



Brisbane Labour History Association
PO Box 5299 West End Qld 4101
Brisbane Branch of the Australian
Society for the Study of Labour History

For more information:
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The Brisbane Labour History Association

The Brisbane Labour History Association was formed in 1990 to encourage and promote the study, teaching, research and publication of labour history and the preservation of labour archives. There are no limits on the study of labour history and the diverse membership reflects many different areas of concern.

The BLHA is the Brisbane branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History. The Association organises seminars, lectures, meetings, conferences and publications on themes of labour history. Membership is open to all individuals and organisations who subscribe to the Association's objectives.

Editorial Policy

The Queensland Journal of Labour History is a journal of labour and social history with a particular emphasis on Queensland history. The history of labour, the classic social movement, is central to our concerns, as are the histories of newer social movements. This journal is committed to the view that history has a social purpose. It publishes articles which, in Ian Turner's words, engage our sympathies, affect present circumstances and suggest answers to present problems. In the words of the Association's slogan, 'The Past is Always with Us'. Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the views of the Association or the Editors. The Journal's Editorial Board is the Committee of the BLHA, chaired by the President.

Notes for Contributors

The *Journal* is published in March and September. Articles of up to 4000 words may be accepted; shorter contributions are encouraged. First person accounts of labour history are particularly welcome. Reports on exhibitions, seminars and research projects are sought, as are book reviews and photo essays. Obtain a copy of the Editorial Guidelines before submission.

Contributions should be made in hard copy to the Society's post office box and (if possible) digital format via email, to the Secretary's email address (see inside front cover). Hard copies should be typed, double-spaced, on single-sided A4 bond paper, with a margin of at least 3 cm. Please number the pages. Two (2) copies of each manuscript are required. Please ensure all contact details are given, including phone numbers and an email address.

Please advise if you have ideas for graphics (photographs, maps, drawings, cartoons, etc) that might accompany your article if accepted for publication.

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*Brisbane branch of the
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