

The Queensland Journal of Labour History

*No. 16
March 2013*



The Brisbane Labour History Association



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Printed by Uniprint, Griffith University

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Front Cover Photo:

Workers on the Story Bridge construction in 1935 - see note on Page 48.

The Queensland Journal Of Labour History

No. 16, March 2013

ISSN 1832-9926

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Labour History (ISSN: 0023 6942) is an internationally recognised journal published twice a year, in November and May, by the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History of which the Brisbane Labour History Association is the Brisbane branch. Contents, abstracts and prices of back issues are available at the web site www.asslh.org.au. The journal is available in both printed form and via the non-profit publisher JSTOR. The association with JSTOR offers individual subscribers a range of advantages, including online access to the full run of *Labour History* from 1962 on.

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The latest issue of *Labour History* (Number 103, November 2012)

The latest issue – a standard non-thematic - contains 12 scholarly articles , one non-refereed report and 15 book review.

In the lead article, Murray and Chesters explore the links between economic inequality and the shifting modalities of state/political power in colonial and post-colonial Australia. Their argument, in essence, is that Australian economic and social historians have failed both to detail the relationship between economic wealth and political power and to examine the ways in which material inequality has shaped the state's ability to 'govern' civil society.

Rodwell's study also examines the relationship between the economic and the social – *albeit* at the micro-level. Using a near complete run of station diaries, her study examines the workings of a flourishing 'family economy' system on a northern New South Wales pastoral station during the second half of the nineteenth century; a system which, whilst fundamentally unequal and exploitative, permitted the wives and children of European shepherds and labourers to make an important financial contribution to their families' living standards. Rodwell's study also documents the importance of the labour of Chinese and Indigenous worker to the station's economic success.

In a similar vein, though a very different socio-spatial context, Mullins' piece reveals for the first time the role of Torres Strait Islander in the North Queensland maritime economy during the first half of the twentieth century, in small-scale enterprise involving the gathering of marine product using shore-based sailing dinghies – a pervasive but hitherto overlooked form of labour utilisation and value creation paralleling, but also competing with, company-based resource and labour exploitation. The support of the journal by individual subscribers makes it possible for *Labour History* to continue to promote and publish labour history research in Australia and beyond. Please visit the ASSLH website for the *Guidelines* if you are interested in contributing to the journal. You can subscribe from the secure website – www.asslh.org.au; or by faxing your credit card details to (02) 9036 7140; or by posting a cheque made out to Labour History or credit card details to: **Labour History, Room 212, Computing Centre H08, University of Sydney, NSW 2006**

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Editorial

Howard Guille, Ross Gwyther and Bob Russell

Politics and the Australian Labor Party (ALP) are prominent in this edition of the Journal. Some background might help to put the contributions in context although we proceed with caution since many readers have had intimate experience in and of the party.

The ALP dominated electoral politics in Queensland from 1915 to 1957 and from 1989 to 2012. In both periods, it was in government for all but one parliamentary term. In the first period, it dominated from a rural base with Labor members from almost all electorates west of the Great Divide. In the second period, it had a suburban base — at one stage holding all but one of the electorates in Brisbane.

Affiliated unions are a structural part of the ALP. The party rules say that the origin of the party is ‘the recognition by the Trade Union movement of the necessity for a political voice’. Affiliated unions have 50 per cent of the delegates at State Conference which is the ‘supreme rule, policy and decision making body’. This proportion works through to all other decision-making including candidate selection.

Union affiliation is the special characteristic of the labour parties of Australian, Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. They differ from the social democratic and socialist parties of western continental Europe by structure not ideology. Indeed, the constitution of the ALP says it is a *democratic socialist party* — a point espoused by the current President Dick Williams on the ALP web-site.

There have been spectacular fissures — over conscription in 1916; over austerity in 1932; consistently over communist membership and influence; and the 1950s split over the Industrial groups and Catholic Church influence. Underlying these major eruptions has been two almost permanent tensions— one between the parliamentary party and the wider party and the other between industrial aims of affiliated unions and the political and electoral judgement of the party.

The ostensible reason for the expulsion of Premier Vince Gair in 1957 was the refusal of the Cabinet to accept a direction from the Party Central Executive to legislate to increase annual leave. This was a struggle between affiliated unions and the parliamentary

party. A critical factor was that the Australian Workers Union (AWU) and the Trades and Labour Council unions (TLC) were temporarily united.

The last issue of the Journal had an obituary for Harry Hauenschild, former President of the Queensland Trades and Labour Council and one of the leaders of the Old Guard, who resisted federal intervention into the Queensland ALP in the 1980s. There were unions and unionists for and against intervention and it provided a base for a more inclusive party that would return to government in 1989 with heightened consciousness about social as well as industrial issues.

Intervention did though alter the composition and the organisation of the party and probably made it more in the ‘Whitlam mode’ that Andrew West criticised in “*Fading Loyalties*”. Writing in 1991, he said ‘One of the reasons given by current Cabinet Ministers for ignoring or undermining ALP policies is that the Party’s members are unrepresentative of the concerns of Labor voters’ (p46). The privatisations undertaken by the Bligh government are a good example of a Labor government undermining ALP policies. As we wrote in the previous editorial ‘there is much room to ruminate about a counter-factual of whether the Bligh government privatisations would have occurred if there was still an “old-guard” style

Queensland Central Executive of the ALP’.

Sue Yarrow takes up questions about the “old guard” in this issue. This is the first of four papers to be published from the 2012 BLHA seminar on labour under conservative regimes. It covers the rise and fall of the Trades Hall Group from the late 1950s to Federal intervention in 1980. Sue makes the important observation that the old guard was industrially ‘left’ but socially conservative. They eventually fell to those they variously denigrated as ‘academics, women, environmentalists or silvertails’.

Factions were a product of federal intervention. This is one of many matters covered in the interview with Dick Williams in the second major article on the ALP in this issue. Dick became State President of the ALP after the disastrous 2012 election. He was previously Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union when that union moved from the right (old guard) faction to the left faction. He says this was fundamentally part of making the ETU into a campaigning union. The interview is enlightening about the issues facing the party including convincing affiliated unions both that the party has changed and that it will have to be serious about increasing revenues to fund necessary services.

The interview with Dick Williams is our second illustration of how we

hope the journal can cover current as well as historical events. It follows on the interview in the previous edition with Alex Scott of the Together Union. Such interviews and accounts will be a continuing feature and we acknowledge that we need to ensure some balance by getting a woman's voice and perspective.

Dick Williams argues strongly that 'we need to have governments that support the working class'. This is pertinent to Iain Campbell's article on insecure work in Australia given as the Alex McDonald lecture in 2012. This is a very informed and impressive article. He repeatedly argues that work security, in its many forms, was principally gained and enforced through institutions and regulation. That is, through political and collective action. The erosion of work security over the last two or three decades needs to be seen as a big political loss for organised labour — whether the stripping of award protections under Work Choices or the substitution of employer-based qualifications for national and occupational ones.

We are honoured to publish Kevin Brown's oration in memory of his mother, Clarice. She gave a lifetime of 90 years to the movement in Queensland and Darwin. It is a beautifully written record of an overwhelming contribution. As Kevin says, 'Clarice, with her typical humility and generosity, would prefer

to be remembered by you not as one-of-a-kind but as one Comrade amongst many. It seems to me that there is much more hope for the world if we think of her that way.'

Glenda Ross was another strong union woman. She was the Queensland Nurse Union organiser in Central Queensland. As she said, 'If there's a picket line you go and show your support to the workers'. It is a good practice.

We continue the theme of politics and regulation in the book reviews. One is on the 'precariat', Guy Standing's word for the global work force without security. There is a review of *Left Turn* — a recent collection of progressive essays and one of Mark Baker's history of town planning in Queensland. The latter is a very nice introduction to some original photos of the building of the Storey Bridge that will feature in our next issue.

BLHA

President's Column

Greg Mallory

President's Column 2013

The Association hosted the October Symposium *Back to the Future: The Queensland Labour Movement under Conservative Governments*. The Symposium was divided into two parts, a historical and contemporary stream. The historical stream consisted of papers on industrial struggles in Mt Isa, Gladstone and the struggle within the ALP over basic reforms. Sue Yarrow spoke on the struggle within the Queensland ALP when a group tried to bring in various reforms within the Party. This group was met with firm opposition from the established power holders who were labelled the Trades Hall Group. Barbara Webster spoke on the struggle of power workers in Gladstone during the SEQEB dispute. Howard Guille discussed the early role that the Bjelke-Petersen Government played in bringing in legislation that was a forerunner to the Work Choices, which was brought in by the Howard government. Lastly, I presented a paper on Pat Mackie and Mt Isa, which gave a background to Mackie's industrial life before entering Mt Isa and the

subsequent dispute that followed in 1964/65. A number of these papers are published in the current edition of the journal.

The contemporary stream examined the politics of the Newman Government and the subsequent sacking of public servants. Both Emma Torvell and Robert Nicholas discussed the effects Newman's policies were having on public service unionism. Adrian Skerrett examined the politics of austerity and compared the situation in Europe with that of Queensland. The symposium ended with three unionists, QCU secretary Ron Monaghan, Financial Services Union secretary Michael Clifford and Tristran Douglas from the Together Union, discussing the current situation facing the Queensland union movement.

The symposium was also addressed by Bob Carneige who was one of the organisers of the community protest at the Queensland Children's Hospital worksite. As I write, Bob faces 18 charges of contempt by the AbiGroup and he is currently fighting these

charges in the Federal Magistrates Court. The BLHA offers him support in his case. The next issue of the journal will feature an interview with Bob on the history of this recent dispute and its implications for Queensland labour.

At the AGM of the Federal Society (ASSLH) held in November Sigrid McCausland and I were re-elected to the Federal Executive. The BLHA AGM elected Ross Gwyther as Brisbane Branch representative and thus the BLHA has three representatives on the Federal Executive. The BLHA AGM saw Doug Devonshire stand down from the Executive. I would like to thank Doug for his work on the Executive for the past few years. Sigrid McCausland was elected to the Executive. Sigrid has had a long association with labour history, serving on both the Canberra and Sydney Branch Executives. A further change to the Executive was John Spreckley being elected as Vice-President. Bob Reed has stepped down from Vice-President but stays on the Executive.

In the last journal, an interview was conducted with Alex Scott, Secretary of the Together union. In future editions of the journal an interview will be conducted with a key person in the labour movement. This person will be asked to launch the journal at a special members' event. This has been an initiative of the editorial committee and I urge members to attend this event.

The National Conference of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History (ASSLH) will be held from the 11–13 July in Sydney at the Trades Hall. The conference is being run by the Federal Society in conjunction with Unions NSW and the Business and Labour History Group of Sydney University.

I would like to once again congratulate George Britten who was awarded Life Membership at the AGM. As I said at the AGM, George has had a life-long involvement in the trade union movement as well as the Communist Party and has been an active member of the BLHA since 2000.

The Association has won the Rogers Coates Scholarship run by the Search Foundation. Congratulations to Executive member Ross Gwyther who organised the application process. The money from the Scholarship will be used for interviewing former activists from the Communist Party.

Lastly the Alex Macdonald Lecture will be held on Wednesday 1 May at the TLC Building. The theme of the lecture will be the history of May Day and will be presented by historian Dr Glenn Davies.

I wish members a productive year.

Greg Mallory

An Historical Perspective on Insecure Work in Australia

Iain Campbell

Introduction

Our topic is insecure work or what some call ‘precarious work’. These are not labels that Alex Macdonald would have used. But they refer to types of employment that he would have experienced in his work career, from his tentative start in a shipyard on the Clyde after the First World War, through long years as an itinerant rural worker in New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland, and even in his more settled years as an ironworker at Evans Deakin in Brisbane. And they refer to practices that he would have fought against in his political engagement in the Unemployed Workers’ Movement, in the Communist Party of Australia and within the leadership of the trade union movement. As secretary of the Queensland Trades and Labour Council, he ‘prepared cases for basic-wage and equal-pay claims in the State Industrial Court, promoted youth education and employment, advocated the extension of the basic wage to Aboriginal workers, and tried to improve annual, long service and sick-leave benefits, minimum wages, restricted hours, safety laws and pensions’.¹ Wages, hours, leave

entitlements, health and safety — it’s a good summary of several key elements in any fight against insecure work.

Discussion of insecure work today

Recent research has been effective in describing the spread of insecure work in Australia and in starting to analyse its causes and consequences. Partly as a result, the topic of insecure work has simmered away in public debate for several years. However, there is little sign of any leap from talk to action. The social movements that help to drive the debate in Europe are missing in Australia, and none of the major political parties show much appetite for legislative action, though trade unions have experimented with a few interesting initiatives at industry level. We face what seems to be a major gulf between research and policy.²

The latest effort to bridge the gulf is the Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work, sponsored by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and chaired by Brian Howe, which gathered evidence in a series of public hearings through 2011–12 and then released an important report in May 2012.

The Inquiry can boast several achievements, but one of the most useful is its initial definition of insecure work:

Insecure work is poor quality work that provides workers with little economic security and little control

over their working lives. Indicators of insecure work include:

1. Unpredictable, fluctuating pay;
2. Inferior rights and entitlements, including limited or no access to paid leave;
3. Irregular and unpredictable working hours, or working hours that, although regular are too long or too few and/or non-social or fragmented;
4. Lack of security and/or uncertainty over the length of the job; and
5. Lack of voice at work on wages, conditions and work organisation.

Insecure work can be experienced by all workers. However, it is often associated with certain forms of employment, including casual

work, fixed-term work, seasonal work, contracting and labour hire.³

This definition owes a lot to the writings of Guy Standing, who stresses that labour insecurity has multiple dimensions, and it chimes well with other academic conceptualisations of insecure or precarious work. The definition used by the Inquiry encompasses what researchers would call: i) income insecurity; ii) benefit insecurity; iii) working-time insecurity; iv) employment insecurity; and v) representation insecurity.⁴ This does not exhaust the list of insecurities, but it is a good starting point. It helps to avoid some common misconceptions that bedevil debate in this area, for example that insecure work is just to do with fear of losing a job or that insecure



work is confined to special forms of employment such as casual work.

The value of an historical perspective

From an historical perspective, insecure work is not new. It was dominant in Australia in earlier periods of capitalist development. In the nineteenth century and early twentieth century it was associated with widespread misery for large parts of the labouring population. Insecure work receded in the middle decades of the twentieth century, in association with the rise of strong trade unions and the consolidation of reasonably comprehensive social protection systems, before appearing to expand once again in the current period. Thus, when we talk about the spread of insecure work in current labour markets, it might be better to refer to its 'resurgence', its 'return', or its 're-invention'.

Parallels between nineteenth century and twenty-first century labour markets are noted by several researchers. Most of the discussion is descriptive, but some scholars frame the historical movement in more theoretical terms by referring to Karl Polanyi, who argues that the rise of market fundamentalism in the nineteenth century required a counter-movement of regulation in order to rescue capitalist society from the devastation caused by the ideology of the self-regulating market. From this perspective, the resurgence of insecure

work today could be seen as one part of the return of an "Age of Insecurity" that could, as in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, give rise to a new counter-movement.⁵

Discussion of historical parallels points to intriguing links. These frame insecure work as a problem that overflows from the workplace to affect labour markets and workers' lives. It validates the issue as one central to social life, demanding careful analysis and a vigorous political response. Moreover, it offers the tantalising thought that successful political action may be possible; just as insecure work was pressed back in the past, we can entertain the idea that it can also be forced back in the present.

A list of parallels is stimulating, but in our judgment the historical perspective needs to be pushed further. If we want to define accurately the research and policy challenge in the present we need to examine not only the parallels but also the *differences* between the two periods. The historical perspective, here as in other areas, promises to sharpen our description of current trends, uncover new paths of explanation and clarify the range of potential political responses.⁶ But to fulfil this promise we need to identify elements of change as well as continuity and we need to consider carefully the implications of any changes. What exactly are the similarities and differences in types of work? What are the main

dimensions of economic insecurity in the two periods? How do we assess and compare the extent of insecure work? How do we assess its intensity? How do we compare the effects on workers and households? Also important are the implications of an historical perspective for contemporary political debate. If we want to break through the current barriers to action and develop an adequate political response to insecure work, we may need to focus more explicitly on that phase when similar forms of work were pressed back in the middle decades of the twentieth century. In effect we need to know: can this success be replicated? Is it possible to rely on similar principles, similar agents and similar tactics?

Unfortunately, answers to such questions do not easily leap out of the current historical literature. Much labour history is relevant to the topic of insecure work, but the connections to contemporary research and policy debates are rarely examined in any detail. Only a few studies are framed in terms of current debates, though one or two reviews, especially in the area of workplace illness and injury, explicitly start from contemporary debates about insecurity or precariousness.⁷ Some union or industry studies offer valuable detail on efforts to regulate forms of insecurity or even to 'decasualise' entire industries.⁸ More broadly, valuable material can be found in accounts of the history of labour regulation.⁹ Perhaps the most directly

relevant research looks at the historical development, especially in the deliberations of the industrial tribunals, of key employment categories such as unemployment, casual employment and fixed-term employment.¹⁰ But otherwise the basket is surprisingly bare.

Dipping into labour history

This paper aims to push the historical perspective on insecure work a bit further with the intention of moving beyond a simple list of historical parallels. It does not offer any new historical research; instead it is limited to a sketch of historical developments that tries to draw out what is revealed in the existing literature about labour insecurities.

Nineteenth century labour markets

One hundred and fifty to one hundred years ago, labour markets in Australia lacked formal social welfare supports and were largely unregulated, at least in the sense of protective regulation. Master and Servant legislation was the dominant form of labour regulation, acting to subordinate individual workers to the needs of employers. There was little chance of collective representation. In good times, trade unions, starting with skilled crafts, miners and seafarers, were able to secure a foothold, but in bad times, as in the 1890s, many fledgling unions crashed and disappeared. It was a world in which employers appeared

to be fully in charge. Labour appeared as a commodity to be treated at the workplace in much the same way as other commodities, and employment relations appeared as simple relations of exploitation.¹¹

Colonial societies had a distinctive occupational structure and workforce composition. Though self-employment was prominent, the majority of workers were wage workers. Partly because of factors such as small-scale production and reliance on manual skill, labour markets were dominated by unskilled and semi-skilled occupations that often involved arduous manual labour. Many of these occupations have either disappeared completely in the course of technological change or been radically transformed. Bullockies, together with the bullock teams they drove, have of course completely disappeared (though they have modern equivalents in the form of truck drivers). Much of the paid work, though not the unpaid work, was done by men. Female workers, predominantly single women, made up some 20 per cent of the workforce in

the 1891 Census and were employed mainly in domestic service but with some in the clothing trades and others working as shop assistants, nurses, teachers and governesses.¹²

Insecurity was a prominent feature of employment. Insecure work was everywhere, though in different forms. We know something about the sweated trades and child labour, which attracted special concern at the time. We increasingly know more about the poor conditions of unskilled workers, such as waterside workers in the cities and farmhands in the countryside. Higher hourly wages and stronger demand for their skills placed craftsmen in the building and engineering trades in a so-called ‘labour aristocracy’, but they were by no means immune to the pressures that affected less skilled workers. They remained vulnerable to harsh employers, economic downturns, and personal plights such as age and sickness.¹³

Most dimensions of labour insecurity were in evidence. As noted above, the workplace was marked by *representation insecurity*, that is, lack of collective representation and vulnerability to employer whims. In addition, there was extensive *work insecurity*, which refers to the risks to the ability to continue at work because the work environment is polluted or dangerous in some way.



A prominent characteristic of most jobs was *employment insecurity*. From the point of view of the labour market as a whole, employment, even in the so-called boom times, co-existed with large pools of workers seeking work, constituting different layers of what Marx describes as a 'reserve army of labour'.¹⁴ Employment insecurity was associated with intermittency of employment, often seasonal. This affected many occupations, especially the unskilled, both in urban and rural areas. But skilled workers were also exposed to similar pressures, most obviously in the case of shearers. Skilled craftsmen in construction and engineering, as well as clerical and supervisory staff, enjoyed better conditions, but their employment remained unstable. Intermittency does not necessarily imply that workers are moving in and out of occupations. Nevertheless, even when workers remain in the one occupation, intermittency inhibits the building up of skills; it fosters what can be called *skill reproduction insecurity*, which refers to situations where the ability to gain and retain skills through access to education or training is impeded.¹⁵

Product market fluctuations penetrated into the core of working-time arrangements within the job. Intermittency can be seen as related to fluctuations in hours within a job, ranging from extremely long hours in good times to short-time work in bad times. In this way, employment

insecurity overlapped with *working-time insecurity*. For many workers, hired by the hour or the day, the precise boundaries of a job could be uncertain, dependent on the grace and favour of the supervisor.

Insofar as there was stable work it existed mainly in isolated pockets, generally with larger employers who were either insulated from fluctuations in activity or could afford to hoard labour over cycles of fluctuating activity. However, even here, workers could be exposed to fluctuations in hours, including short-time work when economic conditions were poor. Recent research points to the significance of long-term employment and internal labour markets in large enterprises such as banks and railways.¹⁶ Stable employment was generally offered to the more highly skilled, but in favourable circumstances it could apply even for the unskilled, for example shunters in the railways. Of course, in this context other insecurities could come to the fore. Peter Sheldon writes of sewerage workers in Sydney (Water Board) in the period from 1890 to 1910. He points out that these jobs offered employment stability for the unskilled and even a modicum of autonomy in how they did their work, with the result that workers pressed to be hired. But it was 'grindingly heavy, dangerous and nauseatingly foul work'.¹⁷

Perhaps the most striking feature of colonial labour markets was

income insecurity, broadly defined as inadequate income. Workers and their families at this time were overwhelmingly reliant on a money wage, perhaps supplemented by self-production and sporadic assistance from family, community, or friendly societies. Destitute workers could appeal to charities or press the government for relief work. However, state benefits that could supplement the money wage did not exist. There was little chance of any ordinary worker developing private income through savings and investments and enterprise benefits were largely absent, apart from occasional experiments in welfare capitalism such as at the Yarraville CSR refinery.¹⁸ Inadequacy in the money wage came from either low wage rates or instability in wages (or frequently both). Poverty-level earnings as a result of low hourly wage rates were certainly evident in many occupations. In several sectors, including clothing outwork, building trades, printing and coalmining, piecework amplified pressures of low earnings, adding in problems of long hours and intense work. But inadequate earnings were also strongly shaped by the instabilities in employment and hours noted above. Much historical research points out that it is necessary to look beyond evidence of hourly wage rates in order to take account of the various forms of lost time. With little cushion from social security or savings, seasonal work, intermittent employment and

fluctuating hours could have a major impact on living conditions.¹⁹

The retreat of labour insecurity

Much of the insecurity found in colonial labour markets receded over the course of the twentieth century. This was linked with the results of a wave of worker mobilization and a raft of protective legislation that was introduced over the period 1880 to 1930, as well as with the more favourable economic conditions in the post-World War II period. Legislation centred on new labour regulation, oriented to worker protection by setting minimum labour standards and establishing a floor for working conditions. Australia was by no means alone in this development, though it chose a particular path in labour regulation, oriented to regulation through 'awards' set down by quasi-judicial tribunals. Protective labour regulation, replacing the old Master and Servant laws, was in turn supplemented in many sectors by active trade unions, and supported by welfare state provision of pensions and benefits and policies of full employment. Employers continued to enjoy extensive rights at the workplace, but managers generally had to work within the rules set by the labour regulation system in their treatment of workers.²⁰ We can see here what has been aptly described as a '*partial de-commodification of labour*'.²¹

The retreat of labour insecurity was a complex, uneven process. Let me

make three basic points. First, it was not a sudden, one-off achievement, but the result of a rather jagged, staccato process, with progress proceeding along different paths and often punctuated by phases of regress. Much of the historical discussion in Australia focuses on the history of wages, tracing developments through the deliberations of wages boards and industrial tribunals, especially from Justice Higgins and the 1907 Harvester judgment onwards. This is useful, and it highlights the complex evolution of a standard for a 'living wage'.²² But we need a broader approach to look at labour insecurity as a whole. O'Donnell stresses the role of the industrial tribunals, beginning in the 1920s but taking root most effectively in the 1940s, in introducing weekly hire and limits on employer ability to impose stand downs, which he identifies as the beginnings of the standard of full-time ongoing work.²³ Other historical contributions consider aspects such as the steady but slow progress of health

and safety and workers' compensation legislation. We lack comprehensive historical overviews of dimensions such as working hours and leave entitlements, but it is likely that these too would reveal a similar staccato process marked by a slow accretion of gains.²⁴

Second, this process incorporated some workers quickly and well, but not all workers. It was a differentiated process. One of the virtues of feminist scholarship is its reminder that if we are interested in the experience of vulnerable groups in the society we have to look at the *gaps* in labour regulation systems. This is particularly important in Australia, where the regulatory system has always been a complex patchwork, with crucial gaps to do with coverage, enforcement, and the insertion of exclusions or exemptions. Indeed, perhaps the most distinctive feature of the patchwork system of labour regulation was the existence of multiple *exemptions*.

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Apprentices/trainees, juniors, slow workers, and persons in labour market programs, were all subject to derogations from minimum conditions. The most important example, however, concerns exemptions for 'casual work', for example, by means of casual clauses in awards and exclusions of all or some casual workers from protective legislation. As weekly hire was consolidated, space was left outside it for a diverse range of forms of work that were given a catch-all title of casual work. As leave entitlements and other benefits were added for full-time, ongoing employment, the category of casual work was by-passed. It appeared in effect as an officially sanctioned exemption from the requirements of labour regulation. In this way, labour law, though ostensibly devoted to restricting insecure work, can be seen as helping to construct and promote particular types of insecure work.²⁵

Such gaps may have narrowed but they never closed completely. Even at the height of the retreat of labour insecurity, incomplete coverage resulted in difficulties for contract workers in sectors such as construction and transport, outworkers in clothing, and even some professional workers. Similarly, lack of enforcement created problems, especially in small workplaces outside of the reach of trade unions. Such gaps were in turn occupied by certain types of workers. Aboriginal workers, whose paid work so often fell into such gaps in labour

regulation, for example when they were paid in kind or under a truck system, subject to special Acts with confiscation of wages, or classified under 'slow worker' clauses in awards, can be seen as one example.²⁶ More familiar is the example of women workers. They were subject, both in the nineteenth century and then under award regulation in the twentieth century, to discriminatory wage rates, which were not removed until the equal pay cases of the early 1970s. They were also caught in a trap caused by the priority given to full-time schedules. As married women increased their workforce participation, generally through part-time work, they often found that such part-time work was offered only under casual conditions.²⁷

Third, the retreat of labour insecurity was not an automatic process. It was driven by specific historical and social forces. Apart from industrial tribunals, we can cite technological change, which favoured mass production and larger establishments, and the relative labour shortages of the period of the long boom after 1945. But a decisive factor was the struggle by individuals, informal groups, political parties and in particular trade unions. Much could be said here about the specific actors, their principles and their campaigning techniques. We know something of trade union campaigns, which depended heavily on values of solidarity, both internal to the occupation and external to the broader society. Conventional

collective bargaining in leading sectors functioned to generalise new standards to the workforce as a whole, but also important were campaigns on social and political issues as well as campaigns confined to conditions in particular industries. The fight against exploitative work arrangements in clothing outwork, which extends to the present-day, is well-known. Another well-documented example concerns the decasualisation on the waterfront in the 1960s, largely driven by the union. Tom Sheridan notes, however, the tension between the leadership of the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF), who identified a need to shift to permanency, and the rank-and-file workers, who often appreciated the ‘rough justice of casualism’, when this was no longer associated with excess labour supply, irregular work and short engagements.²⁸

Most dimensions of insecurity were forced back in the course of the twentieth century advance. Intermittent employment diminished, partly as a result of the introduction of weekly hire and rights to notice. Similarly, regulation of working hours, based on the notion that a living wage was tied to normal full-time weekly hours, helped to reduce the frequency of fluctuations in hours within a job and chronic underemployment. Paid leave entitlements, including public holidays and paid annual leave, established the important principle that a wage should cover hours of non-work

as well as hours of work, thereby protecting the worker and not just work. Underpinning the consolidation of economic security was widespread representation security, whereby most individual workers felt confident that their interests at the workplace would be heeded by employers. The evolution of income insecurity is perhaps less clearcut. Minimum wages led to the extinction of piecework in most industrial areas, thereby helping to shrink both income insecurity and the other insecurities associated with this form of payment. Nevertheless, though the principle of a living wage helped put a floor under wage rates, and a rising tide of real wages supported prosperity, persistent wage inequalities meant that many households continued to feel under financial pressure.

The vision that guided this process and shaped the result, both as a pivot for regulation and as a labour market outcome, is sometimes described in terms of ‘Harvester man’.²⁹ I feel uneasy about this characterisation for several reasons — it unduly prioritises wages (and wage discrimination), it inflates the significance of the 1907 judgment of Justice Higgins, and it blurs the parallels with other industrialised societies. I prefer a concept that was initially borrowed from the German discussion but is now widespread in much labour law literature — the Standard Employment Relation (SER).³⁰ The SER, or perhaps more carefully the traditional SER, is

defined as 'a stable, socially protected, dependent, full-time job... the basic conditions of which (maximum working hours per day and week, rest times, pay, social transfers, etc.) are regulated to a minimum level by collective agreement or by labour and/or social security law'.³¹ This concept identifies the broad parameters of a distinctive vision of regulated work, anchored in a male breadwinner model of labour market participation, that was common to Australia and many other industrialised societies during this period.³²

Lessons for the Present?

Description of current trends

This rough sketch helps to sharpen the description of current trends in insecure work. It suggests that simple talk about a return to nineteenth century conditions is exaggerated. Though parallels are evident, and it is clear that we dealing with similar processes driven by similar forces, major differences are also apparent. These reach beyond the obvious divergence in the types of work, associated with the decline of much heavy manual work and the rise of service sector occupations, to include important differences in the extent and intensity of several labour insecurities. For example, we undoubtedly see a resurgence of employment insecurity, marked by intermittent work, which recalls nineteenth century labour markets. Ian Watson draws attention to the way in which transitions in and out of casual

work reproduce earlier mechanisms of a reserve army of labour.³³ But the phenomenon primarily concerns one segment of casual work and it is not as widespread as in the nineteenth century. Moreover, some of the flows into casual work are distinctive, linked to the increased participation of women and the increased importance of part-time schedules in the employment structure. As such, they are related to distinctive features of modern labour markets, such as multiple, more frequent labour market transitions, often attached to stages in the life course.

Another feature that recalls earlier labour markets is the slow but significant increase in time-related underemployment and long hours work. But these forms of working-time insecurity are now connected to employer strategies aimed at particular types of labour rather than product market fluctuations, and again they remain more limited in extent than in the nineteenth century. Similarly, as in the case of intermittent work, underemployment is associated with part-time work and new forms of participation in the workforce. It is more difficult to judge changes in the extent of work insecurity, since new hazards have replaced those dominant in earlier periods, but dangers to health and safety do not seem as widespread as in the nineteenth century. Income insecurity is a substantial problem. This is only partly to do with low wages, and instead, as in the nineteenth

century, it is often linked to the resurgence of intermittent employment and underemployment. In contrast to the earlier period, however, income insecurity is cushioned by access to sources of income beyond wages, in particular a social welfare net.

The influence of labour regulation and social welfare as buffers for individual workers and households represents a crucial difference between the nineteenth century and today. It is true that both systems are subject to erosion and can appear rather tattered at times. This has widened gaps and reduced access to minimum conditions and benefits. Moreover, both can be used to favour the already privileged and to amplify class inequalities, for example in government efforts to push welfare recipients into low-wage employment. These erosion processes reflect the influence of neoliberal policies of labour market deregulation. But they remain contested, and it is possible to point to counter tendencies that promise consolidation, as in the development, albeit very late in Australia, of comprehensive, government-funded paid parental leave.³⁴ Moreover, trade unions, though reduced in strength and influence and somewhat tarnished in reputation, continue to be important in economic and social life. The continued existence of such buffers means that insecure work, where it is present, tends to have a lesser impact than in previous periods; insecure work does

not lead so directly or so immediately to insecure lives.

Our rough sketch points to at least two major differences between the nineteenth century and the present. First, we are dealing with a changed labour market structure, with a more diversified workforce and more diversified patterns of participation in paid work, often structured according to phases of life. Second, we are still operating within a framework of twentieth century labour regulation and social welfare systems. These differences affect even the elements of insecure work that appear strikingly parallel to earlier periods. One example is casual work. Nineteenth century labour markets are often described as highly casualised. This description is apt, insofar as they were labour markets with high levels of employment insecurity for most workers, fostering instability in jobs and high levels of intermittency. As a consequence there was no strict line of division between employment and unemployment; many workers occupied instead a kind of grey zone in which they moved uneasily from one job to the next. Casual work is once again a significant and highly problematic phenomenon in Australia today, comprising over 20 per cent of the workforce and affecting millions of households. But its meaning today diverges from its meaning in the nineteenth century. The workers currently incorporated in casual work are more likely to be female and

young. At the same time, only some current casual workers are intermittent workers; many are in stable jobs with regular rosters — so-called ‘permanent casuals’. As suggested above, the current version of casual work is shaped by its location within specific gaps in protective labour regulation. Its meaning today is derived from the contrast with the dominant standard employment relation; casual workers are rightly defined in terms of a common lack of most of the standard rights and benefits that have become part of ongoing employment contracts.³⁵

Nevertheless, even if we judge talk of a return to nineteenth century conditions as exaggerated, it remains true that the spread of insecure work is a substantial problem in Australia today. It is a problem that demands a political response.

Politics

The rough sketch above can also help to clarify the political (or policy) challenge in the present-day. Political action of course has to be constructed; we cannot rely on the independent power of a societal ‘counter-movement’, as (under-) theorised by Polanyi and some latter-day researchers. But the politics of combatting insecure work is a murky area, clouded by intersecting and often unfinished debates, both amongst those committed to reducing insecure work and between defenders and opponents of insecure work. I will just make a few comments.

On the one hand, we can see that the political challenge in reducing insecure work is not the same as in earlier periods. The major difference stems from changed labour markets and the existence of a more diversified labour force, which shares an interest in diverse schedules to fit their needs at different stages of life. As a result, the model of standard employment, oriented to full-time, permanent, waged work now appears too constricting and based on an outdated presumption that a male breadwinner continues to be the central participant in paid work. In particular, changed labour markets imply a need to accommodate the increasing interest of many workers in good quality part-time work and better work-life balance. On the other hand, it would be wrong to conclude that the political challenge is completely novel. Labour markets have changed, together with the composition of the workforce, but most workers continue to identify economic security as the platform for a better, more decent life. This necessarily connects the struggles of the present to those of the past.³⁶

The precise way in which struggles of the present can be connected to those of the past remains, however, contested. One broad issue concerns the desired dimensions of economic security. Does the changed labour market structure demand a new configuration, perhaps pursuing the goal of income security in a different way and giving priority to occupational career and representation

in place of employment security? A related issue concerns the continued relevance of the SER, both as a guiding vision of change and as an inherited set of regulatory institutions and practices. Should it be jettisoned, to be replaced by a new set of standards, perhaps tailored to the palette of different types of employment? Or, more plausibly, can it be reformed by preserving the structure and reinvigorating the content, for example by opening it up to accommodate good quality part-time work? Tied up with the broad issues of political vision are issues to do with evaluating the relevance of traditional forms of organisation and action, largely associated with worker mobilisation through trade unions and socialist or social-democratic political parties, which played such an important part in diminishing and softening the impact of insecure work in earlier periods. Can we rely on present-day trade unions to mount the same sort of challenge? How might we mount such a challenge?³⁷

In addition to these arguments, we should also mention the hulking presence of the neoliberal position, voiced most insistently by representatives from the employer associations and the conservative think tanks. Though none of the employer associations were willing to offer a submission to the Independent Inquiry, their opinions on the topic of insecure work were widely circulated through official statements and op-ed pieces in

the daily press. Their central contention is that the problem of insecure work is falsely labelled; most of it is better described as ‘flexible’ work. They argue that the forms of flexible work, such as casual work, are part and parcel of the diversity of modern labour markets, welcomed both by employers and individual employees, and they should not be restricted by protective regulation or trade union action. Indeed, they advocate further labour market deregulation and further restrictions on trade union action in order to increase labour market flexibility and improve prosperity. These arguments are largely free of any supporting evidence but remain dominant in the public discussion. This position invokes flexibility but clearly confuses flexibility for employers with flexibility for employees. Though the arguments are couched in terms of modern labour markets and the value of diversity, they reach back to a traditional nineteenth-century promotion of market forces.³⁸

In talking about politics and the struggle against insecure work, we return to our starting point, the career of Alex Macdonald. His work — together with that of his comrades and friends — remains part of a crucial ongoing debate.

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Top Dog to Old Hat: Jack Egerton and the Trades Hall Group — 1957 to 1980

Sue Yarrow

The Trades Hall Group (THG) was a group of senior unionists who served under John Alfred Roy (Jack) Egerton,¹ while he was both President of the Queensland Trades and Labour Council (TLC) (1957–76) and President of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) (1959–76). I critically examine their rise to power and the nature and substance of their leadership of the party and the labour movement. Ultimately, their leadership was overwhelmed in two ways: when the labour movement filled the streets opposing the Bjelke-Petersen government; and, when the ALP National Executive and the courts ruled against the Group, intervening to democratize the Queensland branch.

Background

Underpinning this paper is an examination of how power is held and balanced between the unions, the party administrators, the parliamentary leader/s and the branch membership. To focus on this, we need to look back to the early formation of the party and its affiliated unions.

In 1893, the first labor members were voted into Queensland's parliament. By 1913 the Australian Workers' Union (AWU), had formed from amalgamations of smaller unions covering mainly rural workers employed across the state. Queensland's workforce was predominantly in the rural sector. The AWU was granted wide coverage of various callings by the early industrial courts, enabling the formation of this large general union. On the basis of these numbers, the union had majority voting strength at Australian Labor Party (ALP) forums and controlled the ALP's administrative organizations and policy platform. From the very start, the AWU enjoyed a high degree of dominance over the ALP.

The AWU was a non-militant union — slow to strike, and preferring to take grievances to the Industrial Commission. By contrast, the craft unions, with membership based around single callings and affiliated to the Queensland Trades and Labor Council (TLC), considered that part of their strength lay in judicious use of strike action.

Following the privations of the depression years and the contribution of ordinary Australians during World War II many workers in trade unions were attracted to left leaning theories about socialism and communism. Some Communists rose to prominent

**BIG MAJORITIES
ALP MEN
SWEEP
CLERK POLL**

ALP Industrial Group candidates swept the polls in the Federated Clerks' Union ballot, which was counted yesterday.

Group candidates won overwhelmingly despite vigorous campaigns against them during the election.

Highlight of the clerks' election was the fight for the vice-presidency by the two main candidates—Mr. W. J. Barry, a Prices Branch officer, and Mr. W. H. Wood, president of the ALP Corinda branch.

Mr. Barry beat Mr. Wood by more than 650 votes.

leadership positions in unions and on the TLC's administration.

At this time, the Catholic Church was strongly opposed to the rising

communist influence in Australia and urged parishioners to participate in the secret "Catholic Social Studies Movement" within their workplaces and in local ALP branches. Into the 1950s, Australia and its wartime allies were seriously confronting Communism, and the ALP and TLC, were under scrutiny. These tensions played a part in Queensland's 1957 ALP split.

By the late 1940s, the ALP had been continuously in office in Queensland since 1915 except for 1929-1932 the years of the Moore Government. Through most of that time the AWU had continued its strong dominating leadership of the party. The AWU was strongly anti-Communist, whereas, the TLC affiliated unions were used to working alongside Communists. Within the ALP there arose concerns regarding the level of influence of the Communists in the party. In 1947 an Industrial Groups Committee chaired by the AWU's Joseph (Joe) Bukowski was established to counter this communist influence. Members of this group and the unionists they influenced became known as "*Groupers*."

Another factor that assisted the influence of the AWU over the party was the Queensland electoral system. The electoral mal-apportionment in Queensland skewed election outcomes for generations. In 1973, Queensland was still divided into four zones, in which the quota for urban regions was

almost double that of some country areas. This system of zonal mal-apportionment was introduced by the Hanlon Government in 1949, continued by the Country Party and had a flow-on effect favouring rural electorates (and AWU numbers) in the election of ALP delegates to conferences.

In the TLC by the early 1950s, a new leader, from the Boilermakers' Society came to prominence. He was a skilled negotiator with noted ability to build consensus and to bring warring groups together.

The rise and fall of Vincent Clare Gair

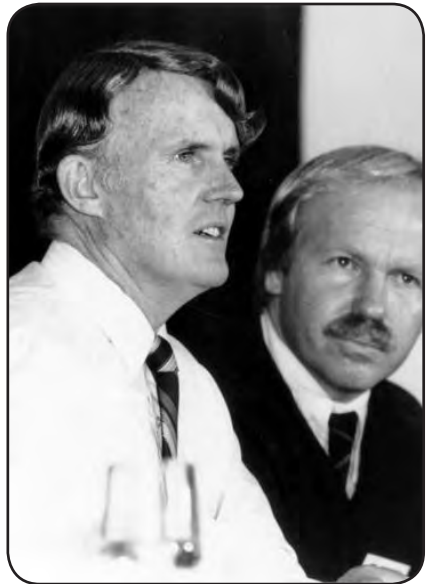
This segment shows the circumstances and personalities that contributed to Jack Egerton's assumption of leadership of the ALP.

Premier Ned Hanlon (1946 — 1952) held an AWU union ticket. The union continued its high degree of influence over the ALP government's policy direction and had developed considerable closeness to Hanlon's ministers. Following Hanlon's death Vincent Clare Gair became Queensland Premier.

On 5 October 1954 the Australian Labor Movement split asunder when Labor's Federal leader, Dr Evatt, denounced the Catholic Social Studies Movement as a "secret" and "disloyal"

organization. In Queensland Bukowski and the AWU broke from the Groups.²⁰

By 1956, challenging issues began to stack up for Gair, some of which included: a poor result from the Queensland Industrial Commission following the 1956 Shearer's Strike (the AWU had affiliated with the TLC following the TLC's strong support during the strike) and Gair's declaration of a state of emergency to move the wool; and, his refusal to accept membership of the AWU while holding a Grouper controlled (Clerk's) union ticket. The AWU's access to the Premier's office and its influence had clearly diminished under Gair.



Denis Murphy and Peter Beattie, Brisbane, ca. 1975

Bukowski (the AWU and ALP President) now aligned with Egerton, the TLC Chair. A side issue was that Gair and Bukowski loathed each other since childhood. The Premier was expected by the ALP Conference to introduce 3 weeks annual leave for Queensland blue-collar workers, but failed to do so. This condition was already enjoyed by Queensland Government white collar workers (members of Grouper unions). It became the publically justifiable reason for the 1957 split and an issue around which all AWU and TLC forces united against their Premier.

Gair was expelled by the Party on 24 April 1957 and took most of his Cabinet with him to form the Queensland Labor Party (QLP). The backbench and Minister Duggan stayed with the ALP. In the August 1957 election, Labor lost office in Queensland.

On 18 December 1958, following Bukowski's behavior at the Trades Hall Christmas party, the Queensland Central Executive (QCE) moved to suspend him. On 23 February 1959, Bukowski responded by disaffiliating the AWU from the ALP and from the TLC. So the Premier was expelled for not implementing party policy, and the Labor Party in Queensland split having been in government for 39 of the past 42 years. It was to be out of office for the next 32 years.

Jack Egerton and the Trades Hall Group take over

Who were the THG, how did they see themselves and how did they operate?

Egerton was a clever operator. From a leadership position in quite a small union, with careful planning and judicious alliances, he took on the leadership of the TLC, then, he joined forces with the AWU to oust Premier Gair. Knowing Bukowski's reputation as a bully who would never back down from an argument, drunk or sober, it was probably no surprise when the Christmas party ructions provided Egerton with the opportunity to move against Bukowski, the State President of the AWU and of the ALP, who like Gair was loathed by many. When, as a consequence, the AWU disaffiliated from the ALP in February 1959, it left the field and the power to Egerton. Wayne Swan's thesis suggests that Egerton commenced planning to oust the AWU from the ALP in September or October 1958.

The term Trades Hall Group describes the group of TLC affiliated union officials who served on both the TLC Executive and/or the ALP Inner Executive of the Queensland Central Executive (QCE) during Egerton's time as both the President of the Queensland TLC and President of the ALP. Sometimes they are referred to as the "Old Guard", when compared to the "New Guard" — loosely identified as

the reformers. None of the THG would have been Communist Party members.

As the leader of the labour movement in Queensland, Egerton wielded huge power. From 1958, the THG stepped into the role previously played by the AWU of completely dominating all aspects of ALP activity. Egerton managed meetings well and found consensus on issues. He was well respected as a strong leader. The Inner Executive was comprised of seven white, male, Anglo-Saxon origin, blue collar union officials, “*real workers*” in Egerton’s terms. The THG ensured that “their types” of people were selected to stand for vacant seats or enjoy offered appointments.

The ALP State Parliamentary Labor Party (SPLP) of those days, having just watched their former Premier being expelled, for disobeying the party executive and conference, would have been a very compliant group when confronted with the demands of the emerging THG. Then, as now, to become an elected MP was often a huge step up in terms of security of employment, a regular income and generous retirement benefits, so aspiring politicians, given support from the party controllers to win a safe seat, would take the right line on issues and show continuing loyalty to the group.

This group surrounding Egerton included: Neal Kane, Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union (ETU)

and Senior ALP Vice-President; Tom Burton, Secretary of the Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) and ALP State President (1976-1980); Tom Burns, ALP Secretary and former ETU official; Fred Whitby, TLC Secretary; Harry Hauenschild, former boilermaker, Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union (AMWSU) President and later ALP President; Ernie Adsett, State Secretary of the Storemen and Packers’ Union to 1982; Clem Jones, ALP Mayor of Brisbane; Gerry Jones, Party Official and former ETU Organizer; Arch Bevis, Transport Workers’ Union (TWU) State Secretary (1970s-1980s); and Nic Bos, Party Organizer and former ETU Organizer who became the ALP State Secretary during the reform years. Each of these union officials was a leader of their own union in Queensland. The group displayed absolute loyalty within the THG and an abiding loyalty to the union movement generally.

They saw themselves as the authentic representatives of the militant working class, as “left” politically, with their militant industrial stance and at a national level they aligned with the left leaning unions. Their definition of “left” related to industrial strength and preparedness to take militant industrial action but gave little recognition to “left” social issues such as provision of child care or abortion.

How the THG functioned

How successful were the THG for the party?

There were no formalized factions, in the sense that they now exist within the ALP although the AWU was clearly a united force when it dominated the ALP, and the Trades Hall unions were clearly not aligned with the AWU for much of the time. Through their dominating personalities, the leaders of the different groups maintained absolute loyalty and discipline within their ranks. Within the THG, a mix of bullying, ridicule, humiliation, or denigration of those opposed to accepted THG views, was used to keep members in line. Fitzgerald and Thornton state,

..the Trades Hall grouping which triumphed at the 1963 convention was ruthless in smashing opposition and in denying opportunities for other groups to express their views in party policy and to secure nomination for winnable parliamentary seats.

They took the view that the perks of office could be distributed to those who showed loyalty to their cause — Senate seats, safe state and federal seats, were all prized and to be distributed to THG preferred candidates. Gough Whitlam in his inaugural T.J. Ryan Memorial Address in 1978, referred to the Queensland Branch's leaders:

They believe (in) picking a candidate for how he will vote in caucus — beget a candidate in their own image — clones can turn out clowns. Jack Duggan, when leader of the Opposition in Queensland suggested that some ALP leaders 'Couldn't care less if the Labor party is in power or opposition'. Following the split and the disaffiliation of the AWU, the state electoral results under the leadership of the THG plummeted. The ALP no longer had the rural organization and financial support of the AWU to depend upon. Election returns fell from 49 MPs in 1956, to 25–26 through to the end of the 1960s.

The best result was achieved in 1972 when 33 state MPs were elected for the ALP but this fell dramatically in 1974. Denis Murphy claimed in his biography on Bill Hayden that the Queensland Branch had passed the death sentence on the Whitlam Government by delivering only 4 out of 10 senate seats in the May 1974 double dissolution, with only 29 out of 60 senate positions attained by the ALP making possible the rejection of the supply bill. Beattie points out that if Queensland had matched the efforts of every other state, the Labor Government could not have been sacked.

When the state election was held in December 1974, the number of ALP members was reduced to from 33 to

11. The THG, and Tom Burns who took over as parliamentary leader, considered it was Whitlam to blame for the reversal, not themselves.

Generational change impacting the ALP

Queensland was changing but the THG were not moving with those changes

Real power in the ALP was concentrated in the hands of a trusted THG few. Hayden remarked how educational standards had improved in the wider community and amongst the influx of new members. The THG were strongly opposed to “groupers,” a term they used to vilify and discredit people they opposed. They were always looking backwards to the 1950s, denigrating new members as “*groupers and grubs.*” But the new people were looking forward to new policy initiatives. The new members who did not fit the THG mould were all sorts: academics — Ernie Adsett had no time for “academic dickheads” and Neal Kane told a Toowong ALP Branch meeting in 1977, that professional people such as doctors, lawyers etc had no right to be in the ALP; environmentalists (bloody greenies); women (bloody women); and, (Brisbane) western suburbs ALP members and residents (bloody silvertails). The THG were all fairly typical Aussie, hard drinking types (Graham Richardson said ‘On it all the time: always pissed’) who were glad when the party offices moved in



Sir John (Jack) Egerton reading a congratulatory telegram, 1976

with 4KQ the radio station, because the Breakfast Creek Hotel was just a short walk over the bridge.

Through Whitlam’s ascendancy as federal party leader, the ALP’s southern branches opened up to new generations and new ideas. Generational change also occurred in Queensland but the THG rejected the ideas of the new recruits. Raymond Evans explained it this way:

As the tectonic plates of cultural normality shifted, new movements and causes broke suddenly across old landscapes: generational rebellion; massive anti-war, anti-nuclear and anti-conscription mobilizations;

struggles for personal liberation ... sexual experimentation; anti-censorship campaigns ... the growth of anti-racism, multiculturalism and indigenous rights; the surge of second-wave feminism and an emerging gay subculture.... ecological consciousness, incorporating environmental conservation All such movements were anathema to mainstream local practice and Queenslanders ... adopted a mainly reactionary bearing towards them. They were officially interpreted as “communism” or “lawlessness” and rigorously resisted.

Egerton’s acceptance of a knighthood in 1976 precipitated his exit from the party and a change in THG leadership. Egerton’s successor at the Trades Hall, Harry Hauenschild summed it up for everyone, when he explained he could never understand what prompted Jack Egerton to accept that knighthood. In previous years, Egerton had proven such a cunning tactician, his great strength was his ability to weld agreements where conflicts had previously existed. Now, he and the THG did not try to negotiate, or absorb new members into the leadership group, or to share power.

The 1976 Queensland Government Cabinet Minutes reveal ‘The Government managed to manufacture problems within Labor ranks by giving (recommending) a knighthood to Sir

Jack Egerton’. Egerton exited quickly from his positions in the party, following his knighthood and the Presidential position was filled by Tom Burton, a vastly less aggressive character, but the same style of leadership persisted.

Life under Bjelke-Petersen

Bjelke-Petersen’s style of government was alienating Queenslanders and delivering them into the hands of an un-welcoming ALP. Particularly the “Right to March” issue outraged many in the labour movement, but the THG were unmoved.

Following the example of their union comrades in the south, some members and supporters of the THG became advocates of green issues and participated in demonstrations against the Vietnam War and conscription. A number of THG members, alongside many soon-to-be reformers demonstrated against the 1971 South African Springbok Rugby team.

In those days, under Johannes Bjelke-Petersen’s, Country Party-Liberal leadership, the government lurched from outrage to outrage. Queensland’s Civil Liberties Coordinating Committee, was formed in 1967 to watch over citizen’s rights and to uphold the right of citizens to march in opposition to the Government. The “right to march” itself became a flash point for conflict between the Government and the labour movement.

Marches were held around many issues over many years: Anti-Vietnam War in 1968; in 1974 Mary Kathleen uranium mine sparked continuing anti-nuclear marches causing wild clashes in Brisbane; the women's movement and indigenous land rights groups marched. When Premier Bjelke-Petersen declared there would be no more street marches in 1977, some citizens were outraged. Marchers said it was about freedom of speech and their democratic right to protest. Anne Warner said that the protestors, in taking to the streets provided the most visible, tangible opposition to the government of the day. Allan Patience says the march bans provoked displays of non-violent protest un-paralleled in Australian history. In late 1978, demonstrations were held across Queensland — Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Mackay, Townsville, Bundaberg, Gladstone, and Surfers Paradise. At Collinsville, most of the adult population marched. Some THG supporters did support the marches, but the leaders of the State Parliamentary Labor Party (SPLP) who at that time were handpicked by the THG, were strongly opposed to street marches. In 1978 the ALP were left open to ridicule when new leader Tom Burns organized a (QCE approved) protest march for which a permit was sought (disgusting the protestors who disagreed with the permit system). The government called Burns' bluff and issued a permit. Whereupon, Burns cancelled the march, saying it was a "ploy." The Courier Mail said

the ALP 'looked idiotic'. During this long "Right to March" struggle, the QCE leadership and the SPLP turned aside from the issue. When Joy Ardill, delegate from McPherson federal electorate, asked a QCE meeting why the SPLP was not supporting the street marches, she was told to 'mind her own business'. The THG and the SPLP failed to grasp the importance of the street march issue, and failed to lead the labour movement in opposing the Bjelke-Petersen government on this issue.

The emergence of the ALP reform movement

The new people joining the ALP were marginalized by the THG resulting in daily public brawling in the media. Finally, the ALP National Executive intervened, only to have the THG take the matter to the courts.

Many Queenslanders who were impacted by these and other issues were seeking an alternate government. They were angered by the Bjelke-Petersen government's excesses, looking for leadership from the ALP, and joining it in large numbers. The THG mistrusted these new people — academics, people from the western suburbs of Brisbane, white collar unionists, environmentalists and women. The Whitlam government had lost office amid the dramatic dismissal by the Governor General, and that brought a further wave of sympathizers

into the ALP. These new people began wanting changes in the ALP: more say for branch members; better representation for women; better party administration; an opportunity to stand for public office. But the THG dug in and refused repeated requests to share power with them.

This absolute refusal to include the reformers into the governance of the party precipitated an on-going conflict. The first call for federal intervention came from the Indooroopilly/Kenmore Branch in October 1976. Years of internal party conflict ensued, all flushed daily through the media. Finally, the National Executive intervened in the affairs of the Queensland Branch in March 1980. This was challenged in the courts by the THG. The courts upheld the right of the National Executive to intervene and enforced power sharing and other democratizing changes upon the Queensland ALP's leaders and rules.

The THG were defeated by their inability to move with the changes that were happening in their world, their refusal to share power, by their outdated style of leadership, by their lack of support during an attack on freedom to demonstrate, and ultimately they lost the numbers as critical mass built up in the party, opposing them.

Notes

- 1 John Alfred Roy (Jack) Egerton, (1918-1998) a boilermaker who rose to Secretary of the Boilermakers Society (1943), President of the TLC (1957-1976), President of the ALP (1959 — 1976), member of the ACTU Executive and member of the ALP National Executive. Knighted in 1976.
- 2 Ross Fitzgerald and Harold Thornton, *Labor in Queensland from the 1880s to 1988*, (St Lucia, Queensland, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1969) p 9.
- 3 Ibid, p 40.
- 4 Brian J. Costar, *Labor, Politics and Unemployment: Queensland During the Great Depression*, Doctor of Philosophy in History thesis, University of Queensland, January 1981. In this document Costar argues Queensland experienced two depressions — a severe locally-induced recession in the late 1920s which was unrelated to the post 1929 world wide depression.
- 5 Wilfred Granville Ardill OAM, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Tugun, Gold Coast on 16 May 2011.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit p 51.
- 8 Ibid, and also P.L. Reynolds, *The Democratic Labor Party* (Milton, Queensland: The Jacaranda Press, 1974) p 9.
- 9 D.J. Murphy, (ed.) *The Big Strikes — Queensland 1889 — 1965* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1983), p 255.
- 10 Rochus Joseph (Joe) Bukowski (1901-1960) was a canecutter then an AWU organiser who became AWU State President (1951-1956), AWU State Secretary (1956-1960), and President of the ALP (1956-1959).
- 11 Raymond Evans, *A History of Queensland* (Port Melbourne, Victoria, Australia:

- Cambridge University Press, 2007), p 201.
- 12 Hugh V. Emy, *The Politics of Australian Democracy — an Introduction to Political Science* (Moray Street, South Melbourne: The Macmillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd, 1974) p 323.
 - 13 Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915 to the Early 1980s — a History of Queensland*, (St Lucia, Queensland, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1984) p138.
 - 14 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit p 144.
 - 15 Hon William George Hayden AC, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Waterfront Place, Brisbane on 1 April 2011.
 - 16 Edward Michael (Ned) Hanlon (1887–1952), was a porter then shunter on the Queensland Railways, ALP MLA for Ithaca (1926-1952), Queensland Premier (1946-1952).
 - 17 DJ Murphy, RB Joyce, and Colin A Hughes, (eds.) *Labor in Power — The Labor Party and Governments in Queensland 1915-57*, (St Lucia, Queensland, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1980) p 492.
 - 18 Vincent Clare (Vince) Gair, clerk in Queensland Railways, MLA for South Brisbane (1932- 1960). Deputy Premier 1947, then Premier (1952–1957). Expelled from the ALP 1957. Formed the QLP. Elected to Senate for DLP (1964–1974).
 - 19 Queensland Parliamentary website.
 - 20 Bradley Bowden, Simon Blackwood, Cath Rafferty, and Cameron Allan, (eds.), *Work and Strife in Paradise — The History of Labour Relations in Queensland 1859–2009* (Sydney, Australia: Federation Press, 2009), p46.
 - 21 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit., p 154.
 - 22 Ibid, p 144.
 - 23 Hon Manfred Douglas Cross AM, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Ashgrove on 13 December 2010.
 - 24 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit., p 147.
 - 25 Ibid, p 148.
 - 26 Hon Manfred Douglas Cross AM, op cit and also Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit p 174.
 - 27 Fitzgerald and Thornton op cit., p 175.
 - 28 Ibid, pp 148 and 151.
 - 29 Ibid, p 150.
 - 30 Ibid p 174.
 - 31 Ibid p 174
 - 32 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit., p 173 quote Wayne Swan’s interviews with Dittmer, Jones and Egerton to provide this quote.
 - 33 Hon William George Hayden AC, op cit.
 - 34 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit., p 187.
 - 35 Wayne Swan, *Factionalism — the Case of Queensland Labor 1959 — 1966*, Dissertation submitted for BA with Honours in the University of Queensland, Department of Government, December 1975, p 83.
 - 36 Hon Manfred Douglas Cross AM, op cit.
 - 37 Neal Kane was State Secretary of the ETU from 1960s — 1987. Served on the TLC and was also Senior Vice-President of the ALP, serving on the QCE and the Inner Executive.
 - 38 Thomas James (Tom) Burns (1931–2007), was an ETU member, ALP Organiser (1960–1965), ALP State Secretary(1965–1972), Federal President (1970–1973), Queensland Branch President (1980), elected as MLA for Lytton (1972–1996), Opposition Leader (1974–1978) and Deputy Premier (1989–1996).
 - 39 Fred Whitby was an ETU Organiser before becoming Secretary to the TLC

- (1969–1984). Elected in 1966 to the ALP Inner Executive and Chaired the first Disputes Tribunal, established under National Executive’s limited intervention.
- 40 Harry Hauenschild (1933–2011) joined Queensland Railways as a porter, soon apprenticed as a boilermaker. Joined the Boilermakers Society of Australia (later the AMWSU) became a paid official of the union. President of the TLC (1976–1990), ALP member from 1960, served on the ALP Inner Executive and the QCE, ALP Senior Vice President (1977–1981).
- 41 Norman Francis (Gerry) Jones (1932–) was a research assistant before becoming ALP State Organiser in 1967. Elected as MLA for Everton (1972–74), then ALP Executive Officer (1976–1977) ALP State Secretary (1977–1980), then to Senate (1980-1996).
- 42 Robert John (Bob) Henricks, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Kelvin Grove, Brisbane on 9 October 2012.
- 43 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit, p 191.
- 44 Ardill, Lorraine Joy interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Tugun, Gold Coast on 31 May 2012.
- 45 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit, p 185.
- 46 Ibid, pp 186 and 187.
- 47 Edward Gough (Gough) Whitlam (1916 -), was the 21st Prime Minister of Australia. Joined the ALP in 1945, practised law until election in 1952. Became Leader of the Opposition in 1967 and Prime Minister (1972–1975).
- 48 Whitlam, Gough *Reform During Recession: The Way Ahead — Inaugural T.J. Ryan Memorial Lecture* presented on April 28, 1978 (Toowong, Queensland: University of Queensland ALP Club, 1978) p 21.
- 49 John Edmund (Jack) Duggan (1910–1993) Secretary of the Toowoomba TLC in 1932, elected MLA for Toowoomba (1935–1968). Deputy Premier in Gair Government. The only Cabinet member who remained loyal to the ALP after the split.
- 50 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit., p 185.
- 51 The University of Western Australia website — Australian Politics and Elections database.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 William George (Bill) Hayden (1933 -) was employed as a Queensland public servant then as a police officer, posted to Redbank. MHR for Oxley (1961–1987), Leader of the Opposition (1977–83) and Governor General of Australia (1988–96).
- 54 Denis Murphy, *Hayden — a political biography* (Sydney, Australia: Angus and Robertson, 1980) p 172.
- 55 Peter Beattie, edited by Brian Stevenson, *In the Arena: Memories of an ALP State Secretary in Queensland* (Bowen Hills, Brisbane: Boolarong Publications, 1990) p 13.
- 56 The University of Western Australia website op cit.
- 57 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit p 199.
- 58 Jamie Walker, *Goss: a Political Biography* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1995) p 15.
- 59 Hon William George Hayden AC, op cit.
- 60 Norma Jones, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Kelvin Grove, Brisbane on 13 December 2012.
- 61 Jamie Walker, op cit p 46
- 62 John Stubbs, *Hayden* (Port Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: Mandarin, 1990) 2004, p 204.
- 63 Graham Frederick Richardson (1949–) was General Secretary of the NSW ALP (1976–1983) and is a former politician from NSW ALP. Was a Senator (1983–1994). Now a lobbyist and media commentator.

- 64 Jamie Walker, op cit., p 48.
- 65 Evans, op cit p 222.
- 66 Fitzgerald and Thornton, op cit p 201.
- 67 Harry Hauenschild AO, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Inala, Brisbane on 3 April 2011.
- 68 Hon William George Hayden AC, op cit
- 69 Solomon, Dr David AM, *Annual Release of Cabinet Minutes — Background to the 1976 Cabinet Minutes*, p1
- 70 Robert John (Bob) Henricks, op cit
- 71 Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915 to the Early 1980s — a History of Queensland*, (St Lucia, Queensland Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1984), p 560 *.IstoryH*
- 72 Ibid, p 563.
- 73 Evans, op cit p 231
- 74 Patience, op cit p153.
- 75 Hon Anne Marie Warner, interviewed by Sue Yarrow at Kelvin Grove, Brisbane 4 September 2011.
- 76 Allan Patience, op cit., p 153.
- 77 Evans op cit p 224
- 78 Fitzgerald and Thornton (quoting Courier Mail) 4/7/78) op cit p. 224
- 79 Lorraine Joy Ardill, op cit.
- 80 Hon Anne Marie Warner, op cit.
- 81 The Hon Peter Douglas Beattie AO, interviewed by Sue Yarrow on 30 January 2012 at Windsor, Brisbane.
- 82 Interviews with Hon Anne Marie Warner, Hon David Hamill and Hon Wayne Goss on Queensland Speaks website.
- 83 Interviews by Sue Yarrow cited above with Wilf Ardill, Joy Ardill, Hon Manfred Cross AM, Terry Hampson, Hon William George Hayden AC, Robert John (Bob) Henricks.
- 84 Hon Manfred Douglas Cross AM, op cit.

Birthday Greetings!

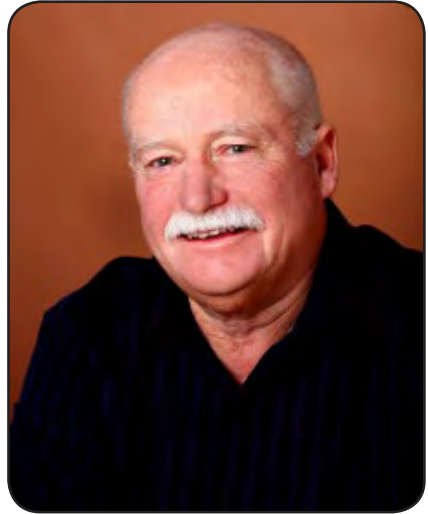
The BLHA would like to congratulate one of our life members, Wally Stubbings., on his 100th birthday - which he celebrates this March. Wally has taken an active part in the labour movement , both industrially and politically, over many decades.

Greg Mallory, President, BLHA

Interview with Dick Williams, President of the Queensland Branch of the ALP and former Secretary of the ETU (Queensland Branch)

Conducted January 2013 by

**Howard Guille and
Ross Gwyther**



Dick Williams

Can you summarise what you've done in the ETU

I did my electrical apprenticeship in Queensland Rail in Ipswich and Redbank. Then I worked for a series of contractors and, in 1974, started at the Box Flat Mine. In 1975, I was elected Shop Steward and from '75 to '84 became a Branch Conference Delegate and, ultimately a State Councillor of the Union. In October 1984, I was seconded into the Union on a six-month period to assist with organising down the Gold Coast in the Construction Contracting area. The SEQEB dispute began six weeks later. I stayed on as Organiser after SEQEB and in 1990, became Assistant Secretary and then in 2001, Secretary, retiring in 2009.

What led you to be active in the union?

I come from a Labour Party and union oriented family. My father was an electrician and my paternal grandfather worked in the boiler shop for the railways. I'm not sure if he was a member of one of the forerunners to the Metalworkers — such as the Boilermakers Society or whether he was an Ironworker. My maternal grandfather was a member of the Ironworkers until the day he died. My mother was a 30 to 40 year member of what used to be the Hospital Employees Federation and was very active as a Conference Delegate, Shop Steward and so on. She was a psych nurse mainly at Wolston Park.

I remember my grandparents and my mother telling me not to speak to

certain people in our street following the split of 1957; to the day she died, my grandmother never spoke to one particular family because they “ratted” and went with Vince Gair to the DLP. I went with my grandfather, working on Bill Hayden’s first election campaign in 1961, doorknocking with him and handing out “how to vote” cards and putting stuff in mail boxes. I think it was just a natural progression for me, given that background, to become a Shop Steward.

I joined the Union as a fourth year apprentice in 1971, a reasonable date, the 1st of April. I just got active and campaigned around various things. Probably my first exposure to leading

an industrial dispute of any significance was the underground “sit in” at the Southern Cross Mine in 1983.

I always remember my first dispute as Shop Steward at Box Flat Mine. It was over the very great decision by our members to go on strike because the company would not employ apprentices. We went on strike, not about increasing our wages and conditions, but providing employment for some of the youth around Ipswich. We won the blue and ended-up with four apprentices.

I also remember in ’75, when they sacked Whitlam on the 11th of the 11th. I was Secretary of the Combined



Dick Williams erecting Eureka flags at the entrance to the Southern Cross No 14 mine symbolised the spirit of the October 1983 staydown action. As Box Flat ETU delegate, Dick had borrowed the flags from his young son’s bedroom for the occasion.

Mining Unions at Box Flat Mine, so I called all the guys underground to the surface and we had a shift meeting and went home and took the afternoon and nightshift home as well. The next day I got a telegram from the union office telling us to get back to work. Which I thought was quite unreasonable of them. I couldn't understand why the revolution didn't start that morning

How were you involved in ALP politics?

I was a member of Young Labour but my ticket shows that I didn't join the senior party until December '74. In 1977, I was a Delegate to the ALP State Conference in Brisbane from the Oxley electorate. In '79, I went to Rockhampton as a Delegate for Oxley again. That was the famous conference when they voted, and I underline the words "they" voted, to allow the AWU back into the party.

Then in 1980, there was federal intervention into the party. Prior to that, the Trades Hall unions essentially ran the party. And you were either with 'em or you were against 'em. And there weren't too many that were against them. People like Harry Hauenschild, Neal Kane, Tommy Burton from the Printers Union, Harry Mellor from the Miso's. Along with Fred Whitby and Jack Edgerton; they were the big leaders of the party and the trade union movement. The ETU had enormous power politically within the party in those days.

What about federal intervention in 1980-81?

Federal intervention was a major shit fight. We had two ALP parties in Queensland for a while. It took two to three years before it finally settled down and a deal was signed between the warring parties and factions became a genuine part of political life. I was locked into what later became the "Old Guard", the ETU, the BLF, Storeman and Packers, the Ironworkers, Vehicle Builders and a number of other unions..

People came together after the three-year blue and by then the old Trades Hall power had been smashed. Equally, from '83 to '89, we all got on with life and worked very hard because of the SEQEB dispute.

Can you briefly sum up the SEQEB dispute?

The SEQEB dispute was about the use of contractors. A SEQEB document fell off the back of a truck and clearly stated that they were going to contract out all new line work. The dispute started just before Christmas 1984. We declared a truce over Christmas, and then the moment the action started again in January, it was on for young and old and we were in and out of the Industrial Commission. Anybody who lived through it knows how chaotic the State was — the place was shut down. The other unions were supporting us magnificently, particularly initially

after the 1,002 were sacked. The Transport Unions had blockades on the state, the Telecommunications Unions, the Postal Unions had blockades on all Government telephones and mail and we had the power wound down in the power stations to critical levels. There was power rationing for weeks on end, all of that was happening, but equally, at the same time, there was a raft of legislation rolled out that was probably the first taste of real anti-union legislation in Australia's history.

The Continuity of Supply Act made it illegal for us to be on strike or any worker in the electricity industry to be on strike. It made it illegal to picket — it had fines and jail terms for all of that. Union officials could be fined and potentially jailed for inciting people to take industrial action. It was the first wave of legislation that allowed scab unions to be set up. The Queensland Power Workers Association, which was a scab union set up to do over the ETU and the other electricity unions, was sponsored solely and wholly by SEQEB, at the taxpayers' expense. Supported by one of the registered unions by the way, but that's another story.

All of the things that Howard did in 2007, and then some, were done in 1985 in Queensland. People don't understand that today, especially the younger people.

What lessons do you draw from the SEQEB dispute?

This is where the political side of things is so important, you can fight as much as you like industrially for wages and conditions, but unless you've got real political power, you can never deliver what we deserve and what workers really deserve. That's certainly my philosophy. I saw it first hand with the SEQEB dispute. We got belted. The union and the members of the ETU who were in the middle of that dispute, were absolutely belted by a government who was hell bent on destroying the union and they almost succeeded.

What was the political response?

Neal Kane and the ETU had placed people into parliament who were good trade unionists and never forgot where they came from. Kenny Vaughan and Nev Warburton in particular, were both ex-Assistant Secretaries of the ETU and became Ministers in the first Goss Labor Government in 1989. Now as luck would have it, Kenny Vaughan turned up as Minister for Mines and Energy and Nev Warburton turned up as Minister for Industrial Relations.

So, within a matter of weeks, days in some respects, some of SEQEB outcomes were redressed. With the redrafting of the industrial legislation, we were brought back into the mainstream. The sacked SEQEB workers had their superannuation

entitlements reinstated — though some people were never found; those that wanted to go back to SEQEB, could go back to SEQEB though not many of them took them up on that. The writs hanging over the heads of power station operators were cancelled.

None of this was perfect. In the minds of the ETU officials of the time and in the minds of the sacked people, it has never been resolved. We are still at war as far as we're concerned. We never got it all back, and, to my mind and to the mind, I think of every other organiser or official in the ETU who went through that dispute, it is still not over. That's how raw that nerve is within some of us.

Even so, because we were able to change a government, we could redress some of the excessive force and coercion used to crush a bunch of workers in an industrial dispute. It taught me a great political and industrial lesson. It taught me, on the industrial side, that if you're gonna take on a government, you've got to be prepared to fight to the death. It's as simple as that. And the chances of beating governments if a government is really, really, really determined to do you over, are pretty negligible. On the other hand, it also taught me that to deliver what workers are entitled to in our society; we need to have governments that support the working class, not governments that are just supportive of the employers and the like.

How did the ETU change after SEQEB?

Prior to the SEQEB dispute, the ETU had a bit over 8,000 financial members in Queensland. We had roughly a \$1 million in the bank or thereabouts, sorry tell a lie, we didn't have a \$1 million in the bank, we had bought a floor of the Trades Hall that was worth about a \$1 million, and we had several hundred thousand dollars in cash. When we finished the SEQEB dispute, or when some people called it over in late '85 - early '86, the union was about \$2 million in debt and our membership had slipped to about 6,250.

Bob Hendricks was Secretary from '87 to 2001. He built us back up to where we had significant funds in the bank. I think around \$2 or \$3 million when I became the Secretary. Our membership peaked at 8,500 to 9,000 just prior to Howard's election win in '96. We were on a downhill slide like all other unions from '96 to 2001. From 2001 to 2009, our membership went from, I'll never forget this number, 7,771 on the day I took over and it was 11,868 when I went out the door in 2009.

I wouldn't say the ETU was gun shy from '87 to 2001 but we used to pick our disputes judiciously and we were not a campaigning union, I'll say it that way. We changed from 96-97 when Howard was elected. This really kicked in from 2000 onwards. We became a proper campaigning union and set out to do a number of things. One was to lift

the wages and conditions of electrical workers in Queensland especially pay which had fallen against electricians across the country and against other trades within Queensland particularly in the Building and Construction area.

Over the four bargaining campaigns from 2001 to 2007, we increased wages by about 40%. Now timing's everything in life; we were helped because there was a lot of work on; Lang Park was being done and that was where we got the 36-hour week.

What about politically?

We set out do a couple of other things — increase our influence within the trade union movement and increase our political influence generally. We could only do that if we were a campaigning organisation and that didn't mean just campaigning about wages and conditions. We would campaign on social issues and issues that affected society generally. I'm always very proud of our anti-nuclear and anti uranium stance.

I was always happy with the old Trades Hall group, but not so happy with Labor Unity because they were in effect too socially conservative for me on abortion, women's rights, and those sorts of issues. I didn't think that the Labor Unity was the best faction for the ETU if we were going to be a genuine campaigning, left union

We had the debate at our Branch Conference in 2004. It was about 'should we be affiliated to a political party' and, if the answer to that was yes, 'which party?' If the answer was the ALP, 'which faction?' And we had that debate and it came up with the left. We moved to the left in 2004 and we're still in the left.

How big a debate was it?

Huge, both affiliation and joining the left- it went for about two and a half hours. It is debated every two years — though people are now very comfortable with the idea of being in the left. There has been one longer debate on affiliation and that was after Peter Simpson, the current Secretary, was expelled from the party for a short period of time.

Can we look at the ALP governments since 1989 — starting with Goss

I think the biggest criticism that can be made of the Goss government and why they were defeated was that they didn't do enough. They came in with a mandate to really reform this state and yes they did all of those good things that I talked about in terms of righting the wrongs about the SEQEB dispute and the industrial relation system etc. But, when it came to the big ticket items of reform that would have really delivered a great outcome for the people of Queensland, they pulled up well short.

How much of this was because the ALP, in government, has been intoxicated with neo-liberalism?

Neo-Liberal policies, economic rationalism, whatever the buzzword is, it all means basically the same thing when it comes to selling public assets. It had been Treasury's desire in Queensland to follow down that neo-liberal path for a long, long time. It follows the IMF agenda for countries that run into any sort of financial problem. They have to privatise their assets, they have to put in austerity measures, they have to cut back on services, they have to reduce the size of government. Now we weren't in that position in Queensland and yet we had Labor governments, successive Labor governments under Beattie and Bligh who were going down that path anyway. The Beattie government privatised the electricity retailers though backed-off selling generation. I know this because of meetings we were invited to with Beattie and then with Mackenroth and Bligh.

Bligh and Beattie at least improved the level of services but they paid for it by not increasing taxation.

Absolutely; and eventually that has to come to a stop. You cannot continue to rack up enormous bills. Before I left the ETU, I was told from within government that they were facing some pretty tough decisions in terms of their financial viability and they were

going to have to look at some drastic measures. I thought that they were talking taxation, that's how naive I was. Because we had been hammering at 'em for years and years that you cannot be a low tax state and still deliver the level of service that you want to deliver.

You are now State President of the ALP; how does the ALP get back?

How does Labor fight back? Labor fights back from our disastrous result from last year on a number of fronts. And this is my mantra and I've had it going since I decided that I would stand for the position of President of the party. We have to go right back to first principles.

The first thing is membership. ALP membership peaked around 8,000 or so, some four years ago. The longer we stayed in government the fewer members we had and so less workers and supporters. So, first step, we have to rebuild the membership of the party and turn those members into individual campaigners and collective campaigners for Labor ideals and values.

Membership has stopped going backwards. Last year, we recruited 1,540 and we recruited 1,222 of those from September to December. For renewals, compared to this time last year, which was leading into an election year for the State Government, we're



The ETU campaigned strongly against the privatisation plans by the Bligh ALP government.

actually 18% higher on renewals at this point in time than 12 months ago. Now our membership year doesn't finish until the 31st of March. So to be tracking almost 20% higher three months out is quite a large achievement. We are also reducing ALP fees for members of affiliated unions.

Now, I'd like to be able to pat myself on the back and say, "it's only since you became President that all this has happened." That's bullshit. It's because people have got a real taste of what a genuine conservative government can be like.

We've had to get our finances in order. The administrative wing of the party relied heavily on the parliamentary levy for its day-to-day running. The levy is three percent of a parliamentarian's salary and to go from 50 plus members down to seven is a big hit in the hip pocket. We have now got the administrative budget under control.

What do you think will be big issues?

Being an old trade unionist, industrial relations is always going to be to the forefront. I'm genuinely concerned about where Campbell Newman is going and where Tony Abbott will take him when it comes to Work Choices

2013. I believe that Abbott and others within the Federal Coalition who were around in 2007, understand how the trade union movement, if it gets serious, can rise up and really change a government in this country. We proved it in 2007 and we can do it again. Thus I don't think that Abbott will go after wages and conditions in the penny pinching way that Howard did in 2004-05. Instead, they will go after the unions.

They will be far more sophisticated. They've been given enough ammunition unfortunately through the HSU, and the AWU debacle. There will be a Royal Commission, they've already announced that. I think they

will also attack the capacity for unions to be political through affiliation and spending. If they do not outlaw it completely they will require a vote of all union members on each and every occasion there is an affiliation or a donation or what have you.

Now that's a challenge for the unions and for the ALP, but it will cause a couple of things to happen. I hope that it will cause other unions to re-engage with their members politically as the ETU started to do from 2001. It will mean that organisers go out and discuss politics with members. It will be a good thing for the both the union movement and the Labor Party to have to go out and talk politics to their members as it



is reason and opportunity to restate our core principles and beliefs.

But what does the party stand for?

We have a great opportunity to restate our Labor values. If you look at the ALP rules, and this is going to upset some of the conservatives within the party, we are a democratic socialist party. We are not a social democratic party. We are not, as Andrew Leigh said in an opinion piece in the Australian, the real party of the Liberals, the small “L” Liberals.

As a party, we lost the confidence of the grassroots people of Queensland, we lost the confidence more particularly of the average trade unionist and we lost the confidence of our affiliated unions and ultimately we lost government. We have to regain those things in reverse.

We have to regain the confidence of our affiliated unions and I know from my discussions that there is some nervousness amongst them. Is it a new Labor Party or is it the organisation that went to the election in 2012? I can only tell them that I believe it’s a new Labor Party.

We then have to convince the average trade unionist that we are a new Labor Party that has learnt by our mistakes. In particular, we will not sell public assets and in fact, we will fight for the retention of public assets. We will fight for the retention of public service

jobs; we will fight for the expansion of services to the average person in Queensland, not for the reduction of them. Equally, we have to have money to pay for those services and if that means that taxes have to rise, then that’s what that means.

We have a new party process for developing and reviewing policy. Now the thing that I am most fearful about in this new process, and I’ve expressed this quite clearly through the ranks of the party, is that we cannot as a party, as a result of this new way of developing policy, lurch to the right. To head that off, we have to restate our commitment to our core values and principles. This has to be strong enough to offset the push to the right by some within the organisation

What do you think those core principles are?

I start with the Social Democratic position that Governments should be able to provide the services that an average Australian would think are reasonable. The core issues are health, education, general community services and the like and as I said previously, if that means that taxes have to rise to a reasonable level, then that’s the way it should be done.

For example, housing for those that can’t afford their own housing and that’s becoming more and more of an issue because of the way that the

housing market is being artificially propped up by developers in the interest of developers. Negative gearing should be definitely challenged because we're probably the only country in the world that allows interest charges on an investment property to be offset against taxation and then pass the burden for paying for the dwelling on to whomever lives there.

We shouldn't be selling assets. We should also be more innovative in what industries we operate in Queensland. We cannot rely only on mining. The people of Queensland deserve better environmentally. For example, I'm genuinely concerned about what fracking will mean for the environment and our water table, particularly with the coal seam gas out around the western districts.

And where is the ALP going?

A couple of final points. One is about the Party and the role of factions. These play a real part in calming the waters since it doesn't cause us to go to war every three years over party positions. Yet, factions are still difficult to deal with and sometimes, and whilst I'm not calling for an end to factions, I wish that a lot more people within the various factions would see the need for addressing the common good of all people within the party, not just their own secular interests

The other point is our opportunity. As I said earlier, everything in life is about timing and this is a good time to be President of the party. I think we've got the capacity to turn Campbell Newman into, if not a oncer, then no more than two terms. And my absolute aim is to pull that off.

Building the Story Bridge

The photo on our front cover shows some of the workers on the construction of the Story Bridge in 1935.

The BLHA has been given permission to publish a wonderful set of photos from that time by Dawn Clancy, whose father and uncle both worked on the construction of the bridge.

The photos (reminiscent of that famous set of photos of Italian riggers working on the Empire State Building during the same years) are an important addition to Brisbane Labour History, and we shall be publishing a "photo essay" with more of them in the September journal. Make sure you check them out!

Revamped BLHA website

Ross Gwyther

Our BLHA website has now had a facelift and is worth checking out. As well as details on upcoming events, we have a separate web page for you to access back issues of the Qld Journal of Labour History. Contents and editorials are available for the very latest issues of the journal, and full copies of all earlier editions of the journal are now available. We also have a web page devoted to useful labour history links. If you would like to add some web links to this list, please contact us with the details.

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The **Brisbane Labour History Association** is the Brisbane branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History. The BLHA 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.

To contact the BLHA - see

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If you would like to join the Brisbane Labour History Association, click on the link below:

- [Membership application/renewal form](#)



Upcoming

Qld Journal of Labour History

This journal is published by the Brisbane Labour History Association twice per year - usually in April and September each year.

We maintain an archive of earlier editions of the journal, and you can download them here. The latest 3 years' editions are available for purchase from the Secretary of the BLHA. You can also download the Editorial (with a Contents page) of these most recent editions - it contains a good summary of the contents of each issue (Click on the issue you would like to download)

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Queensland Comrades Speak

Ross Gwyther

One of two Roger Coates Labour History Research Grants for 2013 has been awarded to BLHA member Ross Gwyther in conjunction with the BLHA. The project is an oral history project to interview members of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) and those close to it who were active in the 1940s and 1950s.

The aim of recording these interviews is to document the organising experiences of communists active on the shop floor and in community politics during the war and immediate post-war years, and allowing present day activists in the union and political field to draw lessons from their successes and failures.

During this period the communist party had significant influence in Australia — its membership stood at more than 20,000 by the late 1940s. Those who joined the CPA during that time in many cases became lifelong activists in their trade unions as well as in community politics.

Today those former members of the CPA are in their 80s and 90s. They have a story to tell which is unique in that they were active in grass roots organising at a time when the left had immense influence in Australian politics. This project aims at recording the anecdotes and experiences related to their organising activities of these comrades — in their unions, and in other political movements.

The original audio files of these interviews, together with either transcripts or indexes of the interviews, will be stored initially on a BLHA website set up for this purpose. Ultimately, these interviews will be stored permanently on archival library websites in Brisbane or the National Library of Australia. They will be a useful addition to the National Museum of Labour when that institution is established.

Currently about 20 interviews will be conducted in Brisbane and some in Townsville and Cairns. If you have knowledge of someone who you think could be interviewed for this project, please contact Ross Gwyther 3366 5318.

Book Review

Antony Loewenstein & Jeff Sparrow (eds) *Left Turn: Political Essays for the New Left*, Melbourne University Press, 2012, 279pp. \$32.99



This is a bold book with sixteen ‘essays from the Left’ defined as those who ‘embrace a transformative project of some sort’ (p7). I think a political essay needs to be clear, historical, and either identify a new issue or say new things about an existing one. The quality of the contributions in this collection is mixed. Some verge on being worthy where the message is the expected one and the writing solid but rather stolid. Other contributions sparkle and say the unexpected. Croome makes a

powerful link between the Indigenous demand for freedom to marry in the 1930s and today’s demand for gay marriage (p217). Tsiolkas asks very hard questions about the problems posed for the post-communist left by nationalism and ‘smugness, (self) righteousness and hypocrisy’ (pp57–8). He argues for a ‘healthy acceptance of the magnitude of the intellectual and collective work’ needed to reanimate the Left (p59). Sparrow shows the importance of history and draws links between preindustrial carnival and Occupy. Though while history gives lessons, ‘today’s problems belong to today’ (p111).

Hussain uses a superbly light touch to skewer the ‘whiteness’ of being in Australia — complete with the crushing remark that if one wakes up after an operation and there are no brown medical staff, one is not in hospital but on the set of the television soap ‘All Saints’ (p113). Graham provides a powerful contribution in his analysis of violence inflicted on Aboriginal people and the likelihood that it will stimulate violence in return. Curr, writing before Pacific Solution mark 2, shows why ‘no one can be proud of what Australia is doing today’ (p135).

The contributions mentioned above combine social and cultural analysis with an account of economic and material exploitation. Indeed, this is has to be the essence of left analysis. We still need to grapple with the role of

the state — as Guy Rundle suggests, it must be the ‘enabler of choice’ (p51). A number of contributors say that competition between communism and social democracy has given way to that between Labor and Greens. However, Tietze and Humphreys are surely correct that the acceptance of market approaches to climate change means that neither has a transformative vision.

The collection is worth reading. The good contributions show that politics and sparkling writing can go together. One weakness is that most of the contributions are too Australian. This is important since capitalism will not be tamed or transformed in one country. I read the collection along with Mason’s recent book on the new global revolutions.¹ This takes a wider view of an integrated global political economy and reinforces the dangers of losing sight of class. Like Sparrow in this collection, it challenges the Left to give a coherent answer to ‘what kind of world lies on the other side of neoliberalism’ (p111).

Howard Guille

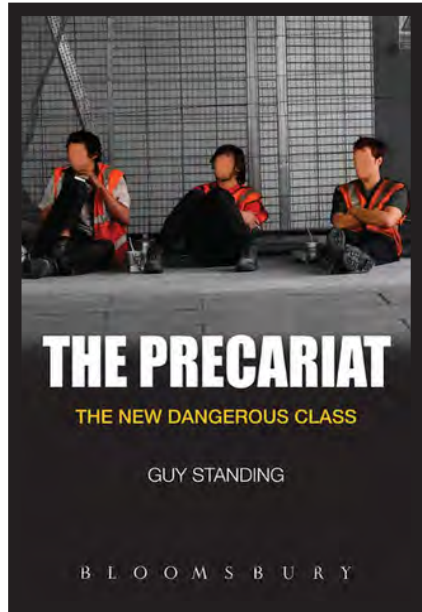
*Reprinted with permission from
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Note

1 Paul Mason, *Why It’s Kicking Off Everywhere*, London, Verso, 2012

Book Review

Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, Bloomsbury Academic, London, 2011, pp 198.



The title of this book derives from the noun, *proletariat* and the adjective, *precarious*, to give us what Guy Standing sees as a new social class in the making, the *precariat*. According to the author, the precariat is not simply a newly impoverished stratum of the traditional industrial working class, nor the newly dispossessed middle classes that have recently captured the attention of politicians in America and elsewhere. Nor, in Standing’s view, is

the precariat a new under-class such as is characteristic of Third World labour market demographics. While the precariat undoubtedly encompasses these social elements, for Standing it is defined by the absence of a number of basic securities in working life.

These securities, or more pointedly their disappearance, include: opportunities to acquire an adequate income through employment (labour market security); protections against arbitrary dismissal from work (employment security); security against technological redundancy (job security); security against employment related injury and disease (work security); skill reproduction security, which includes opportunities for training and job apprenticeships; income security protection via social security; and lastly, the security that comes with collective voice and recognition in the workplace (representational security, normally through collective bargaining). According to Standing, these basic securities/protections have been systemically eroded over the era of neo-liberalism and the on-going crisis of capitalism, while the related insecurities are responsible for the rise of the precariat .

So who now finds themselves within the precariat? Certainly, the youth of many societies who face unconscionably high unemployment rates, difficulty accessing training, and gaining alternative sources of income, are an

important component of the precariat. At the other end of the demographic spectrum are retirees who are forced back into the labour market, often for wages that are considerably less than pre-retirement earnings. Others in the precariat, according to Standing, include visible minorities who endure labour market discrimination and the disabled who are forced to work for their benefits. A growing component of the precariat also includes those members of society who have got on the wrong side of the criminal justice system, as well as migrant workers who are prevented from practicing their normal occupations due to host country licensing restrictions. Meanwhile, on the 'other side of the world', workers, (often women) who toil in globalized export processing zones constitute a growing element of the precariat, as do, more generally, temporary and part time workers in the developed world.

For Standing the precariat is an outcome of the global search for both numerical and functional flexibility on the part of both firms and increasingly public sector employers. Privatisation, outsourcing and casualisation are the main culprits lying behind the formation of this new global social class. Interestingly, Standing also sees student debt, related to the full-scale commodification of education, as an important contributor to youth falling into the ranks of the precariat.

Ultimately, Standing is concerned with the political implications that flow out of the creation of this new social class. He paints two possible scenarios, which he labels a 'politics of inferno' and a 'politics of paradise'. As suggested by these evocative terms, the former refers to the establishment of a dystopian society, which is preoccupied with the social control of the precariat. This leads to an authoritarian future with the threat of neo-fascism that Standing already sees emerging in movements such as the Tea Party in the US as well as in extremist movements in Italy, France, etc. The alternative is a social order that banishes human-made insecurity through the provision of a basic income along with opportunities to transition from a state of 'denizenship' to full citizenship for dispossessed migrant populations.

Overall, this book makes for thoughtful, if worrying reading. The book reads like an extended essay in which the author uses broad descriptive brush strokes on a canvas that covers the globe. The reach of empirical examples, relying mainly on secondary statistical and polling data, from America, China, Europe and India is impressive. This material is mainly used to illustrate rather than to test the author's theoretical argument concerning the creation of a new precariat class.

This reviewer's main difficulty with the book is to be found in the sociological

imprecision that is attached to the concept of the precariat. By including so many diverse categories (youth, migrants, women of the Third World, para-professionals, part-timers, etc.) within the notion of a precariat, it strikes me that this is more of a residual category than a social class. Likewise, claims that globalisation came to an end with the global financial crisis (p.26, 58) or that the roots of neo-fascism have been established in several, key developed countries is at best hyperbole and at worst a serious misdiagnosis of current realities. One is left wondering what has replaced globalisation, or how polities that retain independent judiciaries, periodic elections and insertion within major regional blocs such as the EU could be characterized shifting in a 'neo-fascist' direction. While *The Precariat* suffers from considerable theoretical overreach, it does provide considerable food for thought. It deserves to be read, discussed and critiqued by a progressive readership that is concerned with the future of the world, as we know it.

Bob Russell

Book Review

Mark Baker, *Visions, Dreams & Plans: Selected Aspects of the History of Town Planning in Queensland*, Mark Baker Town Planning Consultancy, West End, 2012, pp84 + foreword.

(Details from bakertpc@powerup.com.au)

This is a beautifully produced and presented book with posters, pictures and maps throughout the text. They catch the eye. One, somewhat at random, is a 1919 advertisement promoting the Glen Aplin development at Stanthorpe as a place to combine housing with income from an orchard. Another is an aerial photo of Rio Vista and Florida Gardens (1960), an early Gold Coast canal estate. Then there is Glenlyon Gardens Estate (1924) in the 'garden suburb' of Ashgrove; the Inala 'satellite town' of 1967; and a survey plan for Collinsville (1920), the first planned mining township.

The book covers Queensland from the 'late 19th Century to the late 20th Century' (p7). It has six sections. Three titled 'aracadian ideals', 'utopian visions' and 'residential dreams' are, respectively, about rural settlement, urban centres and the suburbs. The other three sections are 'legislative

precepts', professional aspirations' and then a review called 'rear vision'.

While QJLH readers will probably find the first three sections most informative, the Wilbur Smith Plan of the 1960s for Brisbane freeways and ring roads is in the section on professional aspirations. Baker notes the protests about the proposed demolition of 560 properties in the inner north. The protests coalesced around Markwell Street in Bowen Hills (p68). While this was lost, the 'grand plan' for northern roads was suspended in mid 1980s. Unfortunately, it came back with a vengeance, and some questionable financial and political judgements, in the tunnels and tolls of the 'Can Do' regime.

Baker's insights about rural settlement re-emphasised, for me, that the history of Queensland labour is very much a rural-urban one. He says that rural settlement in the 1880s was about 'relocating the poor from urban areas where they formed a threat to the establishment' (p9). Similarly, soldier settlements after World War I 'dispersed the threat of unemployed, de-mobilised troops' (p13). He also documents the large scale Burnett and Callide scheme of the mid-1920s, the creation of Monto and of Theodore in the Dawson-Nathan irrigation area. These were large-scale efforts which some compared to Soviet planning (p15).

In my opinion, we must recognise that planning contributes to inequality: the workers and the poor are segregated economically and environmentally. Germane to this, Baker says, ‘not all of the aspects of planning were heroic successes’. Indeed, many ‘... were either overt or covert attempts at social engineering...’ (p79). Although he does not say so, very few of the rich and powerful are subject to ‘social engineering’.

Land-use planning is one of few remaining areas of state regulation in an era of deregulation. This alone makes the book valuable to the labour movement. Those of us who want progressive change can learn much from it. This includes that planning is too important to be left to either the market or technocratic planners.

Howard Guille

In 2011 the ACTU commissioned an Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work in Australia.

The Final Report is Brian Howe, Paul Munro, Jill Biddington and Sara Charlesworth, *Lives on Hold: Unlocking the Potential of Australia's Workforce*, Melbourne, ACTU, 2012.

Brian Howe has said that ‘the spread of insecure work has taken place under the radar of the political class’. It is ‘an issue crying out for a deep, far-reaching investigation’



In Memoriam

The Life and Times of Clarice (1922–2012)

Kevin Brown

It would be impossible to do full justice to the life of my mother Clarice even by speaking for the whole day! Clarice's social and political consciousness began when she was in her very early teens and she lived until she was very nearly 90. Luckily for us, she left quite a lot of written history in the form of articles she contributed to newsletters for the U.A.W. and the Communist Party. I've combined these with my own memories to give you an outline of her eventful and productive life — her important life.

Clarice's life story naturally starts with her parents and, in particular, the story of her social activism and her political awareness begins with her father. Clarice's father Marcus Tonkin, known to all as "Curley", was born in Ballarat in 1891. Like many of his generation, Curley had to leave school prematurely to find work. After a few years mining he became a shearer. For many years



Clarice aged 24 marching with the E.Y.L. in the 1946 May Day march, Brisbane.

he led a very hard life, which took him away from home for long periods — to Bendigo, to Broken Hill and beyond. Between shearing seasons, Curley took whatever other jobs he could find.

Curley's reputation grew throughout Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria both as a first class Shearer

and also as a fighter for the working class. On one occasion before coming to Queensland, Curley was an inmate of the Ballarat Goal for six weeks for leading a shearer's strike. Curley was right at the centre of some of the biggest industrial battles of the 1920s and 30s — all based around the right to belong to a Union and the right of workers to a decent quality of life.

Curley's traveling life brought him to Longreach in 1918 and, in 1920, he met and married Nell who had been born in Richmond, Queensland in 1889. Curley and Nell had three children — Donnie, Clarice and Frances. Clarice was born on the 25th of October 1922.

From 1927 to 1935, Clarice was a primary student at Longreach State School. The hardships of the depression years in Longreach were etched in Clarice's memory. She remembered that Curley was either being continually put off work or involved in a strike. There were periods when they had no money for schoolbooks and Curley had to go to the police station to get rations. Like so many others at the time, Clarice's parents struggled to survive but somehow the family never went hungry.

As a result of his life amongst shearers — and the struggles in which he played a leading part — Curley became an active trade unionist and an organizer of men. After his bitter experience of the Great Depression, he became a

convinced Socialist. In the early 1930s he joined the Communist Party and remained a staunch and proud member until his death in 1968.

An early exposure to the world of politics was inevitable with a father like Curley. In 1932 when she was just ten, Curley would proudly take Clarice along to C.P.A. meetings in a private home in Longreach, which the locals called "Moscow House". Clarice had memories of growing up with talk around the meal table about Joe Stalin, the Bolsheviks and the Great Russian Revolution.

There was no High School in Longreach in those days, so Clarice took a Commercial Grade Course from 1935 to 1937. Her best subjects were Bookkeeping and Shorthand. Clarice sat for the Examination of Technical Colleges in 1937 and passed with flying colours.

Her first job, at the age of 15, was as a typist and proof reader at the "Longreach Leader" newspaper. She received 17/6 a week. By 1939, Curley had decided that his only real prospects for permanent work were in Brisbane so he left Longreach to establish a home there with the intention of getting the rest of his family to join him. But Clarice didn't want to leave her job in Longreach and her employer didn't want her to go.

Clarice had created a very popular new feature in the paper called “The Children’s Corner”. Her boss, in a pleading — almost desperate — letter to Nell, wrote that “She is not the average girl that goes into an office. They usually have to be told everything and are generally a step behind. [Clarice] is different, she is always that step ahead, has plenty of initiative and is thinking out and planning out things.” Eventually Nell and Curley won the battle over Clarice and she left Longreach for Brisbane in December 1939, aged 17.

Curley had found a house in Charlotte Street Paddington, not very far from where we are today. This is where Clarice spent her late teens and early adult years from 1939 until her marriage in 1945. According to her long-time friend Hazel Harland (then Hazel Bredhauer): “when Clarice was a teenager living at Charlotte Street, Paddington with her parents, she was a very happy fun-loving girl. Everyone she met seemed to be her friend. She made everyone welcome to her circle of friends.”

From late 1939 to 1943 Clarice had a series of secretarial and stenography jobs for a variety of employers including Solicitors, Hotel Brokers and even a Member of Parliament Dr. C. V. Watson-Brown, the Independent Member for the seat of Gregory. All these employers gave her glowing references and were sorry to see her go.

Then in 1944, her association with Unions and politics began in earnest when she went to work as a stenographer for the Storemen and Packer’s Union. As Clarice herself put it: “With my father’s early working class influence there was no escape for me. People used to continually ask me when was I going to join the Communist Party or the Eureka Youth League. It wasn’t long before I decided to join them both and I did so on the same day — 10th October, 1944.” She was 22 years old.

Clarice wrote that she joined the party and E.Y.L. during the war years because she wanted to see a better life for young people and of course to help defeat the fascist threat, which was so real after 1940. She wrote: “I have never regretted joining either organisation” and she repeats this many times in her writings.

The E.Y.L. had been established in 1941 with the aim of supporting the war effort while protecting the rights and conditions of women, youth and juveniles in industry. It had close links to the Communist Party but was not affiliated with it. One of its founding members and eventual National President, was a young Ron Brown, Clarice’s future husband.

Clarice immediately immersed herself in the activities of the E.Y.L. and the C.P.A. During the war years, there were a lot of young women from the

Communist Party working at the Trades Hall. They were called Party girls (a term which had quite a different meaning then to what it does now!) and they were very active in raising money to send books, tobacco and food parcels to servicemen.

Clarice hadn't been in the Party very long, when she was nominated, along with Comrades Babs Godbold and Olive Ling, to represent the Party at a Womens' Conference in Sydney. It was there she heard Jessie Street and Katherine Susannah Pritchard speak. They both made an indelible impact on her.

Clarice first met her future husband Ron at a Clerks' Union meeting in 1945. The meeting was convened for the staff of the various unions in the Trades Hall and, because she worked at the Storemen & Packer's Union, Clarice attended. In those days Ron was very active in the Clerks' Union with Comrades Heck Morgan and George Wright. When he spoke at the meeting that night his clear logic and fire, his obvious sincerity and his eloquence made a deep impression on Clarice — deeper impression, it seems, than that made on Clarice by the US Army soldier who she had been going out with just a short time before, and who she had even contemplated marrying.

For both Ron and Clarice, it appears to have been a case of love at first sight. Within a few months, on September 1st

1945, they were married at the Albert Street Methodist Church — surprising perhaps for a couple of atheist Communists, but that was the way of things back then!

No sooner had they been married, than Clarice and Ron found out to their cost that old-fashioned and sexist views were not the exclusive domain of just the right-wing unions. The supposedly left-wing Storemen & Packers' Union sacked Clarice because the Union leadership, which included some officials who were Communist, were opposed to married women working!

This made things very difficult for Clarice and Ron. Ron was on a quite low wage doing publicity work and assisting Fred Paterson. Fortunately Clarice wasn't out of work for long. In 1945 she went to work in the E.Y.L. office situated at that time in the Trades Hall with Comrades Kath Bacon and Betty Fitzgerald. Clarice, her father Curley and Ron were all working at the Trades Hall at the same time. Curley was the cleaner and Ron was Research Officer with the Trades and Labour Council under the secretaryship of Comrade Mick Healy. The trio — Curly, Ron and Clarice — were affectionately nicknamed 'The Three Musketeers'.

After she left the Trades Hall Clarice became even more involved with the Party and went to work at the State office in Heindorff House in Queen

Street with Comrades Claude Jones, Doug Olive and Albert Robinson. After this she worked in the District office in Adelaide Street with Comrades Ron Hass and Mavis Tippett. Then she worked at the Party's Wartime Welfare Office in Edward Street with Comrades Collie Rolleson, Bab Godbold and Eva Bacon. The Wartime Welfare Office was the communications hub for the many comrades in the Army, keeping in contact with hundreds of our servicemen during the war years.

After the war in about 1946, Clarice's old mate Laura Hansen, together with Comrades Ron Hass, Mavis Tippett and Alma Hubbard led the squatting of families at the army barracks in Victoria Park in the name of the Party. This was the famous "Haas for Houses" campaign. The organisation took place from Laura's house at Allenby Street, Spring Hill.

1946 also saw a major Meat Strike. Clarice wrote: "Many people like ourselves were forced on to a diet of rabbit. In that period we ate rabbit cooked in every way it could be cooked — and sometimes in ways that it couldn't. On one occasion we bought a rabbit, which proved to be bad. Luckily for us the meat strike finished the next day."

The 13-week Queensland Rail Strike occurred in early 1948. The E.Y.L. was very active in the strike and its members, including Clarice,

distributed thousands of leaflets, and sold many copies of Queensland C.P.A. newspaper "The Guardian" and the national E.Y.L. newspaper "Youth Voice". Together with many older Party members, E.Y.L'ers would get up before dawn to go on to the picket lines. The longer the strike went, the more violent it became, culminating in the bashing of Fred Paterson in front of the Trades Hall on St. Patrick's Day, 1948. Fred was the first Australian Communist ever to be elected to parliament and Clarice's husband Ron was very proud to be his parliamentary secretary.

As police viciousness increased generally during the strike, so did their brutality against those on the picket lines, particularly the women. Some big "demons" made a speciality of kicking women on the ankles as they would walk by. They would call Clarice and her mates all types of filthy names and often the women would limp home with badly bruised ankles. Clarice particularly remembered this happening when she was on a picket line outside the Milton Railway Workshop with Comrades Elna Ariott, Laura Hansen, Jean O'Connor, Alice Hughes, Val Fraser, Connie Gutteridge and others.

Clarice remembered that in the years 1946-1948 sometimes it seemed as if the Trades Hall was permanently surrounded by police.

In 1949 Clarice worked as the E.Y.L. Assistant Secretary with Comrades Kath Olive, Betty Fitzgerald and Lita Jiggins. The E.Y.L. in those days was a big organisation with strong links to the trade union movement, organizing many job meetings, selling the national E.Y.L. paper "Youth Voice" and being responsible, with some trade union assistance, for organising several enquiries into youth working conditions. These enquiries gained wide support and were later to culminate in the winning of daylight training for apprentices and greatly improved wage rates for young workers, including the winning of adult wage at 19 years in some industries.

"Youth Voice" was sold by E.Y.L.'ers including Clarice on Brisbane city streets, wharves, at shops and in factories. Clarice wrote: "Frequently there would be Young Christian Workers, then a reactionary organisation, selling their papers on one street corner and us selling our paper on the opposite corner. Female members of the E.Y.L. were particularly good at selling 'Youth Voice', some of them I recall were Comrades Joan Graham, Kath Olive, Betty Fitzgerald, Rose Wands, Lucy Surplus, Beryl Booth and Gloria Pinna."

In 1949 Ron and Clarice moved to Darwin. Ron became the Editor of the "Northern Standard", the newspaper of the North Australian Workers' Union. In his job as editor and sometimes

reporter Ron received three defamation actions and two criminal libel suits. The paper was raided three times by Commonwealth and Darwin police and during 1950-51 Clarice recalled that the newspaper files were more often to be found at the Darwin Police station than in the paper's office. In 1949 during the national Coal Strike the newspaper office was raided by Commonwealth police due to its pro-strike stance. On one occasion Ron was arrested. Amid this turmoil, Ron and Clarice's first child, my brother Ray, was born in 1949.

Very soon after arriving in Darwin Clarice joined the newly formed Housewives' Association, later known as the Union of Australian Women like its counterpart down South. Clarice was one of its earliest members. The Darwin Housewives' Association included such comrades as Kath Olive Snr, Mac Carne, Moira Gibbs, Esther Meaney, May Moss, Mary Norris and Grace Bardsley. The Housewives' Association put on quite a show in Darwin for many years, taking part in May Day marches and various campaigns organised by the North Australian Workers' Union in the early 1950s, including the fight for democratic rights for all Territorians, including aboriginals. These struggles were necessary because at that time the Territory was virtually a colony run by the beef barons and the merchants.

The Housewives' Association especially took up the struggle around the exorbitant price that families had to pay for milk, which was imported from down South by ship or overland. Clarice remembered that the flour imported for bread making was often so old it contained weevils.

One of the Housewives' Association May Day displays was of a tin humpy on the back of a truck depicting the conditions under which some Darwin workers had to live. One of the slogans "More Homes, Less Bombs" was painted on a very rough piece of corrugated iron. One of the most humorous displays on a May Day float organised by the Housewives' Association was of a smoking 'Flaming Fury'. Old Territorians will know that the Flaming Fury was the only method of toilet disposal before the introduction of sewerage and it was common for smoke to be seen rising all over Darwin.

In 1952, the D.L.P. industrial Groupers were getting the upper hand in the North Australian Workers' Union. Ron was told he could either write what the Groupers wanted in the "Northern Standard" or he could get out. Ron refused so Clarice and Ron did one of the fastest shifts they ever had to do because the house they were in was owned by the Union. Half the Darwin waterfront helped them shift that day and they were newly installed in another house at Fanny Bay in about 2

hours flat! The next morning Ron was sacked with just five minutes notice and was told to get out of the Territory immediately.

A "black ban" was placed by the N.A.W.U. on employing Ron but, despite this, Ron got a job as a gardener at the Darwin Botanical Gardens. This kept them going until they were able to get out of Darwin in their own time. Ron used to say those 6 months of gardening were amongst the happiest of his life.

Clarice recalls that one of the highlights of her years in the Darwin branch of the Party was the 1951 visit to Australia of the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Hewlett Johnson. He was known far and wide as 'The Red Dean' and was a popular hero of the Left. The Party organised all the activity around his visit to Darwin and Clarice was very proud to have been responsible for pressing his clothes for the gathering!

A couple of months before Clarice and Ron left Darwin to return to Brisbane, I was born. In the newspaper birth notice Ron referred to me as "another one for the cause". Unfortunately I was born with jaundice and would have died but for an emergency blood transfusion from Ron. This experience put an end to Clarice's hopes for at least one more child because after the drama of my birth the risks would have been too high. The Fanny Bay house — which was the first house I knew — was not

much bigger or better than that tin humpy on the Housewives' Association May Day float. Clarice remembers that the floors were dirt and that spiders would regularly drop from the roof into my cot.

Returning to Brisbane in 1952 Clarice immediately joined the Union of Australian Women, which, before 1950, had been known as the Brisbane Housewives' Association — the sister organization to the Darwin Housewives' Association. In those early pioneering days in the U.A.W. Clarice worked alongside such comrades as Eva Bacon, Alice Hughes, Marie Crisp, Laura Hansen, Millie McKillop, Lil Rowe, Dot Rass, Pauline Jones, Muriel Morgansen, Mabel Hanson, Estelle Bertossi, Jean Leary, Marj Croucher and many, many others.

In 1959, Ron was thrilled to have the opportunity to go to the Soviet Union with Comrade Frank Bishop and other comrades from Australia to do a study course there for fourteen months, mainly in Economics. During Ron's extended absence Clarice took care of my brother Ray and me on her own but with the support of her many friends and Comrades. I have very fond memories of sitting with Ray on Clarice's lap while she read letters from Ron in Moscow and showed us the many photos he had taken. The house we lived in, in Robertson Street, Fortitude Valley would probably be condemned by today's standards but it

was filled with love and happy times. We missed Ron greatly but somehow he was there with us in spirit through his very frequent letters.

While Ron was still in Russia, Clarice organized a move to Brookes Street, Bowen Hills. A little while after Ron returned we moved again, this time to 171 Warry Street, Spring Hill. For nearly 60 years until leaving Warry Street for the nursing home in 2009 Clarice's life revolved around the Fortitude Valley area, whether it was shopping in Brunswick Street, going to activities at the U.A.W. rooms in Ann Street, meetings at Dot Rass' and Bill Sutton's house in Wren Street, or the Party building in St Paul's Terrace. All within walking distance — and Clarice loved to walk.

Clarice remembered well all the activities of the Valley branch of the Party. The regular Sunday morning house-to-house canvassing with the national C.P.A. newspaper "The Tribune" around the Valley, Bowen Hills, New Farm, Kangaroo Point and Windsor. Many comrades would be involved including Bill Sutton, Dot Rass, Archie Bow, Bill Mehegan and Warren Bowden. Then every Sunday afternoon, Comrades would rally to act as security at the Party's stump in Centenary Park where various Party leaders, including Ron, would speak. The Valley branch would also organise street corner meetings at night in the New Farm area, with speakers standing

on the back of truck, and using a carbide light.

The Party was always conspicuous in the annual May Day march as a sea of red flags. The Annual Party Ball was held at the old South Brisbane Library Hall, and the Party Fairs were held twice a year. Clarice recalled that Comrades Marie Crisp, Marj Croucher, Aynes Hall, Isabel Anderson, Alice Hughes, Jean Leary, Eva Bacon, Molly McDonald, Rose Wands, Ivy Kreiger, Dick Hall and many others worked very hard to make them successful.

One of Clarice and Ron's closest friends in the Party was Comrade Pete Thomas. Over many years, Pete was editor of the "Queensland Guardian" and later the industrial journalist for "Tribune" from 1968 for several years. Clarice mentioned him very often in her recollections and in her writings. To my brother Ray and I, Pete was like a special Uncle.

A great highlight for Clarice was in 1965, when Paul Robeson paid a visit to Brisbane and sang to a capacity crowd at the old Stadium in the city. Many Comrades went along to see his inspiring performance.

In 1968 Clarice's dear father Curley passed away. Ron gave the oration and made the point that Curley was especially proud of how his children had understood and respected his struggle and were, each in their own

way, carrying on his beliefs. This was certainly true of Clarice.

Clarice recalls one of the biggest demonstrations against the Vietnam war was held at the Roma Street Forum (now Emma Miller Park) in 1969. Many U.A.W. members and Party members were involved. Dozens of police were lined up across the road. The hundreds of demonstrators at the forum were joined by a large contingent of students, who had defied the police march permit laws imposed by the newly-elected Joh Bjelke-Petersen government and marched from the Queensland University to the Forum, with their placards of protest and flags flying defiantly. They were greeted by resounding applause when they were spotted in the distance. I am proud to say that I was one of those students and even prouder to say that my mother Clarice was one of those demonstrators at Roma Street who applauded our arrival.

Clarice's old mates Laura Hansen and her sister Milly McKillop, were always well to the fore in the Vietnam War and other demonstrations. Clarice recalled that many a time she had to pull Laura back from the fray as she continually voiced her opinions to the police, even while they were making arrests.

During the Springboks Rugby League tour of Australia in 1971, the team arrived in Brisbane from Canberra to

be greeted by demonstrators on the footpath outside the Tower Mill Motor Inn on Wickham Terrace, not far from the Trades Hall. The number of police was actually more than the number of demonstrators such was the paranoia of the Bejelke-Petersen government. After a standoff of about fifteen minutes, the police loudhailer asked the crowd to clear the footpath, but before this could be done, an officious police inspector ignored the authority of the then Police Commissioner, Ray Whitrod, and gave the order. The police suddenly moved forward. The crowd turned and ran. What a scatter there was, with people young and old, running down the hill into the park, followed closely by the police! I was with five other demonstrators, who ran through the park to the Trades Hall, with the police in hot pursuit. As the Trades Hall was out of bounds to the police, they had to retreat, leaving us safe inside. Three police did manage to get inside the hall, and they were quickly ejected, but not before they had arrested one student — the young Peter Beattie! I was not the only member of the Brown family at that demonstration. Clarice was there as well, of course!

Clarice was always very proud of the fact that Senator George Georges when quite a young man had attended her 21st birthday party. Many years later Clarice continued to call George Georges a friend. George, a well-known veteran leader of the Civil Liberties struggles in Queensland, was

one of the leaders during the fight for the Right to March in 1978-79, during the Bjelke-Peterson era. Clarice and many other comrades were involved in meetings and demonstrations — including very defiantly sitting down in the middle of the city streets, risking arrest.

Beginning with her work with the Darwin Housewives' Association all those years before, Clarice formed many lifelong friendships with those in the aboriginal movement. Comrades Daisy Marschisotti, Bob Anderson and Lil Rowe together with Celia Smith, Stan McBride and Kath Walker were very involved as members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' Organisation. Clarice was proud of the strong links between the U.A.W. and the various organizations campaigning for the aboriginal cause.

Clarice had a knack of relating easily to young people who were on the brink of a life of social and political activism. She loved their energy and enthusiasm and they loved her optimism and, even after many years of struggle, her apparent indestructibility. During the 70s and 80s Clarice formed friendships with many young Comrades involved in the Revolutionary Socialists Student Alliance based mainly at Queensland University. She was involved alongside them in many protest marches and demonstrations during the Vietnam War, the Springboks' Tour and also the Right to March Campaign. She

also had many young friends from the Students for a Democratic Society.

In 1974 Clarice lost her dear mother Nellie who died at Eventide Home. In 1980 Ron succumbed to a heart attack and we lost him very suddenly, aged just 64. Their personal and political partnership had lasted for 35 eventful years. Clarice was devastated but she picked herself up and carried on, finding comfort and purpose in the comradeship of her many friends in the U.A.W., the Party, the Union movement and the Peace movement.

A few years later, forced to move from 171 Warry Street, Clarice miraculously managed to secure another house in the

same Street — this time at number 102. She moved there with Ted Williams a former 171 Warry Street neighbour who became, from the early 80s, her devoted partner for the next 30 years.

On December 3 1984 five hundred S.E.Q.E.B. workers stopped work as a protest when contractors were brought in by the Bjelke-Petersen government on four major projects. This eventually led to the sacking of almost a thousand of one of the State's toughest Unions, the Electrical Trades Union. Many U.A.W. members, including of course the ubiquitous and untiring Clarice, took part in this struggle right up until February 1985 when power station workers agreed



Clarice aged 53 marching (rear, right) in the U.A.W. section of the 1976 May Day march in Brisbane

to return to work. During the dispute 500,000 Queensland workers had been stood down through lack of electricity. Throughout this period the attitude of the police towards the demonstrators became quite vicious, spurred on by the Bjelke-Petersen government, but this didn't stop Clarice turning up to just about every march.

Some of the activities at which she was an ever-reliable presence (always with her brightly-coloured umbrella and very often accompanied by her devoted niece Juleen) were the annual marches for May Day, the Hiroshima anniversary every August, the Palm Sunday Rally and the International Women's Day celebrations, as well as marches and events for Campaign against Nuclear power, People for Nuclear Disarmament, Children by Choice and Abortion Law Reform. Clarice was also involved in the Grass Roots organization with her dear friend Norma Nord, the Rally for Peace and also Just Peace.

From the 1940s until well into the new century, Clarice was involved with the E.Y.L., the C.P.A., the U.A.W. and many other progressive organisations in just about every major social and political issue of her times. Whether it was by marching, selling papers, distributing leaflets, filling envelopes, handing out how-to-vote cards at polling booths, door-to-door canvassing or even just making tea and sandwiches (particularly for B.W.I.U. and, later,

C.F.M.E.U. events) Clarice was an ever-present happy and an optimistic face. So many of the remembrances I have received since her passing refer to her gentleness, her cheeky sense of humour, her seemingly-endless energy and her positivity.

In 1993 Clarice lost her elder brother Donnie. He had been living continuously at the Charlotte Street house since 1939. Clarice continued her involvement with social and political causes right up to around 2008 when failing health and frailty gradually started curtailing her activities. Even after this, she was still fond of talking about current affairs and had an opinion on just about everything.

When the C.P.A. ceased to exist in 1991 and its assets were transferred to a new organization called the Search Foundation, Clarice became one of its first members. The Search Foundation is one of the very few organizations in this post-ideological world, which is genuinely searching for a 21st Century alternative to capitalism.

Those who knew Clarice will know that she was just as passionate about animals as about her fellow humans. There are countless photos of Clarice cuddling Koalas, patting Kangaroos and feeding birds. There were always animals around our house and in her last years at Warry Street, as well as Ted for company, she also had the dog Misshue, their very talkative Parakeet

and also Ted's beloved Quails whose eggs Clarice sold for him in the Valley.

From March 2009 Clarice could no longer look after herself and the ailing Ted in their Warry Street home. They moved to Treetops Nursing Home initially, and then finally to Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit at Wynnum, the final home of quite a few of Clarice's old mates including Stella Nord, Bert Nord and Allie Elder. Comrade Norma Nord is still a resident there.

Ted passed away in December 2010, and two weeks ago on October 7th Clarice's mighty heart stopped beating forever. She was a realist to the end — she knew what was happening to her and she was OK with it. It was her wish that her body be donated for medical research. We, her family, are overjoyed that she was accepted by the University. In death, as in life, Clarice continues to give to others.

Though I have been speaking for probably way too long, what I have said tells just a fraction of my mother's 90 eventful years. I hope it's conveyed something of the significance of the life we are celebrating here today.

Clarice was a loving and nurturing mother to my brother Ray and myself and she was, very special. But without contradicting myself I believe that there are many Clarice Browns in this world. Many of them, male and female alike, have been mentioned by Clarice

herself in her writings and their names have been repeated by me here today. Many of them have now passed on. Some of them are here with us right now. They are people who care enough to try and make a difference to the lives of their friends, comrades and family and to the whole world. They sometimes make a difference on their own, and sometimes as part of a mass movement. I think Clarice, with her typical humility and generosity, would prefer to be remembered by you not as one-of-a-kind but as one Comrade amongst many. It seems to me that there is much more hope for the world if we think of her that way.

Many times as a child and as a young teen I stood with Clarice at various events to the music we're about to play (though not quite this version). I think Clarice would be really happy and proud to be farewelled by you today with this song, *The Internationale*.

Kevin Brown
20th October, 2012

Glenda Ross

The Qld Nurses Union (QNU) lost one of its most committed unionists and a great friend in August last year with the passing of former Rockhampton organiser Glenda Ross.

Glenda was the QNU organiser at their Rockhampton office for 13 years before her retirement in March 2010. Prior to that she was a long standing QNU Councillor.

A no-nonsense Organiser, known for her fancy fingernails and straight-

talking, Glenda was a committed unionist and often first at a picket line or protest to show solidarity for comrades in other unions.

In fact she was arrested for obstructing police while standing on the picket line outside Emerald's Gordonstone Mine in 2003 yelling "scab" at replacement workers.

In an interview with *The Morning Bulletin* newspaper when she retired, Glenda explained it was all part of the job as a union leader and said showing support for striking union workers was something she enjoyed doing.



Glenda (at right) with Nursing Union members at Barcaldine Hospital

She once said,

“I’m always opposed to people being locked out of their workplace and I’m always opposed to scab labour,”

“If there’s a picket line you go and show your support to the workers.”

Shortly after starting her career as an enrolled nurse, Glenda moved to the Central Queensland sugar town of Sarina to work in its small country hospital.

She joined the union in 1985 and later took up an honorary position with the Queensland Nurses’ State Council and followed up by filling the Organiser role for the QNU in Central Queensland.

At the time of her retirement, Glenda said “good wins” for members—including campaigns where they locked beds to address workload issues in 2006 and the 23.5% wage increase—were among her career highlights. One of the lowest moments was when 92 nurses lost their jobs with the closure of St Andrew’s Hospital in 1997.

Glenda was a passionate advocate for nursing and midwifery, and with her Organiser area in Central Queensland covering close to half a million square kilometres, she was frequently on the road visiting members in workplaces.

In 2001 Glenda was awarded a Centenary Medal in recognition of her commitment to trade unionism and nursing — she was a much loved member of the nursing and union family.

Contributor's Notes

Kevin Brown is the younger son of Ron and Clarice Brown. His older brother, Ray is a fashion designer and lives in London. Ray and Kevin's childhood in Brisbane was spent immersed in the activist life of their parents, ranging from the Junior Eureka League and the EYL. to the UAW.'s Brisbane Junior Players to the activities of the BWIU (now the CFMEU) and the CPA. Originally trained as a high school teacher, Kevin began his teaching career in Tully and Mount Isa. He now lives in Adelaide where he is a graphic artist and a designer of typefaces.

Dr. Iain Campbell researches labour restructuring, precarious work, temporary migrant labour, working-time patterns and work-life balance at RMIT Centre for Applied Social Research, has written books on casualisation, and was a key expert witness at the Reasonable Hours and Family Provisions Test Cases and recent Federal Inquiry into insecure work in Australia.

Dick Williams was State Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) and National President of the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union of Australia Electrical Division (CEPU) from 2001 until 2009. Dick has a life-long affiliation with working people from his time in the railway workshops and coalmines around his hometown of Ipswich, to projects across Queensland and New Zealand.

Sue Yarrow is an atheist, pacifist, social justice advocate who has worked in the labour movement since 1968. For 10 years, she was an organiser and industrial advocate for the FMWU (now United Voice), before working in Aboriginal land interests in the public service and for 7 years as principal advisor to ALP Ministers in the Goss and Beattie governments. She is now retired and researching labour movement history.

2013 Alex Macdonald Lecture
Labour Day:
Family, freedom and a fair go
Dr. Glenn Davies



5.30pm for 6.00pm
Wednesday 1 May
Level 2 TLC Building
16 Peel St
South Brisbane

***free admission**
***refreshments available**

The origins to Queensland's Labour Day and the recent shift of date.

Dr Glenn Davies is Head of Social Science at Caboolture SHS and has taught modern history in Queensland state schools for over 20 years. He received his PhD in 2005 from University of New England on the history of Australian republicanism, has written extensively on the topic and is currently the Queensland State Convener, Australian Republican Movement. He is history editor of online journal, Independent Australia where he regularly explores the historical context to contemporary Queensland political issues.

Dr Davies regularly blogs at <http://republicanchat.blogspot.com.au/>

The Alex Macdonald lecture is an annual event organised by the Brisbane Labour History Association. It commemorates former Qld TLC Secretary Alex Macdonald and the critical role unions have played in the Qld Labour Movement.



A BLHA event with generous sponsorship by the Qld Council of Unions
For more detail contact: Dr Greg Mallory 0407 692 377.

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.

The Queensland Journal Of Labour History

No. 16, March 2013
ISSN 1832-9926

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