

LABOUR HISTORY NEWS

**Labour History Society (South Australia)
Spring 2020**

VALE JIM DOYLE



Unionist and life member of the Labour History Society

President's Report

After the enforced pause in activities due to the COVID 19 restrictions we are hopefully, getting back to normal as far LHS activities are concerned. The AGM held on 15 August was well attended and two new members were elected to the Executive, Adrian Graves and

Vini Ciccarello, however, three previous members did not contest for positions, Elizabeth Di Cesare, Anne Fisher and Allison Murchie. The Executive wishes to thank them for their work with the Executive last year and in Allison's case for several years on the executive and as editing chief for the newsletter. The Conference Working Party also thank Elizabeth and Anne for their work on the WP Committee.

The Executive are now considering guest speakers and events for next year and LHS members are encouraged to put their ideas forward to the Executive. The October General meeting will consider 100 years of the Communist Party of Australia with various guest speakers recounting their experiences and the achievements of the CPA in Australia. The April meeting will have speakers from the Port Adelaide Workers Memorial Centenary Committee.

The joint meeting of the LHS and Independent Peace Australia Network (IPAN) to celebrate 50 years since the Adelaide Moratorium Marches was very well attended and the feedback has been extremely positive. The video of the event has been forwarded to members and supporters.

It is sad to record that In the recent month there have been the deaths of three South Australian industrial activists, Jim Doyle, Vic Heron and Gavin Keneally. It is also noted that Ex Hawke minister Susan Ryan pass away recently. Tributes to her will be the Summer Newsletter.

Jim was a life member of the Labour History Society and had spent most of his 102-year life promoting and defending the struggles of the working class. Vic was the secretary of the Miscellaneous Workers union for a number of years before entering the State Parliament as the Labour member for the state seat of Peake, which unfortunately was lost to Labour in the State bank wipe-out election. Gavin was the long-term ALP member of Parliament for the State seat of Stuart.

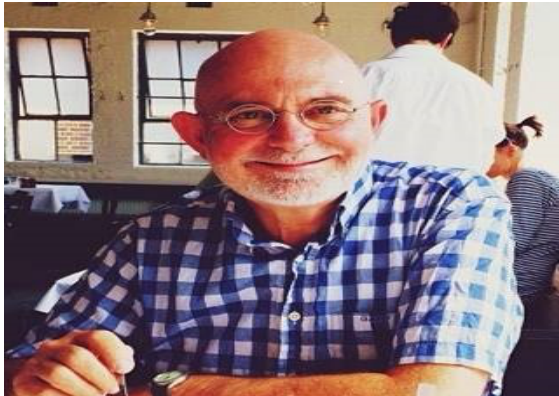
Tributes to their lives are published on the following pages.

Doug Melvin
President
Labour History Society
SA Branch

In this edition: Meet the new Executive members; Vale Jim Doyle, Vic Heron and Gavin Keneally; The Dismissal Letters, the Port Centenary of Adelaide Workers Memorial; Vietnam Mortarium 50 years On (Part 3); Book Reviews; the Assange matter; Important dates and membership dues.

Introducing your new Executive Members

Adrian Graves (Elected at 2000 AGM)



Adrian Graves was born and raised in Alberton. Following his graduation in 1974 from the University of Adelaide, he took a doctorate in 1979 from the University of Oxford on the history of the Queensland sugar industry. He subsequently held academic and managerial posts in Australia and the UK.

A lifelong activist and trade unionist (presently the ASU), he was Coordinator and then Treasurer of the SEARCH Foundation, Sydney between 2014 and 2018. He is an associate of the University of Tasmania working with a team to establish a program in Digital History.

Recently returned to Adelaide, he is currently writing the history of the Graham F Smith Peace Foundation. His daughters and grandchildren (of which he is very proud) live in New York, Melbourne and Adelaide.

Vini Ciccarello (Elected at 2000 AGM)



Vini Ciccarello, came to Australia from Italy with her family at age 6 and has lived in the same street in Norwood for most of her life.

She has been fortunate to have enjoyed an eclectic career having worked both here and overseas (Italy) as an au-pair, fashion designer, Interpreter/Translator and later as a Librarian for 17 years at the State Library of South Australia.

Vini was involved with many community organisations when in 1989 she was elected to the City of Kensington and Norwood Council in a by-election where Vini served three terms as Mayor and subsequently as the Member for Norwood also for three terms in the State Parliament of South Australia.

Vini has served on many Boards and community organisations with emphasis on multiculturalism, aged care, the environment and Italian language and cultural services.

Currently she is involved with UNESCO Adelaide, Radio Italiana 531, the Coordinating Italian Committee (which provides aged care services for the Italian community) and Friends of the State Library of South Australia.

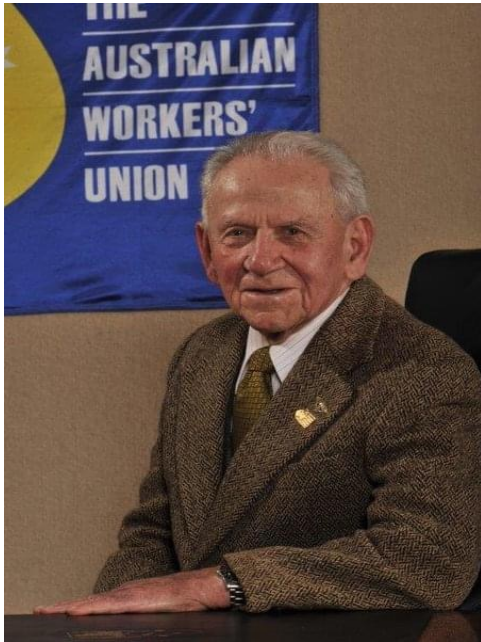
Grant Banfield (Co-opted to the Executive September 2000)



Grant Banfield has been a university academic, educator and activist for more than 30 years. He teaches, researches and writes in the fields of sociology and the political economy of education. After retiring in 2019 as a full-time academic at Flinders University he took a position as an adjunct scholar at the University of South Australia where he supervises post-graduate research student.

Vale Jim Doyle

13 July 1918 – 15 August 2020



Jim Doyle was born in Rockhampton, Queensland and grew up in Longreach, the eldest of seven children. His father was a teamster who drove a wagon of 12-16 horses and carted wool from Longreach pastoral stations.

Jim left school in 1932 at the age of 14 and got work pulling thistle weeds along the course of a river. He started shearing in 1939 and worked in shearing sheds all over Queensland and later in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

Jim had tried to join the Army at the beginning of the Second World War, but shearing was a reserved occupation. After Pearl Harbour he was allowed to join. He volunteered to drive trucks and was accepted even though he did not have a drivers' licence. He was eventually posted to Geraldton where soldiers were spread along the WA coast as they were

expecting the Japanese to attack.

As there was a shortage of shearers Jim was pulled out of New Guinea by the Army to return to shearing as they needed the wool of the sheep for the war effort. He was eventually discharged in 1944.

Jim got his education in the shearing sheds. In Jim's words, "... the important thing about the conditions in that period was the debate that took place in the shed, because the circumstances were conducive to shearers debating how things were going. Usually there would be one shearer or another who might have a little portable wireless in the shed although portable wireless in those days, you couldn't listen to them much or very rarely of a daytime. There were only a few stations you could pick up around Longreach at that time on the portable. One of the best stations was a Victorian station 3AW. For some reason it came through of a night and generally that's where they got the news. Shearers were always keen to be kept up to date with the news and in particular politics of the day. They'd get the papers out every week and shearers were always carrying a fair bit of reading material with them on their travels from shed to shed. The level of the debate was energetic to say the least. This was a time with the rise of fascism in Europe, the civil war in Spain. Shearers were taking a very keen interest in this as well as the revolution in Russia in 1917. There was a spin-off in all of these things washing over into the debates taking place in the shearing sheds. So, shearers were pretty well-informed and, on the whole had a very definite attitude to where they stood. Moscow also had a radio station that used to broadcast in English too. They used to be able to get it on occasions and it was well listened to."

This formed the background of Jim's education in the shearing industry. Jim continues, "That period was probably the most important period in my life in my education. At this time there were quite a lot of communists in the shearing industry and the Labor Party people that were there, in a lot of cases the older ones, and I can still remember some of these older ones who

were bitter on the outcome of the big strike in the 1890s. I can remember one old bloke, and I'll probably never forget him, old Ted Dean. It still makes me emotional how bitter he was on this period, on the big strike."

The big strike in the 1890's led to the formation of the Australian Workers' Union and the Labor Party.

In 1946 Jim was shearing at Carandotta Station near Mt Isa and was heavily involved in the industrial action to win the 40-hour week in the industry in Queensland so that shearers would no longer have to work on Saturday mornings.

Throughout his long career as a shearer he was regularly elected as the shed rep. He was always militant but also strategic in how he operated and was often offside with the bosses. In the 40- hour week campaign they took on the large pastoralist first and Jim demonstrated this approach. Shearers are piece workers, so they are only paid for the hours they work but others in the shed were waged employees. Jim agitated for the support of the other workers to go to the shed on Saturday morning while the shearers stayed in their quarters. There was no work if the shearers did not work. The other workers still had to be paid and the bosses caved in. The 40-hour week was on its way to be won.

During the 40-hour week campaign Jim met Jack Wright and they became firm friends and often worked together. Through the activity of the rank and file members of the AWU the leadership of the Union had to take the case to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and Queensland became the first state to win the 40-hour week in the pastoral industry.

Being so militant led to Jim missing out on many jobs in some of the big sheds but there was always plenty of work. He bought his first Union card on 7th March 1933 and was a financial member continuously for the rest of his life, a period of 88 years continuous membership. Surely a world record. He always believed that the best place to educate workers was to be among them.

Before he became an organiser in the SA Branch of the AWU in the West Darling including Broken Hill he also organised on the West Coast and Norther parts of SA. He was the Secretary of the AWU Barrier Committee. He was instrumental in getting the 40-hour week in the pastoral Industry for NSW.

In 1961 Jim was invited to attend the World Federation of Trade Unions Conference in Bulgaria. The conference was attended by delegates from all over the world and they discussed the problems of their countries. Some of them invited Jim to visit their countries and he went to Hungary, East Berlin, Poland and Russia, stopping for several weeks in Indonesia on the way home. He visited many farms and factories in these countries and was very impressed by what he saw and learned.

While working in Broken Hill Jim got a Certificate in Engine Driving which led to work in Whyalla for BHP and later in New Guinea at Bougainville Copper Mines. He put in 6 months as an Operator at the old RAH. He also spent time working as a driver at Moomba when shearing work was not available

Jim had a lifelong dispute with Clyde Cameron who was very influential in the AWU. He opposed him being a union delegate in the AWU as Jim always did what was best for the working class. Cameron stopped him from being a delegate to ALP conventions. Cameron supported AWU officials Dunnery and Tinson and the Catholic Right.

When the AWU amalgamated with the Iron Workers Union Jim supported and helped the campaign for Wayne Hanson. Hanson was elected by a large margin.

Cameron, Dunnery and Tinson also opposed life membership of the AWU for Jim. Bill Ludwig, the AWU Secretary from Queensland nominated him and it was endorsed by the National Executive.

Jim became an Organiser for the Union from 1972 to 1982 and was Vice President of the AWU where he was elected un-opposed. As an organiser he would travel 90,000-100,000 km a year and was hardly ever home. He was based in Port Pirie and later in Port Augusta. He had a good sign up rate of new members and he covered everyone in country towns from shearers to fruit pickers.

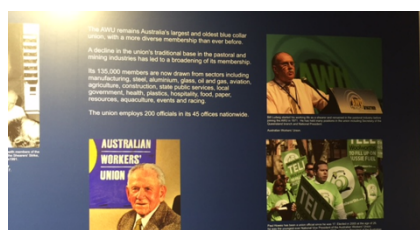
Jim attended May Day marches whenever possible and talked of the big marches in Melbourne after WWII where thousands of rank and file gathered on the banks of the Yarra. He was a regular attendee at many Adelaide marches and May Day celebrations.

On 8th July 2011 the AWU opened a new office complex in Port Pirie and named it “Jim Doyle House” in recognition of his life-long commitment to the Union movement and the working class. Three hundred people marched down the main street as part of the celebrations. A moving speech was made by Wayne Hanson and the building was officially opened by the then National Secretary of the AWU. Wayne said, “He is unique in many ways, but in this instance, he is a stand-out, a one-off living example of the longevity and history of the Australian Workers Union. At 93 he is a walking, talking history of his union.”

Jim was forced to retire in 1986 due to reaching retiring age, but he continued to advise, educate and agitate. This included publication of his newsletter “The Plod” which had a wide circulation. He was a regular visitor for lunch at Parliament House in Adelaide to have “a chat” with local Members of Parliament.

Jim was a much-loved life member of the SA Branch of the Labour History Society.

We will miss you Jim.



Photos: Part of the exhibition at Barcaldine, with Senator Penny Wong, with Sally McManus Secretary of the ACTU, with Greg Combet, with Bill Shorten at his 100th birthday celebrations, with Wayne Hanson at a May Day rally.

Allison Murchie and Les Birch

Sources: Oral History interview by Allison Murchie, OH 963 SLSA, Speech by Wayne Hanson at Port Pirie 8.11.2011.

Photos: Courtesy of Allison Murchie and Wayne Hanson

VALE Vic Heron

Victor Stanley Heron was stalwart of the South Australian Labor movement, Vic was a compassionate, committed representative of his community and for working people. He was the Labor member for Peake from 1989 to 1993, and sadly passed away on 1 September in New South Wales. He is survived by his partner, Maxine, and his sisters Patricia and Ros.

Vic entered parliament at the age of 50 after a long career supporting and empowering workers as an organiser and, later, state secretary of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union.

Vic was passionate about retaining a strong safety net of wages and conditions for those who most relied on it, and he was a fierce advocate for health and safety at work, for access to the training that enabled health and safety, and for accessible, affordable childcare. He recognised the barriers to women's equal participation in the economy and he was generous in his contribution to the fight for change for gender equality.

Compiled from Condolence speeches from the House of Assembly

One of Vic's lasting achievements was to play a lead role as Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union (FMWU), SA Branch in the recognising the importance of the social role of childcare workers. At the time in the late 1980s, childcare workers in SA did not even have an Award. They were classified as "Other", the lowest classification in the Hospitals etc. Ancillary Employees Award which covered private hospital and aged care non nursing employees.

In the early 1990s just before Vic became an MP, the FMWU won the SA Child Care Award. That was the first significant step in a long unfinished journey for childcare workers being recognised as important early childhood educators, not just "child minders".

Vic was always supportive of new Organisers in particular and through his own experience as an Organiser, that Organisers needed mentoring but also needed to be allowed to try new things and "have a go".

Chris Fielding former FMWU member

I was Vic's campaign director for the seat of Peake both when he won it and then lost it with an unfavourable redistribution and the State Bank affair.

Vic was a good member and was very well respected by the electorate and without the State Bank affair I am sure he would have retained the seat regardless of the redistribution.

One of my best memories of Vic was when I was working for Jack Wright and it had been announced that the Bannon Government had won the right to stage the F1 Grand Prix in Adelaide. Vic rang me and the conversation went “Hi Doug, about this Grand Prix, the motor clubs reckon their members will do the non-construction work for tickets to the event. Mate that is not on. Our members (FMWU) do event work and that is how it has to be”.

This one short conversation led to meeting with the UTLC and the Grand Prix becoming a total closed shop – no ticket no start.

Doug Melvin

VALE Gavin Keneally

Gavin Keneally won preselection for the seat of Stuart for the 1970 election and was one of those Labor MPs swept to power when Don Dunstan was elected 50 years ago. He was one of the longest serving ministers in the Bannon Labor government, and when he stepped away from politics, he was just 56.

Gavin was an accomplished footy player and an excellent cricketer, he also represented his city in tennis, table tennis and basketball. He also wrote for his local newspaper and produced his own radio program. A native of Quorn, he was transferred to Port Augusta in his role with the commonwealth railways, and it was there his political career commenced when he became secretary and president of the Port Augusta sub-branch of the Labor Party.

As transport minister in the Bannon government, his accomplishments included overseeing the sealing of the Stuart Highway between Port Augusta and the NT border, commencing planning for tunnels to improve road safety through the Adelaide Hills to the freeway, introducing the state's first red-light traffic cameras, overseeing an increase of security on public trains, streamlining vehicle registration and car ownership transfer, making baby safety capsules mandatory and established a pool of capsules for hire to make the measure affordable for all South Australians, he also introducing a pre-licence training scheme for motorcyclists to combat a rise in motorcyclist deaths.

Gavin Keneally enjoyed a rich life outside politics. Married to Judith, he had five children, six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. He was committed to his family, to his friends and to the community he loved.

Compiled from the SA Legislative Assembly condolence speeches

The Palace Letters. Chris Sumner

Professor Jenny Hocking was nothing if not dogged in her pursuit of the Palace Letters. She finally succeeded on 29 May 2020 when the High Court decided that they were Commonwealth Archives and not the personal letters of the Governor General Sir John Kerr and the Queen. The Letters were released on 14 July by the Commonwealth Archives and are easily accessible from their web site. They comprise 211 letters of 1200 pages written between Kerr and the Palace (principally with Sir Martin Charteris, the Queen's Private Secretary) covering the whole of Kerr's tenure from 1974 - 1977. Charteris makes it clear throughout that the Queen was kept fully informed.

I cannot pretend to have read them all, but enough, along with the extensive media coverage, to get fascinated by them. Especially if you are a political junkie or historian you need to be careful once you start - they well and truly suck you in. They have also sparked another species of the history wars between monarchists and republicans and between, par for the course, republicans themselves. They should be read with Paul Kelly and Troy Bramston, *The Dismissal* (Penguin Viking) 2015 and Jenny Hocking, *The Dismissal Dossier* (MUP) 2015. Another book from Hocking is expected. It is to be hoped that she covers not only Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's dismissal by Kerr on 11 November 1975 but the other historical and social circumstances of the time.

The mainly typed letters and copious attachments, many being newspaper clippings, were sent only 45 years ago. Yet they seem to be from another epoch closer to the communication practices of the Victorian age than the present day. Instant news from cable television or the internet and the use of email means that most of what Kerr did would not now be necessary. They are sent in the diplomatic bag.

There is a formal mode of address (My Dear Private Secretary) on embossed letter head from Balmoral Castle or Buckingham Palace. Kerr doesn't use the official Government House letterhead presumably to try to emphasise his view of the 'personal and confidential' nature of the correspondence. He often concludes with cloying obsequiousness: "my expression of complete loyalty and the desire to perform my humble duty to Her Majesty as may best serve her interests and purposes" (27 May 1976), to which replies from the Palace respond favourably.

Some subjects will be cringeworthy to modern Australian eyes - discussion about the proper order of precedence for a Knighthood in the Order of Australia with respect to the Thistle, Order of Merit or Knights of the Grand Cross (7 May 1976). We can all be pleased that this earth-shattering dispute was satisfactorily resolved. Charteris was "delighted to hear that Sir Garfield Barwick agrees that the proper place for the A.K. is immediately after the O.M." (17 May 1976).

Generally, on the use of the reserve powers of the Governor General, Kerr's aim was to garner as much support as he possibly could for their use in the circumstances he faced where the Coalition under Malcolm Fraser was deferring the usual supply bill in the Senate beginning on 15 October 1975. With the Palace he only partially succeeded and this ambiguity becomes the central point of controversy about the Queen's involvement in Whitlam's dismissal.

On 3 July 1975 (over 4 months before it occurred) Kerr sent an article from the *Canberra Times* which raised the possibility of dismissal of a government if it cannot obtain supply. Kerr says he had no intention of doing it but clearly the issue was on his mind.

On 24 September 1975 in a handwritten P.S. Charteris cites a Canadian expert, Eugene Forsey, and refers to dissolution of Parliament if supply is refused. On 4 November, Charteris affirms the existence of the reserve powers but to be used only as last resort and commends Kerr on his skill and wisdom and impartiality in handling of the matter.

On 11 November Kerr informed the Queen of the dismissal and included the supporting advice of Sir Garfield Barwick, Chief Justice of the High Court. Kerr confirmed that he had not informed the Palace beforehand as under the Australian Constitution the responsibility was his and it was better for Her Majesty not to know in advance. In a reply on 17 November

Charteris said Kerr had acted with perfect constitutional propriety and admirable consideration for Her Majesty's position. He rhetorically asks what else could be done and opines that what Kerr did could not easily be challenged from a constitutional point of view. In later correspondence Charteris without qualification reaffirms this view. On 25 November 1975, Charteris is "delighted" that Kerr received a "forthright and unequivocal letter of approbation from Bob Menzies." There can be no doubt by this time whose side Charteris is on.

On 28 April 1976, Charteris says academic opinion among constitutional lawyers is that the dismissal was correctly done. On 17 May 1976 that "legal opinion in this country was very much on your side". He was "fortified by the Grand Night at Gray's Inn and lunch with Judges at the Old Bailey". These definite opinions from English lawyers are seemingly endorsed despite the controversy in Australia and views to the contrary including that of noted ANU constitutional expert, Professor Geoffrey Sawer, which Kerr had previously sent. On 20 Nov 1975 Kerr advised that he had not warned Whitlam in case he moved to revoke his commission and he could not risk this outcome for the sake of the Monarchy. He concludes by repeating his view from other letters that: "I have attempted to act in the best interests of the Monarchy".

Kerr was obsessed with whether Whitlam would attempt to remove him if he was warned. This had nothing to do with Prince Charles but Kerr improperly raised the issue with him in a casual way when they were together at the Papua New Guinea independence celebrations in Sept 1975. As Kerr no doubt anticipated, the conversation got back to Charteris who advised him that the Queen would have to accept the advice of a Prime Minister to withdraw a Governor General's commission but that the decision would be delayed as long as possible. Kerr says the only reason he did not want this to happen was to protect the Monarchy, not concern for his own position. Conveniently, both interests coincided but whatever the motive for his actions it was unacceptable. The Letters reveal that Kerr's overriding concern is for the Monarchy and not the interests of Australian democracy. Kerr should have had the courage to warn Whitlam and face the consequences. Whitlam's sense of humour got the better of him when he jokingly referred to a race to the Palace in discussion with Kerr at a formal dinner for the Malaysian Prime Minister on 16 October. Despite this, he later denied that he would have sought Kerr's dismissal and it is obvious that the political consequences of doing so would have been disastrous.

Charteris should have refrained from engaging with Kerr on the use of the reserve powers – it was unnecessary, unwise and indiscreet; he had no special competence to do so. He should not have acceded to Kerr's enticements to comment. He was not a constitutional expert particularly in relation to the law in Australia. Having decided to get involved by supporting the use of the reserve powers to dismiss a prime minister and dissolve Parliament there was a further error of judgement.

Charteris must have become aware from Kerr's correspondence that the reserve powers might be used. Therefore, in providing his comments in support of their existence, he should have gone on to provide the context for their exercise and emphasised the other conventions surrounding a constitutional monarchy: that the Governor General acts on the advice of the Prime Minister, and the responsibility to counsel, advise and warn Government ministers. The real issue was never the existence of the reserve powers but their extent and the manner in which they should be exercised. In the debate in the SA Parliament on 16 October following the blocking of supply I conceded their existence for use in extreme circumstances.

In failing to further elaborate on the constitutional principles Charteris was in good company, no different to the various legal experts who gave opinions in support of dismissal. They only told half the story. The Liberal Party's hired opinions, Murray Gleeson QC and Keith Aickin QC both later appointed to the High Court by Coalition Governments, supported dismissal as did Shadow Attorney General and former Solicitor General Robert Ellicott QC.

Kerr, improperly and in conflict with the normal separation of powers doctrine, obtained a supportive opinion from Barwick. Whatever limited precedent for involving the judiciary in a situation like this, Barwick should not have participated. He had a massive conflict of interest being a former Liberal Member of Parliament, Attorney General and a cousin twice over of Ellicott. Kerr could have been in no doubt about what advice he would receive. Even worse was the clandestine involvement of High Court Justice Sir Anthony Mason. What all these people should have done was advise, that once Kerr had properly considered all the advice before him including that from the Law Officers of the Crown (Attorney General and Solicitor General) and determined to no longer follow the advice of the Prime Minister, he should have advised the Prime Minister of his reasoning and set out his proposed course of action, preferably in writing. If the normal rule is that a Governor General acts on the advice of a Prime Minister, then the latter is entitled to know when he no longer intends to do this and the reasons why.

Mason's involvement was inexcusable as was his contemptuous response to Hocking that he owed history nothing but at least he told Kerr that Whitlam should have been warned. He drafted a dismissal letter for Kerr which in the end was not used. He could easily have drafted a pre-dismissal letter for Kerr to provide Whitlam with a considered view of the situation, notice of his intentions and a chance to respond.

What Charteris and all these learned and distinguished lawyers failed to do was provide the advice on dismissal in the context of the other vice regal powers and responsibilities and constitutional conventions related to them. Their failure to do so was inexcusable and led to a break down in the normal constitutional norms which earned Kerr great opprobrium from most Australians. This could have been avoided if Kerr had acted openly with Whitlam. He could have been the hero and Fraser and Whitlam the devils.

Buckingham Palace's official response was that the release of the Letters confirmed that neither the Queen nor Palace had any part to play in Kerr's decision to dismiss Whitlam. One of the arguments of the Palace in court against release of the Letters was that their secrecy was essential to preserve the constitutional position of the Monarch and the Monarchy. This fear can put to rest. Given the muted public reaction, the strenuous and expensive resistance to their release has been shown to have been pointless. Predictably, the Australian Monarchist's response has been to say that the system worked properly, the decision was taken in Australia according to our constitutional practice. This view is supported by Prof Anne Twomey of Sydney University who has written extensively supporting the existence of the reserved powers.

Hocking maintains her previously expressed view about the Palace's involvement and says an unqualified royal green light was given to the dismissal. She describes the Letters as a bombshell which blows apart the claim that the Queen had no part in the dismissal and that the damage done to the Queen, to Kerr and the Monarchy is incalculable.

Kelly and Branston writing in *The Australian* are both republicans and otherwise highly critical of Kerr but see nothing sinister or improper in what the Palace did. Although

generally on the same side as her, Kelly and Bramston respond that ‘mad cap conspiracy’ theories have been debunked and the Letters are humbling and humiliating for Hocking.

The republican cause is not advanced by wrongly accusing the Palace of involvement, they argue. Australian Republic Movement President Peter Fitzsimons was gobsmacked by the content of the Letters. Malcolm Turnbull says Kerr was getting a lot of advice. For them and Anthony Albanese the Letters reinforce the need for a republic.

Some republican critics went so far as to argue that the Queen should have breached the Governor General’s confidence and intervened directly to advise Whitlam of Kerr’s thinking. I disagree, as that would have contradicted the generally accepted view that the conflict should be resolved in Australia.

The truth about the conclusions to be drawn from the Letters lies somewhere between the competing positions. There was no conspiracy, no advance notice given to the Queen and the Palace had no direct involvement. But it cannot be said there was no involvement. Charteris provided some comfort to Kerr before the dismissal that he had the power to do what he did and that he was handling the crisis well. Afterwards, he almost acts as a counsellor to assure Kerr that he had behaved properly despite the furious public disagreement in Australia and contrary opinions from constitutional experts.

What is indisputable is that Kerr preferred protecting the Monarch (and himself as well) over allowing the accepted conventions of Australian democracy and constitutional procedure to play out properly and openly. Here, republicans have a legitimate complaint - more about Kerr than the Palace, but the latter cannot be absolved of all responsibility. Despite this, the republican cause has not been reignited by the disclosure. For the Australian public the issue remains on the backburner and regrettably is likely to remain there given more pressing economic issues.

Some interesting titbits emerge from the Letters. First, there is one curious insight about Whitlam. Not only did he mistakenly trust Kerr throughout the crisis but he initially badly judged Fraser. On 29 August Kerr 1975 observed to Charteris that Whitlam had predicted that Fraser would wait until 1977 for an election as he had “a better sense of values than his predecessors.”

Second, for complete philological pedants who support state education and don’t admire the British aristocracy, it can be observed that the education Charteris received at Eton did not run to him knowing the difference between the words “principal” and “principle”. In his handwritten P.S. of 24 September, he discusses a constitutional “principal.”

Finally, despite the excessive formality of his correspondence with Kerr, it is endearing to know that Charteris had a more skittish side. In 1995, after his retirement, in an article in the *Spectator* (a politically conservative publication), he snubbed Royal protocol and formality by describing the Duchess of York as vulgar, Prince Charles as whiny and the Queen Mother as a bit of an ostrich for not looking at what she doesn’t want to see. Whitlam would probably have enjoyed his company more than the pompous, stuffed shirt Kerr.

Chris Sumner

Remembering & celebrating fighters for justice:

Centenary of the Port Adelaide Workers Memorial

The Port Adelaide Workers Memorial stands proudly on one side of the old Black Diamond Corner, at the junction of Commercial Road and St Vincent Street. It honours 136 deceased individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the labour movement and broader community. Commemorated are men and women who worked steadfastly over many years in their workplaces and unions; local community; local government; and state parliament. They include local Aboriginal stalwarts Ruby Hammond and Aunty Josie Agius.

Generally each year, on the Sunday following May Day, a name or names are added to the Memorial, and those previously named remembered. The event is organised by Memorial trustees: SA Unions, the ALP Federal Electoral Committee for Port Adelaide and the Port Adelaide Enfield Council.

Creating the Memorial

The idea for the Memorial was first raised on the sudden death in December 1916 of Hugh A Garland, prominent trade unionist and founder of the Daily Herald. The Port Adelaide Labor Party Electorate Committee formed a sub-committee to 'devise a scheme' to commemorate the life of Garland. The scheme initially involved a memorial drinking fountain. On 23 January 1917 the Port Adelaide Council granted the Electorate Committee's request to erect a memorial fountain in the town centre.

Before long, the design was expanded to memorialise not only Hugh Garland, but also 'departed Labor leaders who had contributed significantly to the area, some of whom had given their lives on the field of battle'. Names would be inscribed on a central pedestal. A statue of 'Justice' would eventually top the Memorial.

Work on raising the substantial funds required then began with the active support of the Port Adelaide Trades & Labor Council. This was no easy task at the height of the First World War. An appeal was sent out to unions; profits were donated from a local horse carnival; the Labor Regulation League organised fund raisers; Labor women ran a Social; and movie proprietors ran shows. Monumental Mason John Tillett was chosen to produce the granite pedestal and two drinking fountains at a cost of three hundred pounds. The total cost was six hundred pounds.

On 8 November 1918 Mayor and labour activist RH Smith laid the foundation stone of the pedestal with a silver trowel donated by John Tillett. The completed pedestal and two fountains, linked to the pedestal by a tiled base, were unveiled before a large gathering on 6 December 1918. Enclosed within the pedestal was a time capsule made from copper taken from a clipper, the Stag, aground in the Port River for many years. The capsule contained signatures of notable people involved with the labour movement, newspapers and coins.

The plaque on the pedestal reads: 'Erected to perpetuate the memory of deceased Labor workers'. At the time, the Memorial was the first of its kind in the world.



B4409, State Library of South Australia, Port Adelaide Collection, c1918

The statue of 'Justice'

War constraints prevented the inclusion of the intended statue of 'Justice' in 1918. Money for the life size white marble statue was donated following the war by local labour supporters Mr & Mrs B Winter. Mr Winter had worked in a tug boat galley and became the proprietor of the Ozone Fish & Chip Café, 43 Commercial Road. The Winters assisted striking seamen and their families during a dispute. On receiving thanks for the donation he explained '...that having his success in life in Port Adelaide, chiefly among the workers, he was simply making the presentation as a token of his appreciation'.

Carved in Italy, the statue was finally added to the Memorial in September 1921.



Flower Day, Port Adelaide, 28 April 1938, City of Port Adelaide Enfield

A focal point for labour

The Workers Memorial became a focal point for labour rallies and parades in Port Adelaide. 8 Hour Day celebrations; Labor Day marches; celebrations of International Workers Day; and May Day events began at or centred around it. Associated community events commenced there.

Unionists in Port Adelaide played a leading role in the winning of the 8 Hour Day in South Australia. In 1873, workers at Lindsay's Engineering Works in Port Adelaide and Wyatt's 'Victoria' Foundry in Adelaide claimed a 48 hour week (over 6 days). They won their demands and the first 8 hour day in South Australia commenced on 1st July of that year.

Winning the 8 Hour Day was a major achievement and a source of great pride to trade unionists. It was celebrated and built on. In Port Adelaide, 8 Hour Day (later Labor Day) holiday festivities included parades; a community picnic; competitive games for men, women and children; and horse racing, at either the Alberton or Largs Oval. From 1932, following wreath laying and speeches, annual festivities kicked off at the Memorial.

An annual May Day ceremony has been held at the Memorial since 1992 to honour the achievements of those named and to add any new name(s). Prior to that year names could be recommended and added at any time.

Celebrating the Centenary

2021 marks the centenary of the Port Adelaide Workers Memorial. A celebration is being planned to commemorate the lives of those memorialised and to affirm what they stood for. The Port of Adelaide National Trust is working with the trustees on a special centenary project. Extensive work has already located a number of descendants of those named. They will be especially invited to the celebration. The day promises to be something to look forward to in these difficult times.

You can find out more on the people named on the Memorial at the Port Adelaide local library. And if you have any further information on them or their descendants the Port Adelaide National Trust would love to hear from you via the Labour History Society.

Jude Elton

References

City of Port Adelaide Enfield, Port Adelaide Workers Memorial, pamphlet.

'Labor Pioneers Port Workers' Memorial', Daily Herald, Adelaide, Thursday 15 December 1921, p. 6

'Workers' Memorial for Port Adelaide: The Foundation Stone', Daily Herald, Adelaide, Friday 8 November 1918, p. 6.

Readers please note the members of the Centenary Organising Committee will be the guest speakers at the LHS April 2021 meeting.

VIETNAM MORATORIUM CAMPAIGN-50 YEARS ON

Part 2 of this article covered the period between 1970 and 1972, excepting the proceedings and findings of the Royal Commission into the September 1970 Moratorium demonstration (Autumn 2020 issue)

Mr Justice Bright was required to inquire into and report upon (paraphrased):

1. The arrangements and plans made for the demonstration by those responsible for doing so.
2. The arrangements and plans made by the police for the demonstration.
3. What happened at the intersection and why did it happen.
4. What were the legally permissible limits of public demonstration, and what changes should be made to the law on this subject.
5. What can or should be done to prevent a repetition of the public disorder that occurred.

Some of the leaders of the demonstration such as Medlin and O'Hair refused to appear before the Commission. They described it as an instrument of the State which would most likely endorse the actions of the Government and the Police.

Others, including Blewitt, Harcourt and Bannon did however participate. They saw it as an opportunity to express their views on the current state of the law with respect to public assembly, and any changes that might be made thereto.

It is my opinion that the Commissioner approached and indeed performed his task in a diligent, considered and comprehensive manner. His Report was a model of objectivity and completeness.

He made the following findings and recommendations (paraphrased):

1. That Medlin and Arnold were primarily responsible for the activities on the day. That it was likely they made the decision to halt the march at the intersection. That many orders and instructions given to marchers were inadequately communicated to them
2. There was a complete absence of communication between Police and Medlin and Arnold. The dispersal communication given by Superintendent Calder was not adequate. Most of the demonstrators would have continued the march if their leaders had remained in control.
3. The Police Offences Act needed review. In particular any obstruction to public places which conformed to a prior valid notification should not be regarded as willful.
4. The Commissioner of Police should be ultimately responsible to the Executive Government, by way of written Ministerial direction if required.
5. There should be a system of advance notification of an impending march introduced. If there is an objection, and no compromise is reached, the matter is to be referred to a Judge of the District Court.

6. Organisers of demonstrations ought not to lead demonstrators into situations in which police dispersal action appears almost certain. Police should not set in motion dispersal procedures except as a last resort.

Insofar as the Report called for legislative reform it is a matter of record that the Dunstan Government enacted the necessary legislation to give effect thereto.

These amendments were important by-products of the period, with a lasting effect on government process, and the ability of citizens to assemble and demonstrate in an orderly fashion.

As was succinctly put by Neal Blewett, in his review of the activities of the CPV, 'a generation has been radicalised, a community made aware of the misuse of power, a nation alerted to the pretensions of American ambition'

In conclusion I will draw on the words of Lynn Arnold, the last Chairman of the CPV, when he wrote on its winding up 'the value of the work of the CPV and other anti-war movements around the world has been in the eroding of the rights of governments to make arbitrary decisions and prosecute wars in whatever way they see fit, to ignore public opinion when it suits them...'

Recent wars in which Australia has participated, and the manner in which they have been prosecuted, continue to demonstrate to us that we must be forever vigilant in holding our Government accountable for what they do in our name

Greg Stevens

First Chair of the VMC Co-ordinating Committee 1970

The Assange Matter

As we go to press, the life of Australian citizen Julian Assange hangs in the balance. The lawfare persecution which has dragged him through British and Swedish courts will continue in the United States, whether he is extradited there to face espionage charges or not. He is facing in effect a fate worse than death, indefinite incarceration.

When the famous 'Collateral Murder' footage was released, Assange rightly predicted that he would be pursued to the ends of the Earth. That pursuit has already registered significant success, tainting Assange on gender grounds and effectively dividing the progressive community which might have provided him with unstinting support. These effective divide and rule tactics are as old as empire itself and its dark arts dirty tricks. The UK judicial authorities have accorded him biased justice. The unjust judge who denied him bail, herself married into the 'intelligence community', accused him of 'narcissism'. It may be the first time the bench has pretended to psychiatric expertise best left to expert witnesses.

The imperialist nature of these stratagems cannot be doubted historically. The US commands the greatest system of alliances and bases the world has ever seen, much like the ancient Athenian Empire in structure. Just because it is an Empire concealed in plain view, this does not make it any the less imperial and founded upon the almighty dollar. The UK is behaving

precisely like a satellite state regarding Assange, doing its overlord's bidding. The Australian ruling class, in part dependant on foreign influence from across the Pacific, has been abject on this matter.

Let us be under no illusion about the fundamental right of free speech at stake here. The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer famously declared in a Nazi prison that when they had come for the Communists, he had done nothing because he was not a Communist, and when they had come for the Jews, he had done nothing because he was not a Jew. Now they have come for Assange. Ancient legislation has been dusted off in the US to prosecute him, new legislation is mooted in Australia under Dutton to extend the powers of ASIO. Every whistle-blower and activist around the world and in this country, ecological, social and political, is on notice. His fate is only too likely to be the thin edge of the wedge of oppression.

David Faber

Book Reviews

"A Bigger Picture "-Author Malcolm Turnbull

Like most politicians Malcolm describes in great detail his accomplishments when in Parliament and this is standard for writers to do so. As a diversion I found out more about Bill Clinton from books written about Hilary than his own autobiography.

Much of this book contains information already known about Malcom such as time with the Packer organisation and promoting the Republican movement. You will observe that I refer to Turnbull as Malcom, as he comes across as a person who you would refer to by first name , as opposed to Scott Morrison who is clearly to be addressed as Morrison, as is Donald J Trump who is always referred to as Trump (and that's only on a good day). Malcolm was clearly outgunned by Howard in the Republican referendum and later also working within a hostile environment such a Politics, Malcolm ends up being outgunned by the conservatives.

Malcolm tells of his anguish at being deposed as Prime Minister yet his career in Parliament was first achieved with a massive branch stacking exercise that saw him oust a sitting Member. The deposing of Brendan Nelson was brutal.

Without doubt, to Malcolm, his most important achievement was the passing of the Same-Sex Marriage Legislation. Yet he fails to reflect that the process was extremely painful for thousands of people. The end justifies the means in his view. The most revealing part of the book is his time as Prime Minister and the eventual dismissal by his own party. He really was quite naive in understanding that as there is no job description for Prime Minister, everyone believes they can do that job.

He wanted to adopt a collegiate system with wide consultation with sitting members and once a decision was made everyone sang from the same hymn sheet. However, the Cabinet was far from united with members actually hating each other e. g. Dutton and Bishop. The word hate crops up time and time in this book. Malcolm appears to be incapable of disciplining members. A classic example is Morrison leaking Cabinet decisions to his mates in the media. Malcolm mentions this on a number of occasions in the book but doesn't do anything about it.

In the end the conservatives like Abbott got him and he should have called their bluff and gone to an election sooner.

Labour and employment get some mention but usually around the message that job creation is the only game in town.

He has an appreciation of climate change but again to many Australians did very little. The book is worth reading but I am pleased i got it from the library and didn't buy it.

Daryl Regan
L H S member

‘Australia Day’ by Stan Grant

In his book, *Australia Day*, which is his long-awaited follow up to *Talking to My Country*, Stan Grant talks about reconciliation and the indigenous struggle for belonging and identity in Australia, and about what it means to be Australian. A very reflective and troubled book, *Australia Day* asks the questions that have to be asked. Who are we? What is our country? How do we move forward from here?

In the book he gives a history of his family and what his early living standards were like. How through education he developed in the Stan Grant of today. One of the most illuminating chapters in the book is ‘The Voodoo of Race’ (page 125). Here the author looks at the origin of race relations, ‘*Somewhere in human history, we gave colour power. There was something in the hue of the skin, the kink of hair, the width of the nose or prominence of a brow ridge that we believed determined a person’s character. Colour was immutable*’. (page 126).

Stan points out, something that we should all think about in the English language, the amount of common words that one realises are quite racist in nature making black a negative word. He uses as example, ‘blackmail, blacken a name, black sheep of the family,’ I can add

blackleg, black-spot, black-balled, blacken reputation. I am sure that readers can add plenty more common use words, that make black a negative word.

He also quotes from the Old Testament 'Blackness was the curse of Canaan'

Another chapter that really got me thinking is 'The Cunning of Recognition' (page 201)

In this chapter the author expresses the opinion that '*A Nation is a great lie, a thing of fiction, you could say it is entirely a mirage, something we imagine into being.*'

He refers back to the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) which ended the 30-year war in Europe and created a new political order, one of sovereignty and independence, States pledged to stay out of each other's affairs (sic, sic).

He then reflects on how the aboriginal people lived in clan groups or tribes bound by their own borders and linked by trade and ceremony before the arrival of the British and the lack of understanding of the system by the early settlers and British government.

About the Author

Stan Grant is a Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi man. A journalist since 1987, he has worked for the ABC, SBS, the Seven Network and Sky News Australia. From 2001 to 2012 he worked for CNN as an anchor and senior correspondent in Asia and the Middle East. As a journalist, he has received a string of prestigious international and Australian awards. In 2015, he published his bestselling book *Talking to My Country*, which won the Walkley Book Award, and he also won a Walkley Award for his coverage of Indigenous affairs. In 2016 he was appointed to the Referendum Council on Indigenous recognition. Stan is now Professor of Global Affairs at Griffith University and International Affairs Analyst at ABC.

Overall, I found the book quite enlightening and thought provoking.

Well worth a read with the necessary reflection.

Reviewer Doug Melvin

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

18 October 2020 General Meeting – 100 years of the CPA 2 - 4 pm Box Factory

8 November 2020 State Conference Launch – Metropolitan Hotel, Grote Street 2 – 4 pm
(please register if you are attending by emailing dougforblues@hotmail.com or davefabr@bigpond.net.au)

19 November Executive meeting 5.30 – 6.30 pm Box Factory

6 February 2021 State Conference – U City, Franklin Street 9 am – 6 pm

6 February 2021 Post State Conference drinks and finger food 6.30 – 8 30 pm
Metropolitan Hotel, Grote Street

24 February 2021 General meeting – speaker TBA

18 March 2021 Executive meeting

18 April 2021 General meeting – Centenary of the Port Adelaide Workers Memorial

REMINDER

2020/2021 Membership fees are now due

\$15 Concession, \$30 full membership, \$50 small organisations, \$100 large organisations

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