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Illawarra Unity: Editorial 1999

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Illawarra Unity: Editorial 1999

Abstract

1999 has been an exhilarating year for the Branch because of the success of the 6th Biennial National Labour History Conference which we hosted in Wollongong over the 2nd to the 4th October at the Wollongong Town Hall and Community Centre. The full details of this event are recorded in the Conference Report included later in this issue of the journal. I take this opportunity to thank all of you who were involved in organising and participating in the conference to make it such a huge success, especially Rob Hood (who laid out the Proceedings of the conference in typically professional manner and designed the poster) and Robyn Troughton, who, as our indefatigable administrative officer, always remained cheerful under the mounting pressures of conference organising. Other members of the organising committee appear in the full Conference report, but there were many others who helped at the event, including Felix Bronneberg (especially with hanging union banners).

EDITORIAL

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Another highlight of the conference dinner was the awarding of four Certificates of Recognition by the Branch to Irene and Neville Arrowsmith, Shirley Nixon, and George Petersen. The text of these Certificates is included on the inside back cover of this issue of *Unity*.

Over 50 papers were presented at the conference, most of them produced in the *Proceedings* edited by Rob Hood and myself. A small number of papers were submitted too late for inclusion in the *Proceedings*, and these are produced in this issue of *Unity*. The first, by Pat O'Shane, was one of the keynote addresses at the conference. All of the other papers are of very high quality and well worth circulating widely in this way. The paper by Peter Love on the 1998 maritime dispute also relates to one of the major themes of the keynote address by Lindsay Tanner, who spoke of a project to collect all documents relating to the dispute. I would urge all our members to contact us if they have any documentary material relating to the dispute, so that we can pass this information on to those who are coordinating this documentary record.

The effort of organising the conference has preoccupied the branch committee for most of the year (and much of the previous year), so that we only organised one ordinary general meeting apart from the AGM during 1999. At the AGM Dr Greg Patmore spoke on Localism and Labour: Lithgow, 1869–1932. On June 17 Dr Bradon Ellem from the University of Sydney (and one of our Coledale members), presented a talk on Life and Labour in Broken Hill to one of our general meetings at the Fraternity Club. The meetings were well-attended by about 30 people.

Illawarra Unity

Our preoccupation with the conference and organising the *Proceedings* has also meant that no other issues of *Unity* have appeared during the year, until this one. However, in partial compensation we now offer this special bumper size edition, which is 2 or 3 times as big as normal.

The national conference was sufficiently successful on a financial level for us to offer \$500 to the Australian Society, in whose name we organised it. We are also able to offer a copy of this issue of *Unity* to all conference participants, and urge those of you from outside the Illawarra to take this opportunity to enrol in our branch by way of the enclosed membership form. This will entitle you to all of our future issues of *Unity* whilst your membership remains current, as well as notices to meetings which you may be able to attend, occasionally at least.

Best wishes for the festive season.

Ray Markey

Illawarra Branch President, ASSLH

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ARE STILL AVAILABLE

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