

ASU National Conference 2012 Life Membership

26-28 November, 2012 • National Wine Centre of Australia - Adelaide



Mary-Anne O'Neill

Nominated by: Central & Southern Queensland Clerical & Administrative Branch

Mary-Anne's activism was engaged when as a young woman she listened to a speech in Tumut from a man on the back of a truck that inspired her. This man was Gough Whitlam. Being part of a rural community meant that team work was important, particularly during bushfire season. The loss of the family dairy farm to progress also alerted Mary-Anne at a young age to harsh realities of life.

Mary-Anne worked as a switchboard operator for some years and was recruited into becoming a Delegate for her union at the time. From this early activism, she came to work in the union office. This route eventually led to her running a centre dedicated to health and safety training for workers.

The ASU lured Mary-Anne to Queensland in 1995 where she began working as an Organiser in the private sector. The Branch was made up of 85% female members at this time, and the union was undergoing significant change, moving from a servicing to organising culture. The change in direction presented significant challenges for the union, and Mary-Anne was integral to this process, working with the Leadership of the Australian Services Union C&SQ to build a Branch that focused once again on members.

Over time, Mary-Anne took on the role of the Branch Trainer and the Assistant Branch Secretary.

During these years, she was instrumental in setting up Work Organising committees and recruiting delegates across both the Private Sector and Public sector. She also supported members during the privatisation of Suncorp, Tatts Bet (TAB) and Golden Casket from government owned corporations to private enterprise.

In 2009, Mary-Anne answered the call for further public service, taking up a position in the Bligh Government as the Member for Kallangur. She continued to promote the union and recruit new members, and applied her significant organising skills to working with her new local constituency. During her campaign Mary-Anne told people that her union would have open access to her calendar and that she would do all she could to assist ASU Members if and when she was elected to State Parliament, and she honoured her promise.

One of Mary-Anne's many strengths is that she fundamentally understands the value of empowering delegates and members. Many of the delegates who Mary-Anne trained are still active today, and have changed their lives through applying the skills that she taught them.

One of the reasons that delegates maintained their activism was to do with the way the Mary-Anne trained them. Her training was always captivating and she took delegates on the journey that had them being as excited about being involved with the union because she herself was committed and was passionate about the union. Mary-Anne was often heard to say that she spent her day's tap dancing – If only everyone's tap dancing inspired delegates and members as much as Mary-Anne's.

Mary-Anne was also committed to OH&S. She was passionate about ensuring workers safety and she translated this to all her training courses.

Her commitment to our members has never wavered and now post Politics she continues her support in attending rallies and continuing to use her contacts to assist members wherever possible.

It is with great pleasure that our Branch recommends Mary-Anne for Life Membership of the ASU.



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Linden Scotts

Nominated by: New South Wales United Services Branch

Linden Scotts received Life Membership of the United Services' Branch of the ASU at our Federal Conference in September 2011. The previous year Linden was awarded a Certificate of Merit at the Branch's 2010 Conference and it is only fitting that he now receives the highest acknowledgement for his outstanding services to the Union, Life Membership of the ASU.

Linden joined the Federated Clerks Union in 1970 while working at Tooth & Company then moved on to Adstream IXL and finally Carlton and United Breweries. He remained until 1997 when he accepted redundancy. During his employment at Carlton and United Breweries he took on the responsibility of Union Rep for two years. In 1999 Linden became a Union Rep at the Teachers Federation Health and has continued in this capacity until his retirement in December 2010. From 2003 to 2010 Linden became a member of the Sydney C&A Branch Committee of Management. Linden accepted the position of Branch President and held this position until his retirement in 2010.

Linden has always carried out his duties in a highly professional and a gentlemanly way. He has been the key to the growth in our numbers and the enthusiasm of our Committee of Management members. Linden has always been honest, reliable and is highly regarded by his fellow delegates.



Keith Harvey

Formerly Industrial Officer, ASU National Office

Nominated by: Victorian Private Sector Branch

Until June 30th 2011 Keith was employed full-time as a National Industrial Officer with the Australian Services Union. He had been so employed since the ASU was created in 1993.

Prior to that date Keith was an employee of the National Office of the Federated Clerks Union of Australia. He was first employed by the FCU in 1979 as Research Officer after completing his Economics degree.

In his employment at the ASU, he coordinated the Union's involvement in the grueling award modernisation process during 2008 and 2009.

Keith had personal responsibility for a number of occupational areas and industries including the private sector clerical occupation which was a priority sector.



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He appeared in all hearings relating to the Clerks Private Sector Award and also in relation to many other industries and sectors. He wrote or coordinated many of the submissions filed by the ASU in the course of the award modernisation proceedings.

Keith would have had the heaviest workload of any union or employer advocate through that period as the ASU lodged more written submissions than any other single organisation.

Keith was also involved in the preparation for the recent ASU's SACS Equal Remuneration Order (Equal Pay case) Application which was ultimately successful.

Earlier part of his work for the Federated Clerks Union involved the establishment of committees and bodies to determine the need for and define the competency standards for the performance of clerical and administrative work which had never been done before.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s there was a concerted policy program undertaken by the then federal government in the areas of micro-economic reform and reform of the systems of vocational education and training. Keith was involved in this work such as being a member of the Employment and Skills Formation Council, a subsidiary body of the National Board of Employment Education and Training. The ESFC, while Keith was a member, produced a report advocating a new Vocational Training system in Australia which would include non-trades occupations, including clerical and administrative employees.

At the same time the government in concert with the ACTU and its affiliated trade unions and employer organisations began a process known as award re-structuring operating under the 'structural efficiency' principle of the then Commission.

This activity was undertaken in respect of clerical awards, beginning with the Victoria Commercial Clerks Award. Keith Harvey was part of the joint union-employer working party established to design and validate a new classification structure for the award. As a result of the working party's efforts a comprehensive skills based classification structure was introduced into the award.

Since his retirement he has been employed casually to perform industrial work for the ASU and two other unions.

Keith is also a Board member and Chair of Aspire Learning, a learning resources company publishing learning resources particularly for training employees in clerical and administrative occupations.

Until recently Keith was also a Board member of the Innovation and Business Skills Australia Industry Skills Council - responsible for the setting of training standards for occupations in the business services sector and in other industries.

Keith has also drafted several ASU submissions in relation to a wide range of Federal Government Inquiries into Workplace Relations related issues.

Keith has also trained other advocates and written academic papers on union and Labor history.

Keith's research and advocacy skills before industrial tribunals are highly regarded and the reason why he is still in demand after retirement; and not just by the ASU.



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Paul Slape

Formerly ASU National Secretary

Nominated by: Victorian & Tasmanian Authorities and Services Branch

Paul retired from the union movement in 2011, after 46 years of service, most recently as the National Secretary of the Australian Services Union, a role he occupied for 14 years.

During his long career Paul worked at all levels of the organisation which gave him a sensitivity to and appreciation of the efforts of all of us working in the team to defend and advance workers' rights. This ensured he was not only respected by his colleagues but well loved, too.

As a leader of the MEU Victorian Branch, Paul also was a member of the VTHC Executive in the 1970s and 1980s and was also a member of the ACTU Executive from 1988 until his retirement.

Paul commenced with the Municipal Employees' Union (MEU) as a 17yr old administrative assistant in 1964, working as an Organiser from 1969-1976 until he was elected Assistant Secretary in 1976. Paul was elected General Secretary in 1982 and served in this position until 1993. In this same period, Paul was the Federal Secretary of the Union, becoming the Joint National Secretary of ASU from 1993 to 1996. Paul was elected National Secretary in 1997 until his retirement in March 2011.

Paul also recognised the need to guarantee workers' future prosperity after their retirements. To ensure the best possible outcomes he became part of the Local Authorities Superannuation Board or LASB (now known as Vision), and he served as a Director and President at various times.

Recognising the need for political activism to achieve real gains, Paul was also active in the ALP, serving a term as Victorian President.

His efforts for local government workers in particular extended to work on various other bodies including the ALGT (Australian Local Government Training), National Local Government Productivity Council, Victorian Grants Commission and the Australian Council of Local Government Steering Committee. His work on all these bodies was focussed on ensuring the best outcomes for workers.

Paul was also active on the international stage representing workers' interests. He held the positions of Chair Oceania Region and Executive Board Member for Public Services International (PSI) over many years. He used his position to promote international solidarity and he believed that promoting labour standards all over the world would lead to better outcomes for both overseas and Australian workers.



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Barry O'Brien
Formerly Industrial Officer, ASU National Office
Nominated by: Western Australian Branch

Barry O'Brien retired from his full-time position of ASU National Industrial Officer on Friday, 27th January 2012, at the age of three score and ten (70).

Barry worked with the ASU National Office for 27 years, commencing work as a National Industrial Officer with the Municipal Officers Association (MOA) on 3rd January 1985. His working history is best summarized in his own words from the following email message that Barry circulated to all of his friends and colleagues on 27th January 2012:

"Up until 1968 I had never been a member of a union and I had no real knowledge of Unions. If anyone had told me then that I would have been active and employed in the union movement for the next 44 years my life I would have told them they were insane.

My initiation into the union movement came about in 1967 due to circumstances which I found myself in whilst working as an offshore oilfield diver in Bass Strait. The classic reasons for unionism - unsafe working conditions, poor pay and conditions of employment, led me into become actively involved with the formation and registration of the a union called the Professional Divers Association of Australasia (the PDAA).

My involvement with the PDAA was from 1967 until 1991 when the PDAA amalgamated with the Seamen's Union. I believe it is a very real honour to have served the trade union movement for 45 years of my life. I am most grateful to the ASU for my last 27 years employment and most thankful to the officers and staff (past and present) who have been not only been my workmates but have become good friends.

I would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to all of my workmates and I feel proud to have been a member of past teams in the National Office and the present team.

I have greatly enjoyed working with each and every one of you and I know I will greatly miss the daily contact and social interaction at work with you all after I retire. The ASU is very fortunate to have such dedicated and talented workforce. I am fortunate to have spent much my working life with good Union people who are motivated to assist others. I love you all and together we made a difference!

I have particularly enjoyed working with all of my mates (male and female) who participated on the ASU National Energy Industry Committee - NEIC.

I have made some very good friends in various ASU Branches over the years and in particular I have had a very long and rewarding association with the WA Branch and I have made some very solid and lasting friendships there.

I have greatly enjoyed my work with the ASU as an Industrial Officer and going "cold turkey" from industrial work will be a wrench but I think it is the right time at age 70 years to search for peace and beauty and to explore the meaning of life."



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Barry has been of great assistance to the Officers and employees of our WA Branch. He has been a tireless worker on behalf of our Branch and has often provided very wise and reliable counsel when we were confronting difficult circumstances at various times.

He was the architect and driving force behind the very successful ASU National Energy Industry Committee that operated most effectively between 1995 and 2006. Barry provided terrific leadership and ensured that only the most principled decisions resulted from this professional working group of industrial officers and members that consistently rose above the usual petty bickering and politics that was the norm between branches, states and tribes.

Barry also played a very significant role in the substantial body of work required to achieve the reactivation and restructuring of our State Union s between 2009 and 2011.

Special mention must be made of his dedication, persistence and tenacity in ensuring that National David Taylor Memorial Award was adopted and delivered on behalf of ASU in the various States of Australia.



Maxine Winkley

Nominated by: South Australian & Northern Territory Branch

Maxine joined her Union 38 years ago in 1974 when she worked at the SA TAB. Maxine was committed to working with and for her fellow ASU members, who were predominantly women, for fairness and respect at work.

Maxine quickly stepped into the role of ASU Workplace Representative and was an inspirational workplace and Union leader at SA TAB. While organising systems, strategies and structures were being talked about across the Union movement, Maxine was implementing them. She grew the membership across SA TAB, identified and developed other workplace leaders, developed bargaining and campaign strategies, built relationships with the representatives of other Unions on site and at all times acted with integrity and compassion.

Her wise leadership was instrumental in campaigning to tackle the privatisation of the SA TAB and her bravery in speaking up for others inside and outside of her workplace, to the media and to other groups of ASU members across her Union knew no bounds.

Maxine recently retired from the TAB but has retained her ASU membership. As she always has been, she is incredibly active in her community. Maxine was a key campaigner in the Rights at Work campaign and for the past four years has volunteered every Thursday as a radio announcer on the Your Rights at Night radio programme. Maxine has become an outstanding media personality through this role and her exploration of ASU and other Union stories is outstanding.

Maxine's gentle and wise leadership has guided many ASU members and others over the years to understand and be prepared to help build inclusive and active Union structures in their workplaces and industries. Her commitment to making her community a better place is to be commended.

