



Clerk's Message

All members of the Alumni will know that 2011 has been a testing year for the department and none of you will be surprised that I assert that 'the Reps team' has acquitted itself very well. I believe we are fortunate in being the inheritors of a tradition of expertise and professionalism that all of you have contributed to. This legacy, and the acceptance of what we are on about, is standing us in good stead.

It was nice to see friends from the Alumni at Professor Lindell's presentation on 10 November. The presentation was very interesting and we were pleased to share it with Alumni.

More recent members of the Alumni will recall Maureen Larkham, a member of the Serjeant's Office who had been with the department since 2007. Maureen was a very highly regarded colleague. Sadly she died on 24 November after a brief battle with cancer; former colleagues joined many of us at her funeral service.

As I write this the 'usual suspects' who continue to run what must be one of the best Social Club's in town are preparing for our Christmas party. We are all looking forward to that, preceded by the usual hotly contested window dressing competition – I hope the year does not have to end



with a casting vote exercised by the Clerk in such a sensitive matter!

On behalf of all your friends in the department, happy Christmas to each of you and your loved ones, and every good wish for 2012. We look forward to another happy year of contact with our Alumni.

Bernard Wright
Clerk of the House

Where are they now?

We find a few of our Alumni colleagues to see what they are up to.

LEN KELDIE

Len moved to Canberra in 1975 after completing his bricklaying apprenticeship in Sydney. He married Jan in 1978 and worked as a bricklayer until he joined the Bureau of Statistics as a storeman in 1979. From there he moved to the Auditor-General's office in 1982 as a finance registration clerk. He joined the Department of the House of Representatives in 1983 in East Block as an accounts clerk class 2/3 leaving as a clerk class 4 having acted as a clerk class 5 for half his time in the finance section. His duties included paying accounts, local travelling allowance, overseas travelling and members

travelling allowance. Len also worked on the department's budget and moonlighted in the Bills and Papers Office, the Transport Office and Printing Section. He helped organise many inter parliamentary departmental sporting events such as volleyball, soccer and touch football and the footy tipping competition.

Len had the privilege of working on the new Parliament House as a bricklayer and then being one of the first staff to move into the building. He has maintained friendships from his time in Canberra and unbelievably still remembers his farewell at the Yacht Club. He has kept the sign with his address for the taxi driver to take

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him home. The Keldies left Canberra in January 1990 and went to Sydney for 6 months where Len did some bricklaying while Jan did a New South Wales teaching course. From there they went to Dubbo for two and a half years. Len worked for the Dubbo RSL as a storeman/cellarman which was a real experience as he was tapping 18 gallon kegs at one of the biggest clubs in the west. On Friday nights the club went through about 70 kegs. (One of Jan's students at that time was David Peachey who played Rugby League for Australia). While at Dubbo Len and Jan bought a home on the Gold Coast and moved there Christmas 1992.

Jan did another course to teach in Queensland and Len worked at the special school at Southport as a teachers' aide. After finishing her course the pair had to go to Mt Isa for Jan's work. So from January 1995 until Christmas 1999 the Keldies lived at the Isa. Len worked for the Mt Isa City Council as a storeman/purchasing officer for those five years and really enjoyed his stay there. He became very involved in the sporting community coaching teams in netball, basketball and soccer. He also was on the parents and friends association at Mt Isa Catholic High and was Vice President and President of that association. Len found it a very interesting place to live, very community minded because of the isolation. Len's greatest achievement at that time was being chosen to run the Olympic torch, recognition for his community work. He returned to the Isa in June 2000 and did the run. Len was torch 52. The run started in the Alice Springs/Uluru area and then went straight to the Isa. Len also became the first person in Mt Isa to be a bone marrow donor, in September 1998.

Back at the Gold Coast Len started a diploma in disabilities studies through distant education with the Catholic University in Brisbane. When in the



▲ Len Keldie

Isa Len had been worried as to what he would do when he moved from what was a young persons place to a quite different environment. A family member suggested he undertake the disabilities study as he had really enjoyed working at the special school in 1992. He finished the diploma part time in 2005. Len is now putting his disabilities studies to good effect and has been working as a lifestyle assistant for the last 12 years.

During this time the Keldies have brought up three daughters and two grandchildren have come into their lives. Len has given away two daughters this year and will give the third away in September next year. Len says: "It has been very interesting and rewarding these last 21 years and I now look forward to watching my 2 grandkids grow up".

He still walks and does the occasional run. He ran the pre-marathon 10 km run at the Gold Coast this year and is going to try to do the half marathon next year.

When reflecting on his time at parliament house a memory that stood out was when Len was asked to take part in the trial sitting in the new House of Representatives chamber in 1988. Len played the part of Peter Staples the member for Jagajaga and

had to make a speech at the despatch box. He comments that he enjoyed the comradeship in the department especially the sporting events like soccer, touch football and volleyball and those runs around the lake.

[Editor's note: Len was the only shuffle runner that I ever came across and he could really motor along]

LYN SIMONS

I joined the Department of the House of Representatives Committee Office in 1972 after a year as a graduate clerk at the Department of Defence. As with many recruits of similar vintage, I was interviewed by Graham Horsfield. He later told me I was appointed because I did not cry when he bullied me. It was an interesting technique which would not go down well today. Did he seriously expect me - a tough country girl - to cry? I loved committee work: lots of hard work interspersed with interesting visits. My favourites were visits to an oilrig in both Bass Strait and Lizard Island, with an Environment subcommittee. The most memorable time however was trying to table a report on the day of

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the 1975 double dissolution. We did not make it. I sat in the gallery close to tears. The only time in my entire time in the department - Graham would have been proud of me!

I managed to find time to have two children while working in the Committee Office. After Jo was born we spent a couple of months in Europe. She was two months old when we left - a perfect age to travel with a baby, although I remember Ian Cochran was very concerned about our having to use disposable nappies. Another change with the times - it is hard to get cloth ones these days!

I was again trying to get a report finished when Nick was due. I worked for a week after my due date and the committee members were worried. Harry Jenkins (senior) was Chair and he calmly said he had delivered babies before, and he would manage this one if necessary. It was not: I left work at 4 pm and he was born at 6. (Nick, now 31, lives in the United Kingdom and is a geophysicist specialising in seismic processing)

In 1984 I was appointed Deputy

Serjeant, with Serjeant on offer 'if it all worked out'. Under Ian Cochran's expert tutelage it did, and I embarked on what I believe is one of the most interesting jobs in the public service, if not the entire world. Every day brought new and exciting challenges. Trying to be all things to all people, or at least the members, required subtle and inventive solutions. They really were interesting times. The move to the New Parliament House was completed on my watch as was the introduction of televising the House. The 'donut effect' was ridiculously evident until members settled down and it became routine. We even beat the Mother of Parliaments to it, and I was lucky enough to spend some time in Westminster advising them of potential pitfalls as they followed us into the camera's glare.

During one question time, a Rastafarian just missed me as he landed on the floor of the house having jumped from the Gallery. The trusty attendants did their job beautifully, and he was hauled out of the building. It was only later we found out he'd broken both ankles in the fall. I also seem to remember seeing Bruce Goodluck on the

ministerial benches in a chicken suit, but that was never confirmed!

Being Serjeant changed the direction of my life completely. As the first woman Serjeant in any Westminster Parliament, I was often asked for interviews, including by the political secretary at the British High Commission. (He said it would never happen in Westminster. Of course it has, but not until 2008!) We became friends and he introduced me to a colleague. The colleague was Michael Patterson, and the rest as they say is history. We were married in the United Kingdom in 1990, when I resigned from the Department.

I first worked in the United Kingdom with the Institution of Electrical Engineers, a chartered body responsible for qualification and ongoing learning of engineers. We were then posted to Brazil for four years, where I found time to teach English, as well as attending the Rio carnival every year. Everyone wants to holiday in Brazil at carnival time! We also travelled extensively throughout South America.

Michael retired in 2000, but accepted short-term supply work in various posts, including Delhi, Dubai, Istanbul, Beijing and Shanghai. Lots of opportunities for more travel. By then I had moved to a job as Director of Members Services with the Chartered Institute of Building. Those members again - my speciality! In my spare time I completed a Masters Degree in Psychology so after retirement I could work with my daughter Jo who specialises in therapy for autistic children

Sadly Michael died four years ago while working in Shanghai. The upside is that I now have heaps more time to spend with Jo's children, Alex 5, and Georgia 4, and to travel. A month in Paris this year, then Venice in 2012. I have just returned from five weeks in Europe with Alex before he goes to 'big school'. I am already planning Georgia's expedition next year. No rest for grandparents!



▲ Lyn with her grandson Alex in the Lake District, UK

MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION PRACTICES: A CALL FOR DONATIONS

The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House has been in existence since May 2009. Since that time the museum has been slowly adding to its fascinating collection of items relating to the history of Old Parliament House, the lives of the parliamentarians and staffers who worked there, and more generally to the history of Australian democracy. The museum has six distinct collecting categories and they are:

- ▶ **Category 1** Material which documents and illustrates Australian political campaigns and movements relating to the development of Australian democracy.
- ▶ **Category 2** Material which documents and illustrates federal parliamentarians' life and work.
- ▶ **Category 3** Material which documents and illustrates the functioning of parliament during the period it sat at Old Parliament House.
- ▶ **Category 4** Material which documents and illustrates the construction, design and iconography of OPH as a building.

- ▶ **Category 5** Material which documents and illustrates the role and history of federal political parties and other groups related to the development of Australian democracy.
- ▶ **Category 6** Material which documents and supports exhibitions and scholarly research into the lives and achievements of Australia's prime ministers.

The museum's collections are divided into its Heritage collection (OPH furniture, rooms, building fragments, drawings and designs of the building), the Associated Parliamentary and Political collection (memorabilia, movable parliamentary and political material culture such as objects and artefacts, pictorial works, ephemera and posters), and the Research collection (ephemera such as pamphlets, leaflets, handbills, invitations, cards, menus, books etc, and the image collection which includes photos, prints, transparencies and multimedia).

Curators and historians at the museum are always on the lookout for material to add to the collections and welcome donations of material that fit into the categories listed above. In particular, staff are interested in photos that members of the House of

Representatives alumni might have showing daily life or special events at OPH during its working life. As well, the museum has an extensive oral history program and would be interested in hearing from people who have stories to tell about their time working in OPH, or who may know of people they think would be good for us to interview.

A particular collecting focus at the museum at the moment is in the area of women's leadership. MoAD is involved in a joint-ARC funded project with the University of Melbourne called 'Women and Leadership in a century of Australian Democracy'. One of the major outcomes for the museum is to increase its collection of objects, papers, photos and ephemera relating to women's leadership in Australia. This could cover politics, law, the environment, religion, Indigenous Australians and many other areas. Museum staff would like to hear from any members of the Alumni who think they may have collections of material in this area that they would like to donate.

Senior Historian Libby Stewart is happy to discuss possible donations of material to the museum at any time. She can be reached by email on 6270 8231, or by email at libby.stewart@moadoph.gov.au.

EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

In June and July this year I had the good fortune to travel to several European states, two of which were Hungary and Germany. In both capitals, Budapest and Berlin, in the short time I was there, I endeavoured to visit their parliaments. While these buildings are ostensibly open to visitors I thought alumni might be interested to learn that I was unable to gain access to either. Admittedly it was high season in Europe and there were very many visitors around.

In Budapest in order to get inside the building a visitor or tourist had to

have a ticket. To obtain a ticket you had to be at a designated place on the periphery of the parliamentary grounds at an early hour, queue up and hope you were sufficiently advanced on that queue to get the coveted ticket which allocated you a visit time later that day. There were tours of the building in English twice a day but you either had to be in the know or lucky to get a ticket. I was neither but found it quite a contrast to the concept of public access that we are used to in Australia. From the outside the parliamentary building is impressive following the same sort of

architecture as Westminster. It was also brilliantly lit up at night as I admired it across the Danube.

The Reichstag in Berlin was restored after the Wall came down and has a glass dome as its principal feature. Visitors to the building can actually walk around inside this roof dome, the idea being that the legislators would look up from their seats in the parliament to see the populace studying them in their debates and deliberations. The remainder of the parliament is housed in very modern

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buildings attached to the Reichstag with the Library being very prominent. To visit the Reichstag you must also book in advance, at least three days in the holiday season, and then on your day you proceeded to a series of marquees on the lawns outside the Reichstag where you were security screened. There were also English speaking tours. Again

I only found out this information when it was too late for me to visit. Coincidentally, early one morning I was able to jog past the front door without being challenged and before the races and marquees were set up. Next time I will be better organised for my visit.

[Editor's note: If any alumnus has had experiences with parliaments in other countries I feel sure we would like to hear about them]



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Further information:

For any further information on alumni events or information please contact

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Season's Greetings

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