



DEPARTMENT of the
HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

ISSUE 6 :: SEPTEMBER 2011

ALUMNI *Newsletter*



Clerk's Message

Colleagues in the department were very grateful to see so many alumni at Peter Buckley's funeral on 3 June. We have had messages from Peter's family to say how much comfort they drew from the large numbers of Peter's 'work family' at his funeral.

The third sitting period under minority government ended on 7 July. Alumni will recall the little-used provisions that have allowed bills to be referred to House committees. All that has changed. Now even one member of the Selection Committee can refer any bill to a standing committee for inquiry. This has now been used in respect of 38 bills. Committees and committee secretariats have coped with this additional workload very well, and also kept up their traditional subject

matter inquiry programs.

Many alumni will recall the challenges, and the fun, of hosting big conferences in Canberra. Three Commonwealth Parliamentary conferences, two IPU conferences, two Presiding Officers and Clerks conferences (1978 and 2000) and the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (2000) will all bring memories back to alumni.

During the break it was my privilege to attend the Centenary CPA Conference in London as a delegation secretary. The conference was very successful. The Brits did a great job of hosting the usual large and very diverse gathering. In keeping with financial restrictions on the English civil service, the Parliament's budget has been reduced considerably. (The



House of Commons Commission has agreed to a 17% budget reduction in real terms by 2014-15; 47 staff have accepted voluntary redundancy, and they are still seeking a further £26m savings). As a consequence the period of the conference was reduced and

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Vale – Peter Buckley

(The following was provided to be included in the Condolence Book on behalf of the Alumni Association)

On behalf of the members of the Department of the House of Representatives Alumni Association I wish to express my sincere condolences to Peter's family at this very sad time. I was privileged to be among the many mourners at Peter's farewell on Friday, where we heard warm and refreshing reflections on his life both as a beloved head of the family and of his commitment and contribution to the department he ably served for so many years. They clearly underscored his strength of character and his approach to life. If I had to sum up Peter's attitude and how he met life's challenges, I could do no better than to quote this excerpt from Denis Waitley's *The Winner's Edge*:

Expect the best; convert problems into opportunities, be dissatisfied with the status quo, focus on where you want to go instead of where you are coming from and, most importantly, decide to be happy knowing it's an attitude, a habit gained from daily practice and not a result or pay off.

Peter's former colleagues remember with great affection their time spent in his company and hope that his family will, as time passes, be able to draw some comfort from knowing of the high esteem in which he was held by so many of us.

Vale Peter, you will be missed, but not forgotten.

Michael Salkeld
Co-Chair

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there were no pre or post conference tours. That may become the pattern for future Commonwealth parliamentary conferences. The presence of small teams of very welcoming and professional staff members who had volunteered to help was very familiar, and brought back memories of our hosting efforts here.

Some alumni will recall meeting

Robert Rogers from the House of Commons on attachment here in 1991. Robert will become Clerk of the House on 10 October, replacing Malcolm Jack, who became Sir Malcolm in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

The Brits are very pleased to have completed work on a 24th edition of May, and now Peter Fowler is happily engaged checking and adjusting the numerous references to May in

House of Representatives Practice.

Many colleagues will know Russell Grove (NSW Legislative Assembly) and Lynn Lovelock (NSW Legislative Council), each of whom has been a good friend to the Reps, and George MacMinn (British Columbia). Each will be retiring in coming months – in George's case after 52 year's service!

With best wishes to all alumni.

Bernard Wright
Clerk of the House

4th Alumni reception, April 2011

Another successful Alumni reception was held on 8 April 2011 with over 50 attendees. It was particularly pleasing to be joined by some of our former colleagues who continue to serve the House and the Parliament. Some alumni travelled significant distances to attend – Margaret Gibson from Woolgoolga, Trevor Rowe from London and Jennifer Hughson from Merimbula.

We were privileged to be joined by two former Clerks, Doug Blake, AM, VRD, and Lyn Barlin, AM, and the Clerk of the ACT Legislative

Assembly, Tom Duncan. It was also great to see Maurie Adamson again (he was the first to accept).

During the evening I reflected on the accumulated years of corporate knowledge, parliamentary practice and procedure present in the room – and the significant contribution this group has made to the department and the parliamentary institution.

The Clerk, Bernard Wright, gave a warm and entertaining address in which he again confirmed his strong support for the Association

and restated the role he believes our members can play.

I had the opportunity to endorse the Clerk's remarks and made reference to the privilege of having worked in the Department. I mentioned that, aside from the exhilaration of working at the hub of the democratic process, the professionalism, commitment, idealism and morale of staff made it a special place in which to work.

On behalf of all Alumni present I thanked the Clerk for hosting the function, acknowledged the continued support of Marion Bartlett, the contribution of Lynette Eager and highlighted the splendid efforts of Colin Christian in ensuring the event maintained the high standard we have come to expect of him over many years.

These functions are welcomed and appreciated by those fortunate enough to attend. They provide a wonderful opportunity to meet with former colleagues in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere and share memories. I urge members to participate in future events.

Michael Salkeld
Co-Chair



▲ Mike Salkeld with the Clerk and two former Clerks at the reception

Where are they now?

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

PHIL BERGIN

I joined the department in February 1970 and took involuntary retirement in October 1997.

I worked initially in the committee office until May 1990 when I was appointed Serjeant-at-Arms.

I held this position until May 1993 when I was appointed as senior adviser to the Speaker where I worked until the involuntary retirement.

Chris (my wife since 1966) and I have lived in Waramanga in the A.C.T. since 1972.

We are now both retired and manage to travel around Australia as well as overseas to visit our children. Our daughter Belinda and her family (Adam and our three grand children Cooper, Freya and Opal) as well as our son Brendan live and work in the USA.

Brendan, a qualified mechanic, took on a franchise with SNAP_ON TOOLS to sell auto tools rather than work with them about the same

time as I retired so I became the bookkeeper part-time debt collector and delivery-boy for his company.

We were reasonably successful with Brendan being offered a position in the USA. He is now a trainer with the company and gets to see a lot of the country.

We have weekly discussions about the stock market as we are both shareholders in a private company which invests in the stock market.

Our first grandchild, Cooper, was born in Oxford, UK, where Adam, the son-in-law, was doing his maths PhD.

We visited our expanding family in Oxford and then Boston where our first granddaughter, Freya, was born. We also were able to travel to Pennsylvania where our second granddaughter, Opal, was born. We managed a family Christmas together in Boston in 2009.

We have managed trips within Australia to the Northern Territory,

Carnarvon Gorge, Western Australia, as well as Norfolk Island for the Millennium and a number of visits to north Queensland for family research.

I still support the Canberra Raiders and manage to get to most home games. In addition I have become Treasurer of a supporters group, the Meningans, who have a monthly lunch with guest speakers drawn from Raiders players and officials. The money raised goes to a scholarship for a young Raiders player who is managing to combine study with football.

GARRY COSGROVE

I moved to Canberra in March 1978 with my wife, Liz and family from Marulan South, which is just north of Goulburn. Prior to that I worked in an open cut mine as a driller and loader operator. When I moved to Canberra, I worked at Mugga Quarry as a 'Powder Monkey' (shot firer).

In 1982 the 'Fraser Razor Gang' decided to close or sell a number of Government locations and the Department of Housing and Construction Mugga Quarry was one of these. I applied for a position at the House of Representatives, interviewed by Neville Gathercole, who was the then, Principal Attendant, and won a position.

I worked in various areas including, the House of Representatives Door, Mailroom, Kings Hall inquiry desk and the Chamber. I put my hand up as an instructor in the staff development program; we had a two week course at Muswellbrook and a number of weeklong courses at Penrith training new staff.

When the new Parliament House was almost complete I was sent up to set up the House of Representatives Wing with a small group of staff as the House was still sitting at the old Parliament House. They were very interesting and busy days; we had no phones in the attendant stations and the technicians were too busy so we learnt how to hook up the phone and record the number.

When Neville moved to the Serjeant at Arms office, I was made Principal

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Christmas in Lewisburg, PA, USA.

2009

▲ Phil Bergin and family

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Attendant, this position was extremely busy, but very interesting.

I left the Department in 2000 but went back as a 'sessional' to work in the galleries. One night when the House was up for the dinner break, I was checking passes at the Representatives door while talking to Mr Goodluck MP, while he was waiting for a car. A staff member entered and Mr Goodluck stopped him and said 'excuse me sir, can I see your pass?' The staffer said 'oh sorry!' produced his pass and walked in. Mr Goodluck started laughing and said to me, 'that was fun; I have watched you people check passes and have always wanted to do that'.

Since I have retired, we have travelled to Perth, Bunbury, Margaret River, Albany and Esperance in Western Australia; had a look at Alice Springs and had a number of trips to Queensland mainly the Sunshine Coast. I have three adult children, who still keep me busy, and five grandchildren with one on the way, which keeps things moving pretty well. I also do a bit of work for Legacy.

We had grand ideas about moving up the coast to a warmer climate but now with the three kids living in the area and the grandkids, I think we are stuck here, which is not such a bad thing if you can put up with Canberra winters. Ducted heating is a great thing, and staying in bed



▲ Old Parliament House, 1984. Garry Cosgrove in the middle of the photo with the 'mow'

till the sun comes up is not too bad. There is so much to do here; I love bushwalking, and you always get interstate friends and the odd relative who would like to see the War Memorial or Parliament House.

I enjoyed my time at the House of Representatives and have a lot of respect for the management current and previous. I will always have happy memories of my time here.

KATHERINE FOX

After nine years in the military I moved to Canberra in 1992 with my family, where I undertook a couple of years doing temporary work assignments to establish what field was for me.

I came to 'the House' as the Human Resource Development Manager in October 1995 – the week of Mike Salkeld's (et al) farewell. I transferred from the old DEETYA where I'd worked with Austudy, the beginning of my public service experience in training and development. The Department was a real eye-opener to the political system and all that supports it.

A friend who had worked there prior to my arrival had said 'you'll learn to love that building' – and I did! I remember spending months almost tip-toeing quietly across the enormous expanse of parquet flooring and being embarrassed about carrying my lunch filled paper bag in all that grandeur. It is the



▲ Katherine Fox

one place I encourage all visitors to see if they do not have time to visit all our cultural destinations – it is a gallery, a museum of sorts, a great café and of great political and historical significance for Australia, not forgetting the architectural splendour of the building itself.

A highlight was the privilege of giving Peter Andren 'the tour' on his first day as a Member of Parliament; he was very insistent at the end of the tour that I accompany him into the chamber as he was nervous about the endeavour, he was convinced I had a responsibility to do so – only renege when I pointed out that if I was seen on the floor of the chamber I would almost certainly lose my job.

The house was a definite highlight of 18 years in the public service.

In 1999 I moved to the Department of Defence where I did a further 12 years in the training and development field. I recently resigned from the Public Service to take up working independently with Results Consulting (Australia) – a great opportunity to see organisational improvement, learning and development from another perspective.

I'm very grateful to those who have taken the time to start this alumni, it has been great to re-establish old friendships – thank you!

ALUMNI ON HOLIDAY - LONGREACH

By Evelyn Kearns

We are heading to the Outback, there is great anticipation,
We will fly to Brisbane then head for Roma Street station.
A glitch in the engine, a long hike to the bus,
But we are in no hurry, no need for a fuss.
At night the train is more bumpity bump than clickity clack,
We sway down the aisles, room to move they sure lack,
But for food and amenities, service levels are high,
By day we watch vast tracts of west Queensland go by.
Day three we're in Longreach all ready to go,
Little did we envisage it would be show after show.
We head down to Kinnon and Co. for a true outback day,
On the Cobb and Co. coach, what part did you play?
We shopped and we ate and wandered around,
Then behind the curtain, true, blue outback theatre we found.
We paddled down the Thomson, beside the Coolabah tree,
After came the campfire, stockman stew, apple pie, damper and tea.
But the highlight for many was diminutive Scotty with his bare feet,
With a laconic repository of bush lore and poetry, oh what a treat!
Now onto Winton with streets clean and wide,
We even see stockmen with spurs strapped on, ready to ride.
We sit by the billabong and with the swaggie we waltz and we dream,
We're in Matilda Country and many a statue of Banjo is seen.
It's here that for some reason our Aussie dinosaurs did fall and die,
But most agree that drilling bones for days on end would only make us cry.
Back to Gidyea country where the Hall of Fame is an attraction,
We get history and artefacts and see a stockman in action.
Over the road we learn about Qantas and tour the big plane,
We get facts and figures, much info we gain
Down to Barcaldine where the tree of knowledge is dead,

Now a 10 million monument, the locals preferring a midwife instead.
A ride round the town, cheap jewellery I miss and some would say drats,
But the people round here have something to fear, a colony of 50 thousand bats.
Lunch at Blackall, the opal shop is open and the news soon gets out,
Keep your hands in your pockets nervous husbands are heard to shout.
We arrive in Charleville on a quiet Sunday night,
Scot tells us nothing's happening and a walk proves he's right.
At Cunnamulla we stop for a welcome cup of tea,
And head down to look at the Fella with his arm upon his knee.
Over the border to Bourke where Fred Hollows does lay,
Another impressive Outback attraction to round out our day.
It's down to the club where the populace bowl,
We swap our lamb roast for a Chinese banquet with a spring roll.
We're heading down to Griffith, we give the utes the flick,
We stop at Cobar and Hillston and at Mount Hope, ice creams do the trick.
The guided tour through the fruit salad farm is the last thing on our list,
Then lunch at Temora to end a trip we are all happy not to have missed.
Plane, train, boat, Cobb and Co coach, we've used them all,
We met old friends, made some new, and all round had a ball.
Now Margaret's been marvellous and that is a fact,
But her capsule on the train, she didn't like that,
She's escorted and guided and joined in the fun,
As tour director, she is our number one.
For our first thirty six hours, Captain Greg drove only 2k,
He rocked the boat, chatted up girls and by the fence found drums to play,
But we know from experience that where ever we roam,
Greg and his purple lady will bring us safe to our home.

Alumni AGM to be held on Wednesday, 28 September 2011

The next Alumni Annual General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 28 September 2011**, between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. in Committee Room 1R2.

We encourage all Alumni to attend and give us ideas on how to make the Association meet your expectations and become a valued circle of colleagues. We are still in the formative stages of developing the association and would welcome any suggestions from former employees.

ALUMNI BOARD MEMBERS 2010-2011

■ Ms Robyn Bushby	■ Mr Keith Johnson
■ Mr Frederick Cook	■ Ms Evelyn Kearns (Secretary)
■ Mr Garry Cosgrove	■ Mr Peter Keele
■ Mr John Cure	■ Mr Max Kiermaier
■ Mr Dean Da Costa	■ Mr Norman Lewis
■ Ms Desley Dawes	■ Mr Bruce McCann
■ Ms Josie Dichiera*	■ Mr Paul McMahon
■ Ms Rada Dillon – Co-Chair	■ Mr Jim Pender (Newsletter Editor)
■ Mr Brendhan Egan	■ Mr Tim Richmond
■ Ms Christina Faulk	■ Ms Marion Ryan**
■ Mr Michael Fetter	■ Ms Cheryl Samuels
■ Mrs Aylwen Gardiner-Garden	■ Mr Michael Salkeld – Co-Chair
■ Ms Gillian Gould	■ Ms Monica Telesny
■ Mr John Hession	■ Mr Ian Young
■ Mr Maurice Hopman	
■ Mr Alan Hume	

*Ms Josie Dichiera was Blog manager until 4 August 2011

**Ms Marion Ryan resigned on 3 March 2011
Ms Carolyn Scheetz joined the Board on 3 March 2011.

Further information:

For any further information on alumni events or information please contact

email - Alumni.reps@aph.gov.au

blogspot -

<http://dephouseofrepsalumni.blogspot.com/>