

Ruth Crow's Response to David Legge's Question
What Are You Doing With Your Life ?
July 1996

In 1990 I donated Maurie's and my books and manuscripts to the Victoria University where they are now known as the Crow Collection. A Crow Collection Association has been formed and 300 supporters receive a regular newsletter (Ecoso Exchange).

The aim of the Association is to enhance the accessibility and comprehensiveness of the Collection. One way this aim is carried out is through community involving projects. Our most comprehensive project was on the history of children's services in the Western Region. There have been smaller projects on housing for older people, and community services the Western Region. The current project popularises the 1995 Senate Inquiry on Citizenship..

This project on citizenship centres around an Ideas Exchange Day which will be held on Saturday, August 24th. The topic for the Ideas Exchange Day is *What Sort of Society Do You Want Australia to be ?* (a quote from the 1995 Senate Discussion Paper)

In organising the projects priority is given to involving young people by finding practical ways they can participate and then taking specific steps to involve them. For example with the project on children's services and the current project the following organisational methods have been/are being used :-

- publicity sent to schools, including notes on resources.
 - schools visited
 - class room lessons presented
 - students invited to visit the Collection.
- and after the climax of the project
- a wallboard on tour to rural and outer suburban schools
 - a booklet distributed to schools.

The 1993 Crow Collection project on the History of Children's Services received a "Community Planning Award" from the Royal Australian Institute of Planning. This project was funded by the Reichstein Foundation. Our current project (on citizenship) is funded by the SEARCH Foundation, the Clerks Section of the Australian Services Union, and the Manufacturing Workers Union. (This funding is the result of the Association's effort at developing links between the union movement and the community movement)

In 1994 I was honoured by being appointed a Member of the Order of Australia

The most significant part of the honour was the citation which stated that it was for :-

The promotion of participative social and environmental planning

Promoting participation implies that others are involved. Thus, although I am given personal recognition I really share the honour with many others. I take this opportunity of passing on a share of the honour to those promoting community health.