

Profile of Ruth Crow A Communist Party Member

Documented by Books and Manuscripts in the Crow Collection
at
Footscray Campus Victoria University of Technology



Ruth Crow at International Women's Day, 1987

In 1990 Ruth Crow donated the Crow Collection to the Victoria University of Technology. It consists of books and manuscripts (reports, working papers, talk aids and other material) which have been used and/or written by Ruth and Maurie Crow over the past 50 years. There is access to the Crow Collection during the hours the library at the Footscray Campus of the Victoria University is open. For personal assistance phone Ruth Crow, after hours, (03) 9329.8685.

Maurie Crow

1915 to 1988



Maurie in a peace demonstration in Coburg, in early 1950s

This is a profile of my political activities from 1936 to 1996, but my life cannot be seen as separate from Maurie's so I have included a few facts about Maurie's life. To set the picture about Maurie's and my relationship here are a few quotes from condolence letters.

Your partnership was an inspiration to us all and a rare argument for marriage. (from our next-door neighbour)

We know that you and Maurie shared much more than your family life together. You shared your political ideals and shared the responsibility of trying to achieve them in a climate that was sometimes unsympathetic.

Your relationship seemed to me a rare instance of mutual love and support which to many of us is unobtainable.

In the year we met (1936) Maurie tried to help me understand the position of women in society. His first gift to me was the book by Hilary Newitt "Women Must Choose" about women in England, Germany, Italy and Russia. It is worth noting that in all the documents which we jointly wrote Maurie always put my name first. Similarly with other publication, written by groups, he always tried to put the woman's name first, eg Deborah White and "Seeds for Change"

Profile of a CPA Member

Ruth Crow April 1996.

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CODES - FOOTNOTES, ASTERISKS and HATCHINGS

Footnotes numbers have been used to elaborate on some facts.

A single asterisk (*) indicates that there is more information in the manuscript files of the Crow Collecti

A double asterisk (**) indicates that the publication is on the bookshelves of the Crow Collection.

Hatchings # have been used in the section on organisations to indicate that documents from a particular organisation are in the Crow Collection.

One # indicates at least one document. Two ## indicates a considerable number of documents.

Script, like this, is used for facts about Maurie's life. This information is very shadowy. It mainly records selected highlights. The dates may be slightly inaccurate.

The Communist Party of Australia

Profile of a CPA Member

Ruth Crow, April 1996.

PERSONAL INFORMATION.

Date of Birth. I was born in September 1916. *Maurie, January 1915*

Family Status. Married 1937, widowed 1988, birth of daughters 1940 and 1942, birth of 5 grand children in 1960s and 7 great grandchildren in the 1980s and 1990s. I live alone but have easily available support from family and friends.

Education. I attended Pleasant St. State School (Ballarat) and Ballarat CEGGS (fees paid by scholarship). I was awarded a Senior Technical Scholarship to Emily McPherson College to study for a Diploma of Institutional Management and Dietetics (1934 - 1936), I was awarded a bursary to study at Melbourne University (Social Work Department) in 1945. This was for a special one year course in Group Work Techniques...Youth Leadership as part of the preparation for post war expansion of social services.

Maurie attended Melbourne Grammar School and Melbourne University (LLB)

INFORMATION ABOUT POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

1933 The German battle ship "Klon" (not sure of spelling) visited Australia, flying the Nazi flag. I was one of the thousands of Australians to welcome it by visiting the ship. We had learnt at school to admire the efficient government in Germany.

1934 Very impressed with Kisch's protests against Nazism. (*1)
(Many influences on my life in 1933/34 account for this change in attitude from support for Nazism to support for anti-fascist)

1936 Attended a student conference on war and fascism ("Youth What Next ?") as delegate from EMCP students (I was secretary of Student Council). Joined the Communist Party.

Maurie was already a CPA member. Very active in University Peace Group

1937 Attended CPA Branch (fortnightly), study circle (fortnightly) and delivered Guardians (weekly). (I carried out these three recurring responsibilities for many years. However, in the early 1970s I ceased delivering the Party press and fortnightly study circle were no longer held. By the mid 1970s instead of attending my local branch I attended centrally held gatherings, for example urban issues, the women's collective etc.

1937 cont. Attended Workers' Sport Federation Camp (about 1000 campers) and also went to WSF camps in 1938.(*2)

1938. Added to the three recurring CPA responsibilities was the monthly Left Book Club discussion circle. During this year we were very much involved in Spanish Relief campaign selling "Food for Spain" buttons, helping with arranging public meetings.

1938 Demonstrated against Nazi spy's, Von Lucker's, visit. Several city street demonstrations against selling pig iron to Japan. Women raised the slogan "Wear Lisle for Style". (Lyle was an artificial silk which we wore as a protest against silk that came from Japan).

1939 Living in the Dandenongs, still delivered Guardians and attended study group, but no proper branch meetings. We were wardens for a Youth Hike Hostel and arranged accommodation for Workers Sports Federation (WSF) hikers and entertainment etc. Member of the Country Women's Association.

1940 Researching food health and income. Conducted classes in emergency catering for CWA and Red Cross (the Dandenongs were a reception area for possible evacuees),

1941 Research material published in booklet by Marjorie Coppel (*3)

1942 Return to Melbourne. Joined "Council for Women in War Work" and "Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime" (*4) Hon. Sec. of local group for child care. Successfully established one of the first 5 wartime day nurseries subsidised by the Women of the University Patriotic Fund. (*5) Active in "Sheepskins for Russia" campaign. Tutor at day-time Marxist study group for women,

Maurie involved in workplace (Munitions Factory) organisations. We were both Air Raid Wardens and were "War Saving Street" representatives.

1943 Appointed secretary-organiser (a paid job) of Brunswick Children's Centre. This was one of first children's centres subsidised by Federal (Curtin) Government. (*6)

1944. Helped to get other child care centres established. (In these years the Brunswick Party Branch had a bookshop opposite the Brunswick Town Hall, in Sydney Road, This was a great hub, women meeting in the day, a lending library, all sorts of discussions and social functions. It was the meeting place for 2 local branches and at least 5 factory branches)

1945 Awarded bursary for one year course in Group Work Techniques (Youth Leadership) at Social Work Dept. Melbourne University. Helped to establish Day Nursery Development Association which campaigned for the continuation of wartime child care. Organised activities for children at the Eureka Youth League (EYL) camp.

Maurie very much involved in Clerks' Union and for next five years an organiser of the union.

1946 and 47 Continued involvement with DNDA. Organised children's activities at numerous CPA functions and at the first Eureka Youth League Camp at Camp Eureka. (In paid employment as a Youth Leader at Exhibition Youth Centre in South Carlton. Also education field officer for Victorian Association of Youth Clubs) (*7)

1948 Elected to represent the Day Nursery Development Association

on the Committee of Victorian Association of Creches (a well established charity-type organisation). Premier Dunstan (Country Party) refused to receive a deputation from the Creche Association while a communist party member was on it. Beginning of the Cold War !! (It is a little recognised fact that the first people attacked in the Cold War were women and people working in social services).

1948 contd. During this period I contributed a regular column to Guardian, mainly about family issues, sometimes using pen name "Patricia Anne" (*8)

Maurie wrote the pamphlet "Catholic Action at Work" ()*

1949 Helped to establish the Junior Eureka League (girls and boys 10 to 16) and was elected state organiser and thus on State Council of Eureka League. (*9) Brought out monthly newsletter etc for JEL. (Had a paid job as a casual employee at Royal Melbourne Hospital during years I was unpaid organiser for the JEL. This kept us solvent) In May 1949 my brother, Ken Miller, was framed on a sex charge. (See Amira Inglis "Hammer and Sickle and the Washing Up", published 1995 by Hyland House pp 68 to 73)).

*Maurie had to appear before the Sharply Commission. See "Report of Royal Commission into Aims, Objects and Funds of the CPA, Victoria (**)." .*

1950 Junior Eureka Leagues established in NSW, S.A. and Queensland. Helped organise support for Berlin Festival delegates, especially the Unity Dance Group. Helped with peace movement in organising a pageant to welcome the Dean of Canterbury. Organised provision of child care at Dean's huge meetings. One of the foundation members of the Union of Australian Women.

Maurie was in Sydney for most of this year preparing wages cases for Federal Awards. While in Sydney he was very much involved in popularising Australian songs and dances etc. (control of Clerks' Union was won by industrial group supporters).

1951 Elected National Organiser for the JEL and was on the National Committee of the EYL. Information on JEL sent to interstate people etc. Began work on handbook for JEL (*10) Helped organise support in Victoria for Sydney Carnival for Peace and Friendship.

Maurie began to organise white collar workers into the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations (ACSPA). ACSPA is now part of ACTU. ()*

1952 Joined the Victorian Teachers Union (part time teacher, 1952 to 1968. Participated in campaign for permanency for married women. Had several articles published in Communist Review... on children and society etc (*)

1953 Relinquished JEL as others were then able to do the job. (the handbook was prepared with the express purpose of allowing me to resign, The JEL continued for another 12 years, until 1965, but from about then on the EYL and JEL gradually went out of existence.) Draft of handbook is in Crow Coll. (*)

Maurie main person in group which prepared CPA submission to the Martin Committee on Tertiary Education. They were advocating that at Technical Colleges there should be a greater emphasis on humanities. () Maurie wrote articles for Communist Review and Guardian, mainly on union and workplace issues.*

1954 Elected Hon. Secretary of Mothers Club. Very much involved in combatting Cold War locally. Also in local peace movement.

Maurie contributed to preparing CPA publication "Education in Crisis" ()*

1956 Involved in local sports clubs, especially during this Olympic Year. Efforts to link peace and sport. Helped organise welcome functions for sport and cultural teams from new democracies. (I was sports mistress at the school at which I taught and family had strong links with local sporting clubs for women and girls...basketball, swimming and athletics).

1957 VTU won campaign for permanency. Involved in local campaign for Federal Aid for Education.

Maurie began to be involved in campaigns around federal aid for municipal councils.

1958 Hon Sec of Coburg Education Committee, a committee campaigning for federal aid. It had support of Coburg Council and met in Town Hall. Efforts made to welcome migrants, eg teaching English to Italian and Greek members of CPA,

1959 Survey of educational needs of Coburg schools (*11)

1960 Very active in Coburg Peace Group and beginning of campaign against the Vietnam war. Meetings held in Gordon Bryant's office (he was local ALP MHR).

1961/62 Coburg Education Committee did a survey of preschool services in Coburg. (*12)

Maurie a "functionary" for the CPA for next 4 or 5 years. This meant a very reduced, precarious income.

1964 Shift to living in North Melbourne. Writing regular column for Guardian using column name "A Word from Parents" (*13)

1966. Treasurer of Clean Air Council of Victoria (An early environmental group, at this time North Melbourne had a very high pollution fall out and, like Footscray, Kensington and Flemington suffered the odours of the stock yards. I was made a life member of Clean Air Council but it is now defunct).

Up to about this time Maurie still attended Clerk's Union meetings, but as he was then no longer working as a Clerk he resigned. His final effort at a Clerk's meeting was to confront the rabid DLPs with the changes taking place as a result of Vatican 2. They did not want to recognise the Pope's call for peace !! ()*

1967 Began a regular column in Northern Advertiser mainly using pen-name Una Voce (*14). Joined committee of North Melbourne Social Service. Helped to organise the Trade Union/community Living Standards Convention. Helped to produce "Irregular" (*!5)

Maurie involved in encouraging unions to give more consideration to urban issues, The result was the Living Standards Convention (*) (**).

1968 Joined the North Melbourne Association. (A foundation member) and involved in history group and education group. Campaigning to save the building stock from block demolition. Helped Trade Unions with establishing "Action for Adequate Child Care" (*16). Helped with preparation of CPA documents "Plan for Melbourne Part. 1" (*17).

Maurie a key person in establishing the Committee for Urban Action which brought together a number of new-type urban action organisations. (*) Maurice very active in Town and Country Planning Association and several, other urban organisations. He was main CPA member developing policies for local government and urban action. He was no longer working as CPA functionary, but working in a legal firm.

1970 Co-authored with Maurice "Plan for Melbourne Part 2".. Prepared a submission for State Govt. Inquiry on Preschool Child Development and encouraged about 15 other organisations to make submissions (*18)

1972 With Maurice, prepared "Plan for Melbourne Part 3" and attended MMBW Inquiry on Shape of Melbourne. Also gave oral evidence at Preschool Inquiry. Maurice and I were jointly awarded one of the first Robin Boyd Awards. (The citation stated that it was for a lay contribution to the literature of the built environment ... a very unexpected recognition... the Irregular Newsletter (later called Ecoso) and the Plans for Melbourne being singled out as samples of our effort.

1972 cont. Helped to establish Community Child Care (CCC), Wrote several "discussion papers", helped with first CCC handbook, helping to bridge over from Action for Adequate Child care to the new type organisation. (*18) Northern Advertiser folded up. I continued to have regular columns in local paper by writing for Melbourne Times. Also wrote articles for Learning Exchange.

Maurie chaired the North Melbourne Association and was the main person responsible for the alternative plans prepared by community groups during the preparation of the MCC Strategy Plan (*) (**). This is very well documented in the Crow Collection. Maurice continued to be a key person in the NMA until 1988.

1973 Maurice and I were awarded the Barrett Medal for "a notable contribution to planning". (Maurie's submissions on urban renewal, transportation etc which he prepared for various organisations and my contribution to child care were cited as reasons for award.) (*20)

1974 Began planning for national bringing together of unionists and conservation groups through the Radical Ecology Conference. Helped to set up national organising committee and to publish pre-conference papers etc. (*21)

Maurie was in reality the national organiser of the Radical Ecology Conference.

1975 Very successful Radical Ecology Conference. Movement Against Uranium Mining and Community Energy Network were formed as a result of REC. (*22)

Maurie ensured a continuation of REC through forming the Community Energy Network Group and beginning to write (with a group) the book "Seeds for Change" () (**)*

1977 Helped to establish North Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, also community fair and community balls held in North Melbourne.

Maurie very much involved in trying to get the Melbourne City Council Strategy Plan implemented. See reports on Mixed Use Area Studies etc () (**)*

1978 Helped to establish North Melbourne News (*23). I was the key person in establishing the North Melbourne Cosy Cottage which was a project to provide accommodation for country people visiting hospitals. This project was based on a committee of community organisations and 5 trade unions. (*)

"Seeds for Change" is published. Maurie formed a group to apply the "Seeds" model to North Melbourne resulting in book "More Enjoyment with Less Energy in North and West Melbourne" () (**)*

1979 Helped initiate an Inquiry by Melbourne City Council into children's services. (*) and (**)

Maurie worked with the Australian Conservation Foundation, unions and community groups to establish "Environmentalists for Full Employment". This existed for several years. Maurie organised a coalition of transport unions and community organisation to prepare the report "Freight Centres or Frayed Nerves" () (**)*

1980 helped to initiate Melbourne Voters Action which campaigned for return of democracy when Melbourne City Council was sacked.

Maurie formed a group to apply "Seeds" to Nunawading, resulting in the two "Nunawading Reports" () (**). These reports and the book "Seeds for Change" were given a Victorian Government Energy Conservation Award.*

1983 Prepared CPA submission for State Government Inquiry on children's services and encouraged about 12 other organisations to make submissions (*24)

1984 Participated in Melbourne City Council Inquiry on services for older people. Maurie and I worked together to prepare the report "Community, Consumerism and Class" (*) (**).

1985 Appointed to District Health Council and for several years brought out the DHC newsletter (*25) Helped with writing the book "Make Melbourne Marvellous" and doing all the typesetting for it. "Make Melbourne Marvellous" was launched early in May resulting in considerable red baiting - see daily newspapers. As spokesman for the Communist Party MMM Collective I suffered the main baiting. (*) (**)

1986 Elected to North and West Melbourne Community Health Centre Committee. (*26)

Maurie helped to prepare "Economic Strategy for Social Change" a document aimed at bringing together the "greens" and the "reds" ()*

1987. On RMIT Centenary Committee. Made special submission on campus child care. On Melbourne City Council Bicentenary Ctee. (*27)

The final contribution Maurie made to the urban movement was to organise a seminar on "What Kind of City Do You Want ?" () During the last part of the 1980s we were both involved in trying to find new directions for the CPA through the "Broad Left" and later the "New Left" (*)*

1988 Maurie and I decided that we should relinquish local involvement and help more with consultancy support. Revived Ecoso Exchange as one way of assisting others in organisations. (*28)

1989 Member of support group for Lord Mayor (Winsome McCaughey) (*29) e.g helped formulate peace statements for Council,

1990 Attended the last CPA National Congress (later, there was a small national gathering but the 1990 Congress was the real end of the CPA.) Shifted to Carlton and made brief commitment to helping to revitalise services for older people. (*30) Donated books and other documents to the Victoria University. Helped to establish the Crow Collection Association. Appointed to Ministerial Advisory (State Govt.) Committee on Women and Housing.

1991 Project on Children's Services (*31)

1993 Awarded Membership in the Order of Australia A.M.

1996 On August 24th 1996 the Crow Collection will be holding an Ideas Exchange Day on the theme of "What Sort of Society Do You Want Australia to be ?" The project has been funded by two trade unions and the SEARCH Foundation.

THE SEARCH FOR SOCIAL IDENTITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

What Kind of Society Do You Want Australia to be ?

Join in Exchanging Ideas
by

- * writing an essay,
- * painting a picture,
- * sketching a cartoon,
- * shooting a video,
- * performing a dance,
- * staging a play
- * arranging a debate,
- * reading a poem
- * presenting an oration,
- or any other way of exchanging ideas.

THE IDEAS EXCHANGE DAY

will be held at

Footscray Campus of the Victoria University, Building M.

Saturday, August 24th from 9 am to 5 pm.

Closing date for written entries July 1st.

Closing date for entry forms for other exhibits August 1st.

Registration \$5.00, \$2.00 (concession) payable on Exchange Day.

END NOTES

1. See "Australian Landfall by Brian Penton in Australian Collection .
2. Documents on WSF are in Radical Collection.
3. A booklet called "Food Health and Income" was published by the Left Book Club in 1941, Edited by Marjorie Coppel. She thanks Ruth Crow for material. This is in Crow Coll. P.
4. See "Women at War" edited by Molly Bain, Crow Coll.P. .
5. The Women of University Patriotic Fund subsidised day care until Federal Govt. subsidies in 1943.
6. Some manuscripts from the Brunswick Children's Centre are in Crow Collection.
7. Some manuscripts from Exhibition Youth Centre are in Crow Collection.
8. See Guardian file, Radical Collection or at Melb, Uni, Archives .
9. Some JEL manuscripts, are in Crow Collection. See also Margaret Walker's Collection in the ANU archives.
10. A draft of JEL handbook is in the Crow Collection, the final version is not now available.(*).
11. Parts of survey are in Crow Collection.
12. Parts of survey are in Crow Collection.
13. Some cuttings of these articles are in Crow Collection. See also Guardian file in Radical Collection or in Melb. Uni. Archives.
14. The pen name Una Voce was used for about 20 years in the Northern Advertiser, then the Melbourne Times and also in the North Melbourne News, Also contributed under pen name "Ruth Writes" and wrote many unsigned articles.
15. "Irregular" started in 1967 with mail out of about 150, Changed name to Ecoso Exchange in 1974. Ceased publication in early 1980s and revived in 1988. File of Irregular in the Crow Collection.. The contents of each issue have been listed. (*) (**)
16. Newsletters and reports from Action for Adequate Child Care are in Crow Collection. (*)
17. "Plan for Melbourne, parts 1, 2, 3" were published by the CPA. Copies in Crow Collection, also some working papers in the manuscripts cabinets. (*) (**)
18. The CPA submission and the 15 submissions from other organisations are in the Crow Collection (*)

19. Plan for Melbourne Part 3 was a formal objection to the Board of Works Metropolitan Plan. Other organisations (eg the Town and Country Planning Association) objected and some objections are in Crow Collection (*).

20. Robin Boyd and Barret Medal Citations are in Crow Collection. (*)

21. Documents about the Radical Ecology Conference are in the Crow Collection (*).

22. Community Energy Network was formed as a result of REC. This group published "Seeds for Change - Creatively Confronting the Energy Crisis" This was later awarded a Vic. Govt. Energy Award.

23. This remarkable newspaper is still in existence. It is written, laid out etc by volunteers and 5000 are delivered by volunteers. Helpers learn many skills. A large number of "News" are in Crow Collection room but not yet listed or catalogued.

24. As well as CPA submission about 6 other organisations were encouraged to make submissions. (*)

25. Files of DHC newsletters and other DHC documents are in the Crow Collection (*).

26. Some unique documents on community health are in the Collection, eg "The Peckham Experiment", documents from the "First World Conference on Domiciliary Care" (**) as well as North Melbourne Community Health Centre documents. (*)

27. RMIT Centenary Committee report includes radical proposals on campus child care written by me. (*)

28. In 1988 Ecoso was revived and in 1991, when the Crow Collection Association was established, it became the newsletter for the Crow Collection Association. Subscriptions cover cost of publication and postage. (*)

29. Winsome did not have a "Lady Mayoress" and so invited some of her women friends to form a support group.

29. Through my involvement in a variety of organisations (including being appointed by the Federal Minister for Health to the Community Forum for Aged Services) the Crow Collection has acquired a range of documents on older people's services. These have not yet been catalogued or listed but they are grouped together in a set.

31. The Crow Collection received funds (\$10.000) for a project on the history of children's services. The project material includes a video, 12 booklets and a wallboard. The working papers from the project are in the Crow Collection. This project was given a community planning award by the Royal Australian Planning Institute. (*) (**)

ORGANISATIONS WITH WHICH I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED

These dates are only approximate.

One hatching indicates that there is at least one document about the organisation in the Crow Collection.

Two hatchings indicate that there is a fairly comprehensive collection of documents in the Crow Collection.

1936 Communist Party of Australia (until 1991) ##
 1936 Students Against War and Fascism
 1936 Workers Sport Federation (oral history only) #
 1937 Left Book Club (sporadically until 1996...) ##
 1938 Food for Spain (Brighton Group)
 1939 - 1942 Country Women's Association (Mt Dandenong)
 1942 Council for Women in War Work #
 1942 Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime #
 1942 South Yarra Day Nursery #
 1943 Brunswick Children's Centre Committee ##
 1945 Victorian Association of Youth Clubs
 1946 Day Nursery Development Association
 1948 Victorian Association of Creches.
 1949 Brunswick Peace Group (in peace organisations until 1996...)
 1949 - 1953 Junior Eureka League Committee ##
 1949 Unity Dance Group for Children #
 1950 Brunswick Swimming Club
 1950 Watersiders' Union Dance Group for Children
 1950 Union of Australian Women #
 1951 Brunswick Athletic Club
 1951 Albert St. Brunswick Mothers' Club
 1952 - 1968 Victorian Teachers Union (VTU)
 1954 VTU Permanency for Married Women Committee.
 1958 VTU Federal Aid for Education Committee
 1959 - 1962 Coburg Education Committee #
 1966 Clean Air Council of Victoria
 1967- 1972 North Melbourne Social Service #
 1967.... Town Planning Research Group (Ecoso fore-runner) ##
 1968 - 1990 North Melbourne Association ##
 1968 - 1972 Action for Adequate Child Care ##
 1969 Action for Better Education #
 1971 - 1985 Community Child Care ##
 1972 The Learning Exchange, cuttings only #.
 1974 Preparatory Committee for Radical Ecology Conference ##
 1975.... Movement Against Uranium Mining #
 1978 - 1988 North Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre #
 1979 - 1982 North Melbourne Cosy Cottage Committee ##
 1979 - 1990 North Melbourne News Collective #
 1980 - 1982 Environmentalists for Full Employment #
 1985 - 1989 Melbourne District Health Council #
 1986 - 1989 North and West Melbourne Community Health Centre #
 1990.... Crow Collection Association.##
 1992 Vic. Ministerial Advisory Committee - Housing for Women #
 1994 Fed. Ministerial Community Forum on Aged Services ##
 1994 Housing for Aged Action Group.#

ORGANISATION IN WHICH MAURIE WAS INVOLVED

This is only very approximate. The dates are from my memory.

1935 Communist Party of Australia (until he died in 1988) ##
 1935 - 1937 Melbourne University Labor Club
 1935 - 1937 Students Against War and Fascism
 1937 Spanish Relief Committee
 1939 Mount Dandenong Progress Association
 1941 - 1964 Federated Clerks' Union (until mid 1960s) #
 1947 United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation (UNRRA) Committee
 1953 Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Assoc. #
 1967 - 1988 Town Planning Research Group ##
 1968 - 1988 Town and Country Planning Association ##
 1971 - 1975 Committee for Urban Action. #
 1974 Preparatory Committee for Radical Ecology Conference ##
 1975 - 1979 Council of the Conservation Council of Victoria #
 1978 - 1988 Community Energy Network Committee #

Socialist Values

EXTRACT FROM "MAKE MELBOURNE MARVELLOUS"
 Published by the Communist Party, 1985

The sort of values suitable for a Socialist Australia should retain the well known socialist principles of abolishing exploitation and alienation but should be reformulated, it is suggested, to reflect also positive values that have emerged from new social movements, and more recent experiences of socialists.

Central to such reformulation should be an expansion of the age-old principle:

From Each According to Their Ability— to Each According to Their Needs

This recognises that the development of new abilities to serve society often associated with new technology and new social conditions, gives rise to new needs; and changing needs in turn, call forth and provide conditions for changing abilities; so that needs/abilities under socialism should include:—

* *A reasonable level of food, clothing, shelter, privacy and shared child rearing and domestic upkeep* so that the physical constraints do not hinder people from exercising their abilities.

* *Convenient opportunities for health, education and culture* so that people's potential for developing greater and more diverse abilities are given scope.

* *Access locally to a reasonably diverse vital community for supportive, recreational and social activities* so that social conditions can assist people to gain confidence to use their abilities to the full.

* *Complete eradication of all forms of male domination over females*, on the job or in the home, to release women to a full range of areas in which their abilities can be exercised.

* *Respect for the natural environment and other species*, so that human needs are designed in such a way that the "needs" of other forms of life are also taken into account, substituting qualitative growth for wasteful and destructive "growth-for-growth's sake" that damages the ecology and threatens the ability of future generations to sustain life on earth for themselves or other species.

In a word, the long established socialist values of sufficiency and equity need now to be supplemented with values which are anti-patriarchal, ecology respecting and committed to self-reliance and grass roots democracy based on collectives.

WANTED: YOUNG AUSTRALIANS IN SEARCH OF SOCIAL IDENTITY

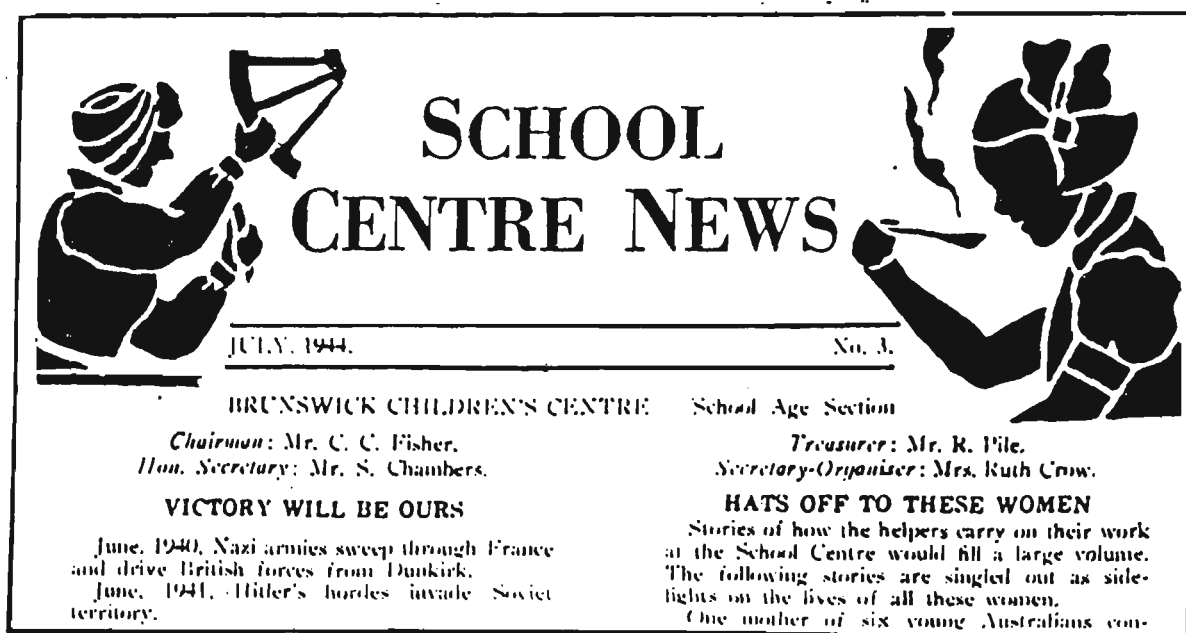


538TG500

INNER city schools have been invited to take part in a project aimed at defining Australian social identity in the 21st century. Students can present their ideas in any form they wish, from writing an essay or poem, to staging a play or debate, or making a video. The project, co-ordinated by the Crow Collection Association based at the Victorian University of Technology, will culminate in an ideas exchange day in August. Crow collection founder Ruth Crow said that as Australia entered the era of the global

economy and information super highway, young people needed to think about, discuss and debate social identity. "And most importantly we must look at how we learn from the young people," she said. Ms Crow said she had fought against facism in the 1930's and 40's and then for peace and in defence of the environment in the post war period. The next big battleground would be "globalisation" and the development of the information super highway.

The Crow Collection at Victoria University is a collection of material on social and urban issues named after Ms Crow and her late husband Maurie. The project will be launched at the Crow Collection Association's annual meeting at the VUT Footscray Campus on March 28 at 7.30pm. For more information about the Australian social identity project contact Sheila Byard at the VUT on 9688 4754. Picture: TONY GOUGH.



This is part of a 1944 newsletter of Brunswick Children's Centre. This Centre was established by the Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime. The Crow Collection has documents from the 1930s to the 1980s about community campaigns for children's services which serve the needs of the children and their parents.

Profile of a CPA Member Supplements

S1. Ruth's C.V.

S7. Two Charts (prepared by Ruth Crow 1981)
One Person's Perspective on Planning
Linking Trade Unions and Urban Action

S9. A Sample of Local Networking and a Sample of
Coalition Building.



"Would you tell me, please,
which way I ought to go
from here?" said Alice.

"That depends a good deal
on where you want to get
to," said the Cat.

SUPPLEMENT TO PROFILE OF A CPA MEMBER

This CV was prepared in 1990 soon after I had donated the Crow Collection to Footscray Institute of Technology (now Victoria University of Technology). I am including it as a Supplement to "Profile of a CPA Member" as it gives some information on my education and my experience in the paid workforce. Please excuse any duplications with main document.

Curriculum Vitae

Ruth Hope Crow

Explanation

This curriculum vitae differs from most such documents in that it has not been prepared as part of an application for a job.

The purpose of this curriculum vitae is to introduce myself to academics who may wish to use the Crow Collection.

Therefore :-

- 1) I have selected facts about my education, employment and experience to indicate that from time to time I have been involved in innovatory movements in these three spheres.
- 2) I have made some comments on my "struggle to get an education" and about the uniqueness of the courses which I studied. Compared with the educational opportunities available today my tertiary education was very limited but compared with majority of young women in the 1930s I was well qualified educationally. My very high motivation helped me to overcome many difficulties and thus to really appreciate what I was learning.
- 3) I have emphasised that in the 1930s my abiding interest was in social issues related to nutrition because this area of my life is not so well known as my later involvements around urban action, children's services and my contributions to publications.
- 4) I have omitted information about my involvement in organisations such as Mothers Clubs, women's groups, unions and sport teams. Membership of such groups has played an important role in my life but on the whole I have not directly contributed in any unique way to these.
- 5) I have provided some information about my experiences at Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology because this may be of current interest now that Victoria University has been formed. EMCPDE has been a part of RMIT since 1976 and with the recent amalgamation RMIT and FIT are the one institution. Thus I am a past student of VUT !!

Curriculum Vitae

Name Ruth Hope Crow

Address Flat 218, 300 Pigdon Street, North Carlton 3054
Phone (03) 380.1876

Date of Birth 14/ 9/ '16

Marital Status 1937 married Maurie Crow.
1940 and 1942 birth of two daughters.
During 1960s birth of five grand-children.
During 1980s birth of three great-grand-children.
1988 widowed.

Education 1930 Scholarship to Ballarat Church of England Grammar School.

1934 to 1936 studied for (and passed) Diploma of Institutional Management and Dietetics at Emily McPherson College, for the first year on a "Free Place" and last two years on a Senior Technical Scholarship awarded on my first year's results. (*)

In 1945 I was one of fifteen students, from all over Australia, who were chosen for their experience in community organisation, to study Group Work Techniques in the Social work Department of Melbourne University. (**)

Employment 1937 to 1943 I worked in various places as assistant dietitian, cook, waitress, joint manager of a tearooms and manageress of a factory canteen (***)

1943 to 1944 Secretary-organiser of the Brunswick Children's Centres. The first federally financed wartime child care service. (****)

1946 to 1948 Club Leader at Exhibition Youth Centre (EYC) and Education Field Officer for the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs. EYC was a very innovative scheme in community recreation located in South Fitzroy.

1953 to 1969 Part-time Teacher of Cookery and Home Economics at inner urban secondary schools.

In the late 1960s casual employment with Northern Advertiser (An Age publication) writing a column on community activities and during the 1970s similar casual employment with Melbourne Times.

Experience (Outside paid work) 1935 and 1936 Secretary Student Council at Emily McPherson College.

1938 helped to research a project on food, health and income in Victoria. The results were published in a booklet edited by Marjorie Coppel in 1939.

1939 - 1942 Helped to establish chain of youth hike hostels in the Dandenong Ranges. This was a very new idea then. (We were living in the Dandenongs)

1943 - 1944 Honorary Secretary for the South Yarra Day Nursery which was a very innovative centre providing care for children of mothers in wartime employment. Member of Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime.

1946 - Helped initiate the Day Nursery Development Association which aimed at keeping the wartime child care centres open.

1949 - 1954 Involved with a variety of organisation which were initiating leisure time activities for children ...dance, drama, sports, music etc.

Late 1950s helped to establish the Coburg Education Committee auspiced by the Coburg Council. Helped with research on the provision of preschool services in Coburg using the 1944 State Government Report as a base for the investigation.

Late 1960s helped to establish Action for Adequate Child Care; an organisation which linked trade unions and local community organisations.

Founding member of North Melbourne Social Service and the North Melbourne Association.

Shared with Maurie Crow in writing "Plans for Melbourne Part 1, 2, and 3, which examined State Government policies on urban planning.

One of the main people responsible for publishing a monthly newsletter on urban issues..."Irregular" later called "Ecoso Exchange".

From about 1972 - helped to initiate Community Child Care, giving special attention to establishing local child care centres, and writing the handbook and magazine (that is, helping to develop theories, to popularise them and put them into practice).

Participated in preparing the Melbourne City Council Strategy plan by helping to prepare alternative plans.

1975 helped to organise the Radical Ecology Conference which was an early attempt to draw attention to the need to preserve un-renewable resources.

1977 Helped with preparation of book "Seeds for Change - Creatively Confronting the Energy Crisis."

Mid 1970s helped to establish the North and West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, the North Melbourne News and the North Melbourne Cosy Cottage (an innovative scheme sponsored by unions and local organisations which provided accommodation for country families visiting hospitals).

Late 1970s participated in Melbourne City Council Consultation on Children's Services.

Early 1980s on initiating group for both the North and West Melbourne Community Health Centre the Melbourne District Health Council.

In co-operation with Maurie Crow, wrote two polemical reports "Community, Consumerism and Class" and "A Charter for a Central Region" and was one of the main authors of "Make Melbourne Marvellous."

Other
Information

1972 Maurie Crow and I were jointly awarded a Robin Boyd Award by the Victorian Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects for our "consistently valuable and perspective contributions to the literature of planning issues in Melbourne". The citation referred to the set of books "Plan for Melbourne Parts 1, 2 and 3" and the publication of the newsletter "Irregular" as well as the articles we had contributed to newspapers and journals.

1973 Maurie Crow and I were jointly awarded the Barrett Medal by the Town and Country Planning Association for our "notable contribution to planning". The citation referred to Maurie's involvement in the campaigns against the freeway plans and against the urban renewal bill and my contribution on child care and education.

In the late 1970s I was made a Life Member of Community Child Care in recognition of my contribution to establishing that organisation.

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Footnotes

* A Scholarship Student in the 1930s There were very few of these Senior Technical Scholarships (I think about 30 for all Victoria). I was probably one of the few women to be awarded one.

The scholarship provided for free tuition and 30 pounds a year allowance. This compared fairly favourably (when supplemented by casual work) with the wages my sister was earning of fifteen shillings a week as a typist.

We studied physics and chemistry with the male diploma students at Melbourne Technical College (RMIT). Although I had not studied these subjects at secondary school I had the highest marks by far of all students, most of the female students did not pass in these subjects.

It is interesting to note how the opportunity to begin the Diploma Course arose quite accidentally.

Towards the end of 1933 I was enrolled as a "Free Place" student for a three months course and wrote an article for the College magazine which I called "Enthusiasm". (!) This was regarded so highly that I was offered a three year free place for the much prized diploma course.

The economic situation of the family in the early 1930s can be gauged by a study of the family budget in the Crow Collection.

I could not afford text books so studied at the Public Library. I worked as a domestic in vacations but kept this fact well hidden from the other students.

All the diploma students, except one, had been educated at private schools.

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** A Mature Age Student at Melbourne University in the mid 1940s. This one-year course was supervised by the M.U. Social Work Department. It was established to train staff for community services which were expected to be developed in the post-war reconstruction period. There were three intakes of students (1944, 1945 and 1946) before it was discontinued.

I was especially favoured by being given a free place and a living allowance of about one hundred pounds a year.

I had two young children at the time. It was quite unusual for married women, let alone mothers of young children, to be studying although there was quite a large increase in mature-age ex-service students.

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*** The Training of dietitians in the 1930s To become a dietitian, once I had gained my diploma, entailed paying 20 pounds, buying uniforms and working in a hospital for twelve months without any pay at all.

The long hours also meant no time to earn money through casual work. Such conditions made continuing my career impossible. In any case I wanted to marry and marriage was a bar to even being a waitress or a cook. It was possible to keep using my single name by working as a cook or a waitress in areas where I was not known.

I was very concerned about mal-nutrition and society and did not believe that dietetics should be only practised in hospitals. My interest in what I called "scientific social feeding" resulted in employment in a factory canteen and in the Brunswick Children's Centre.

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**** Innovations in Child Care in the 1940s The My main responsibility was the School Centre which provided a midday dinner for about 100 children, after school and holiday activities recruiting and organising about 20 to 30 voluntary helpers, and also helping to co-ordinate the already existing creche and kindergartens so that the three sections were linked in the one scheme. (Some basic documents on the Brunswick Children's Centre are in the Crow Collection).

The body and soul of Library collections

Published in Nexus

6/11/95

We call the Crow Collection a living library and it has both a body and soul," Ruth Crow said at the meeting of Friends of the Victoria University Libraries on 24 October. Ms Crow and her husband Maurie, originally donated the collection, located at Footscray Campus, to Footscray Institute of Technology.

Ms Crow went on to explain that "We can see and accurately measure and record the 'body' — the books and manuscripts — the way it is used by students, the support group provided through the Crow Collection Association, and so on.

"The 'soul' is not measurable and thus much less easy to identify. However, tonight, it is my task to try to unveil the soul of the Crow Collection and I am attempting to do this by displaying these old slogans," she said.

One of her first slogans was the words of the famous Spanish Republican heroine, who inspired

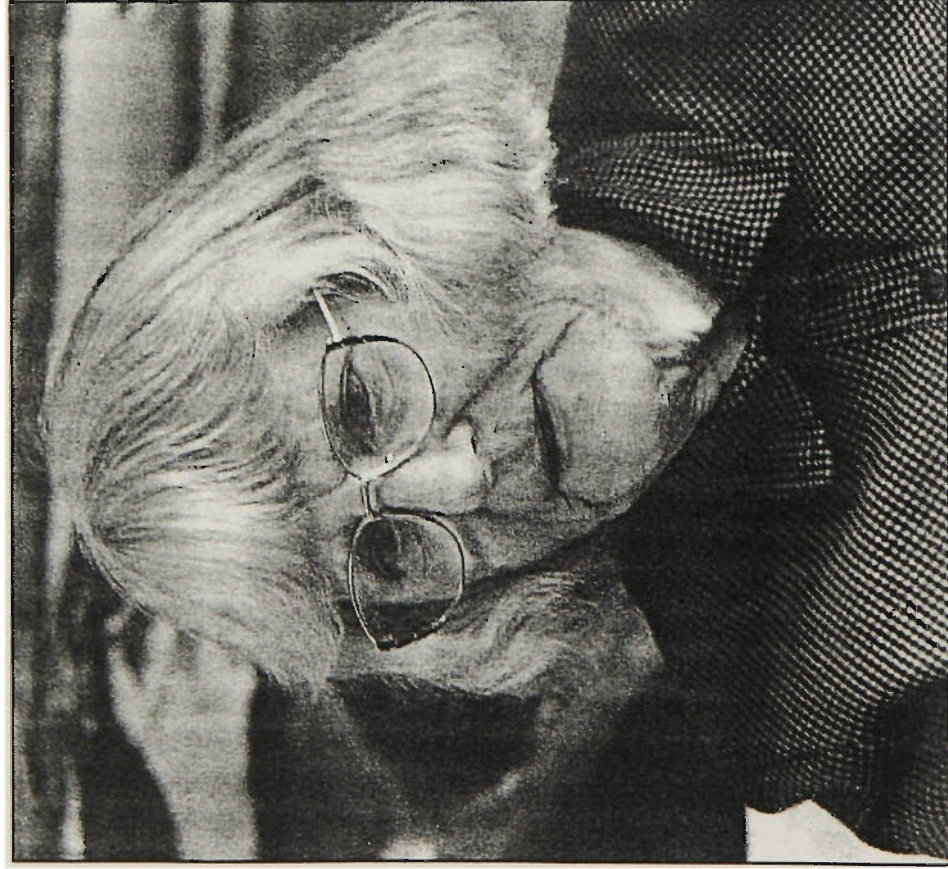
Mr and Ms Crow in 1938 by saying "I would rather die fighting (Franco's Fascists) than live on my knees."

"The popular slogan 'Women must work to win' from the early 1940s, was followed by a saying from the mid-1940s when there was so much idealism about post-war reconstruction. It was 'Put magic in the lives of children'."

Ms Crow ended her slogan display with the warning from the 1980s "Human beings are our most endangered species, give them a peaceful life and nuclear free future."

"Maurie and I were inspired by Karl Marx who said 'Philosophers have only talked about the world, the task however is to change it.' The soul of the Crow Collection shows how we tried to carry out this philosophy."

Ms Crow said she believes that the other Victoria University Library collections have their own souls, each reflecting the life and times of the donor. This observa-



tion was well illustrated when her talk was followed by John White describing the documents in his collection of Australian books and manuscripts, which, like the Crow Collection, is at the Footscray Campus.

Locations of the Victoria University Special Collections are:

Footscray Campus

Special Collection - Australiana and rare books
Crow Collection - Urban Planning Issues

Nott Collection - Association of Illumination Engineers

Vaccari Collection - Multicultural Collection

Melton Campus

Urban and Social Policy Collection

St Albans Campus

Union of Australian Women (UAW) Collection
Archives Collection

Werribee Campus

The Radical Literature Collection

URBAN ACTION MOVEMENTS : . . ONE PERSON'S PERSPECTIVE

October, 1981
Ruth Crow

PERIODS	1940 . . Mid 1950's	Late 1950 .. Mid 1960's	1970 . . 1980 . . .
Locality of Experience	Brunswick	Coburg	Nth. Melbourne
Period Features	<p>Wartime, United Front Agst. Fascism. Increase of working women</p>	<p>Defeat of worst of "Cold War" Community movements on education. Beginning of Peace Action. More women with tertiary education. Rapid suburbanisation and car ownership</p>	<p>Movements on equity/environment. Urban renewal: Increase of home ownership in inner suburbs. Women's liberation; Community Control</p>
Immediate Gains	<p>New types of centres for children. New ways of involving women in local organisations.</p>	<p>Recognition of deprived north and west. Increase Council support for services Trade Unions and Living Standards.</p>	<p>Different quality in services. Alternative Plans by local people. Conserving energy as a local issue.</p>
Reaction	<p>"Cold War", social services first target. Deterioration in local politics ("red baiting") Day nurseries closed.</p>	<p>Parochial interests encouraged. (e.g. preschool education for my own child)</p>	<p>Sacking of M.C.C. Action_ to divert to parochial planning.</p>
Permanent Gains	<p>Widening experience of people. Fight back on services through Combined Pensioners (started in Brunswick)</p>	<p>Widening experience of people . . beginning of union involvement. (Action for Adequate Child Care, etc.)</p>	<p>Widening experience of people. New ways of forming coalitions. (environment urban action, unions, etc.</p>

"Philosophers have only talked about the world in various ways ;
the point however is to change it."
Karl Marx.

LINKING TRADE UNIONS AND THE URBAN ACTION

Oct. 1981

Ruth Crow

To date urban action movements have mainly attracted white collar workers and the trade unions have had their main strength in the organisation of blue collar workers. This over-simplified chart may help to show how to forge links between there two movements.

<u>Blue Collar Industrial Workers</u>	<u>White Collar, Professional and Technical Workers.</u>
Work at point of production Treated as things ("hand") <i>Suffer alienation.</i>	Do not work at the point of production..Treated as career staff. <i>Suffer Anomie</i>
To feel human unite with others on the job - <i>solidarity the anti-dote alienation.</i>	To feel human unite with others off the job - <i>creating community the anti-dote to anomie.</i>
To get results action <i>deteriorates to reformism</i>	To get immediate results action <i>deteriorates to parochial demands.</i>
Reformism results in <i>charismatic leadership</i> which destroys unity with other groups	Parochialism results in <i>Piece-meal planning and destroys coalitions.</i>
Antidote to reformism is the campaign around wider issues - <i>living standards beyond work place - alternative production.</i>	Antidote to parochialism is the campaign around wider issues - <i>general living standards - alternative urban plans</i>
Campaign around socially useful goods - <i>Environmentalism for Full Employment (EFFE)</i>	Campaigns around socially useful services - <i>Conservation of urban energy</i>

↓
EFFE
ENVIRONMENTALIST FOR FULL
EMPLOYMENT

↓
CUE
CONSERVATION OF URBAN
ENERGY

therefore

Linking the trade unions and urban action on main issue
of

ENERGY/ EQUITY/ EMPLOYMENT/ ENVIRONMENT/ENJOYMENT

"The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and therefore changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educator must himself be educated," (Karl Marx, "Thesis on Feuerbach")

(Please excuse the Victorian era use of the word "men")

Networking and Coalitions.



"COSY COTTAGE MURAL"

This mural was designed by Kaye Hopwood and painted at a North Melbourne Street Party on 27th February 1982, photo by Peter Elliott.

On the left of the mural are the names of the organisations which endorsed the slogan . . .

"CHILDREN . . .

OUR MOST ENDANGERED SPECIES
GIVE THEM A PEACEFUL WORLD
AND A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE"

The names on the panel are:

- North Melbourne Association • Curzon Children's Centre; North Melbourne • Pax Christi
- North Melbourne News • Inner Suburban Teachers' Group • Brotherhood of St. Laurence
- North Melbourne Social Service • North Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre
- North Melbourne Uniting Church • North Melbourne A.L.P. Branch • Food Preservers' Union
- North Melbourne Peace Group • North Melbourne Education Group • Cosy Cottage Group
- North Melbourne M. A. Uranium Mining • North Melbourne Children and Youth Committee
- Miscellaneous Workers' Union • People for Nuclear Disarmament • Community Child Care
- St. Albans Church of England, North Melbourne • Australian Railways Union
- Union of Australian Women • Environment Action Centre

Card printed by Rowprint Services (Vic.) Pty. Ltd. for the North Melbourne Association, P.O. Box 102, North Melbourne, 3051.

LOCAL NETWORKING AROUND A LOCAL EVENT Reproduction of part of a card about the painting of the Cosy Cottage Mural, 1982.

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The Urban Freight Group consists of representatives of the following groups:

Kensington Association
North Melbourne Association
Flemington Association
West Melbourne Association
Carlton Association

Australian Federated Union of Locomotive
Enginemen
Australian Railways Union
Citizens Against Freeways
Conservation of Urban Energy Group of the
Conservation Council of Victoria

In addition the following municipalities provided financial assistance.

Port Melbourne City Council
Fitzroy City Council
Collingwood City Council

The Urban Freight Group would like to thank all those people who have helped in the production of this report.

Comments and criticisms are welcome. The Urban Freight Group can be contacted—
c/o P.O. Box 102, North Melbourne 3051, or by phoning:

Mr R. Murphy - 376 8753
Mr S. Gibson (Sec. AFULE) - 328 1835
Mr J. F. Frazer (Sec. ARU) - 60 1561

A SHORT TERM COALITION OVER A PARTICULAR ISSUE Reproduction of part of the introduction to "Frayed Nerves and Freight Centres", 1979

