

BOOK NOTES

By David Clune*

In a recent Book Note, two works sponsored by the Sesquicentenary of Responsible Government in NSW Committee were mentioned. As the Sesquicentenary year advances, readers of *Australasian Parliamentary Review* may be interested in a summary of what else has been published so far under the Committee's auspices.

The Sesquicentenary Committee is funding works on the major political parties and minor parties and independents in NSW. Michael Hogan's *Local Labor: A history of the Labor Party in Glebe, 1891–2003* (Federation Press, 2005) is a pioneering account of the ALP at grass roots level that also tells the story of Labor in NSW in microcosm. Recently published is Paul Davey's *The Nationals: The Progressive, Country and National Party in New South Wales 1919 to 2006* (Federation Press, 2006). A former journalist and Federal Director and NSW Secretary of the National Party, Paul Davey provides a sympathetic but balanced assessment of the Nationals and their predecessors.

The Sesquicentenary Committee has combined with the State Records Authority of NSW to produce an administrative history of NSW. Hilary Golder's *Politics, Patronage and Public Works: The administration of New South Wales, Vol. 1, 1842–1900* (UNSW Press) was published in 2005. The next volume, *Humble and Obedient Servants: The Administration of New South Wales 1901–1960 Vol. 2* by Peter J Tyler (UNSW Press) is now available. A *Guide to New South Wales State Archives Relating to Responsible Government* has also been published (State Records Authority of NSW, 2006).

A number of biographical works have been sponsored. JM Bennett has written *Sir James Martin: Premier and Chief Justice of NSW* (Federation Press, 2005), a worthy addition to the existing standard biographies of nineteenth century NSW Premiers. Dr Bennett has also written *Colonial Law Lords: The Judiciary and the Beginning of Responsible Government in New South Wales* (Federation Press, 2006). Michael Hogan has edited two useful books of political reminiscences, *A Lifetime in Conservative Politics: Political Memoirs of Sir Joseph Carruthers* and *The First New South Wales Labor Government 1910–1916; Two Memoirs: William Holman and John Osborne* (both UNSW Press, 2005). Andrew Moore's *Francis De Groot: Irish Fascist Australian Legend* (Federation Press, 2005) is a fascinating study not only of the man who cut the ribbon on the Harbour Bridge but of the secret armies that posed a formidable challenge to the system of responsible government in the Depression era.

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Steve Chase covered NSW politics for the ABC from the late 1980s to 2001. He has written a highly readable, personal account of his years in the gallery and the events he reported on, *You didn't get it from me : A reporter's account of political life in New South Wales from 1988–2001* (ABC Books, 2006). It includes two excellent chapters on how relations between the media and politicians really work.

As part of her research into the history of the NSW Aborigines Protection Board, Anna Doukakis analysed 60 years of *Hansard* in detail to ascertain the attitudes of NSW MPs to indigenous people. The result is *The Aboriginal People, Parliament and 'Protection', 1856–1916* (Federation Press, 2006), a valuable and at times surprising study of the attitudes and complexities that shaped indigenous policy.

A truly ground-breaking project funded by the Committee is *People and Politics in Regional New South Wales, 1856–2006* (Federation Press, 2006) edited by Jim Hagan. Much history concentrates on the major urban regions of the State. This two volume work redresses that imbalance by dividing NSW into 11 extra-metropolitan regions and tracing their social, economic and political history from 1856 onwards.

As well as traditional publishing, the Committee has provided grants for a number of website projects. The Mitchell Library has put a guide to the papers of over 100 NSW Parliamentarians on its website. In conjunction with the NSW Parliament, an on-line biographical register of former NSW Members has been created. The reports of Parliamentary Debates published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* from 1843 to the establishment of *Hansard* in 1879 have also been put on the Parliament's website. As part of the Australian Women's Archives project, the National Foundation of Australian Women has created an on-line data base giving details of over 700 women candidates for the NSW Parliament. ▲