

Thursday, Sept. 27, '02

Parliamentary Joint Committee  
On Corporations & Financial Services  
Parliament House  
Canberra 2600



Dear Sirs

I have just heard of your proposed hearings. Might I nominate myself to give evidence.

I am a retired journalist, author of "O'Malley, MHR," a biography of the American-Australian economic adventurer, King O'Malley." I am thus abreast of the value to banking to rural and regional Australia of the Government bank he created, the Commonwealth Bank.

Sir Robert Cosgrove, who had been Premier of Tasmania for 18 years, told me on the bank's 50th anniversary in 1962 that "Australia couldn't possibly have developed as it has without the Commonwealth Bank." I wrote about it at the time, when I was a reporter on the Hobart "Mercury."

I am abreast of the injection that Kiwibank, a Government-owned bank for which the first branches opened last February in New Zealand, <sup>is providing</sup> in correspondence received recently, a spokesman for this bank wrote me from Wellington that the 250-plus outlets by then operating, seven months later, made Kiwibank already the largest network of branches throughout the country.

I lived in Canberra for 14 years, til 1995. I followed political issues, particularly in banking, in that time.

I make the long trip back only rarely, but would pay a visit because of the importance of a hearing such as yours.

*Larry Noye*

McNair

# NEWS

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NEWS

## Journalist from the old school is still a man of letters

By Vaughan Mawrey

**VETERAN** journalist Larry Noye, of Albion, has been retired for seven years, but he still has his finger on the pulse of the community.

Mr Noye, 72, keeps up a steady supply of letters and news tips to newspapers and magazines.

Quite a lot of his letters relate to King O'Malley, a member of the Fisher Labor Government who founded the Commonwealth Bank. After 23 years of

research, Mr Noye published a biography titled *O'Malley MHR* in 1983.

King O'Malley would be curdling in his grave if he could see what was happening today," he says.

"The Commonwealth Bank was founded to keep the private banks in line, and O'Malley would be shocked to see that it has been privatised."

Mr Noye grew up in Footscray during World War II and befriended some of the American soldiers who were camped at Brooklyn. He went to school at the Williamstown

High School, and found his way into journalism via a stint as a copy boy on the *Torn* newspaper.

He started as a reporter on the *Footscray Advertiser* in 1945, then moved to daily papers in Bendigo, Geelong, Limerston and Hobart before returning to his home town for a 16-year stint at the *Footscray Advertiser*.

There, he was a colleague of Robert Coleman, who later became a columnist on the *Melbourne Herald*.

"In my earlier days, boxing was a big sport around Footscray, and one rubbish was borne to fighters such as Frank Finlery, who became Australian lightweight champion.

"There were four boxing gyms in Scray, and there was bitter rivalry to attract the top talent between trainers Jack McLeod and triple Australian champion Ambrose Palmer.

"In those days Jim Shephard was the secretary of the Footscray and District Football League, a position he held for 13 years. He was later leader of the (Labor) Opposition in State Parliament."

Fourteen years in Canberra saw Mr Noye doing general and short-term political reporting for the news agencies Australian United Press and Australian Associated Press, and for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

Later, he became one of the few male secretaries in the Federal Public Service, while contributing news stories to a public service newspaper. He retired from the Department of Defence in 1993.

Through his back research he became friendly with Margaret Fisher, daughter of former prime

minister Andrew Fisher.

On the other side of the political divide, he lunched with Heather Henderson, daughter of former prime minister Sir Robert Menzies. He also was invited to a meeting with Tamara Fraser, wife of former prime minister Malcolm Fraser, to help her set up a portrait gallery of all Australian prime ministers.

In retirement he flew to the United States to visit American soldier Chuck Allen, who was camped at Brooklyn during World War II and who took young Larry to the pictures.

"I was fascinated by the Yanks when they were here," Mr Noye recalls. "I was sorry when my friend Chuck died last year."

While most journalists contented to compare years ago, Mr Noye still reads out stories on his ancient Olivetti manual typewriter.

Much of his journalistic work now consists of writing obituaries for prominent people he's met in the course of his long career. Recently he paid tribute to Ben Healey.

Sometimes he's called on to speak to local groups - and yesterday (Tuesday) he shared his life story with the Williamstown Prebus Club.

He's a member of the Footscray Lions Club, and manages the club's program to sign up organ donors.

Mr Noye also believes that religion is important, but says he's "ecumenical" in his church interest. He attends both the Williamstown Presbyterian Church and the Williamstown Church of Christ.



Retired Albion journalist Larry Noye shares computer preferences instead of letters in the office and news tips on



Good job, not!