

EMERITUS PROFESSOR JAMES SEYMOUR HAGAN

Citation for the conferral of a Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*)

Born in Sydney in 1929, Jim Hagan grew up during the depression. He attended the Woollahra Opportunity Classes and Sydney Boys' High School. As a consequence of the depression, he lived from time to time on his uncle's farm outside Campbelltown. In this three-generation household, headed by his grandfather, whom Jim describes as the "most literate man I have ever known even though he left school at the age of 12", young Jim developed a sense of the past and of its interaction with the present. This interaction was to be the foundation of his life-long interest in history, and especially in Australian social history. From his grandfather, he also learnt the value of reading. This particular value was to form the foundation of his life-long interest in education. When radio was the principal form of entertainment in the home, Jim Hagan became a national celebrity as a "Quiz Kid" in John Dease's highly rated weekly radio program.

On completion of his secondary education, Jim Hagan was admitted to The University of Sydney where he studied history and was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours and later a Diploma in Education. He was a founding member of the History Teachers' Association. After a brief career as a school teacher, he became a lecturer at Sydney Teachers' College. He both edited and contributed to a series of textbooks on European and world history for use in schools.

The son of a printer with *The Daily Telegraph*, Jim Hagan developed an interest in labour principles and has been active in labour politics throughout his life. Through his interest in Australian trade unions, and especially in the Printing and Kindred Industries Union, he was awarded a scholarship to study for a Doctor of Philosophy degree at the Australian National University. His chosen area of study was the history of the printing unions. In 1966, his first book, *Printers and Politics*, was published by the Australian National University Press. *Printers and Politics* was to be his first of several books documenting the labour movement in Australia. In 1981, he published *The History of the ACTU*, which established him as a leading authority in the field. In 1991, he co-authored with Ken Turner *A History of the Labor Party in New South Wales* - the oldest Labor Party in the world, having been established in 1891. He was also a founding member of the Australian Society for Labour History and has been a regular contributor to the Society's journal, *Labour History*. In addition, Jim Hagan is a passionate railway historian.

In 1965, Jim Hagan was appointed a lecturer in History at the Wollongong University College where he became a driving force in the campaign by staff, students and community groups to secure autonomy for Wollongong University College from The University of New South Wales. This stance was strongly opposed by the then College leadership and by The University of New South Wales. He helped, however, to build up an irresistible pressure for autonomy that was finally agreed to by the New South Wales Government in 1973. Jim Hagan became a foundation member of the Academic Senate of the new University of Wollongong and served for many years on the Councils of both the Wollongong Institute of Education and the University of Wollongong. On the latter Council, he was regularly re-elected as an academic staff representative. He served as Dean, Faculty of Arts at the University of Wollongong from 1988 to 1995 when he retired with the rank of Professor of History.

In 1976 Jim Hagan was seconded by the then Minister for Education to chair a working party to advise the New South Wales Government on the establishment of an Education Commission, the establishment of which had been a central plank in the education policy of the newly elected government. His long association with higher education resulted in his appointment as a member of the Higher Education Board of New South Wales that was charged with the oversight of the advanced education sector. He served on that Board from 1981 to 1988 at which time the colleges of advanced education became part of the new national unified system of universities. Significant during the nineteen-eighties was his appointment as chairman of a working party to recommend on the future of the Goulburn College of Advanced Education and ultimately its incorporation into the Riverina College of Advanced Education to form the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education. This merger paved the way for the relocation of the New South Wales Police Academy from Bourke Street in Sydney to Goulburn. So began his long association with the Riverina as Chairman of the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education during its period of rapid growth and diversification. His many interventions shaped the academic and administrative policies in a way that prepared the College well for transition to university status in 1989. Jim Hagan urged the Council persistently and vigorously to seek autonomous status under its own act of incorporation and, drawing heavily on his Wollongong experience, not to accept the status of a college of a university no matter how prestigious that university might be. The Government ultimately accepted that advice and the correctness of that advice is well vindicated in the many successes of Charles Sturt University during its first decade. Jim Hagan was appointed by the Minister for Education to the first Board of Governors of the new University. He served continuously on the Board, including a period as Deputy Chancellor, until his retirement in October 1999.

Jim Hagan's interest in Aboriginal studies goes back to the early nineteen-seventies when he was awarded a grant by the Australian Research Council to study Aboriginal employment, especially in New South Wales. His interest in the effect of colonisation on indigenous people is on-going and is not limited to Australia. He has worked with historians in South East Asia and Holland on a comparative study of the labour movements in different countries. He has established, with sponsorship from the trade union movement, the definitive library in Australia on labour history. He also served from 1990 to 1996 as a member of the Advisory Council of Australian Archives (now known as the National Archives of Australia). He was a founder of the University of Wollongong Archives. He is a Fellow of Warwick University and a regular visitor to the prestigious British Centre for the Study of Social History. In 1995, he was made Professor Emeritus of the University of Wollongong in recognition of his contributions to teaching and research at that University. In 1998, Jim Hagan was made a Member of the Order of Australia.

James Seymour Hagan, Australian social historian, commentator on the labour movement in Australia, an advocate on the role of the Aborigine in the history of this country, an advisor to governments on post-secondary education, a founding member of the Board of Governors of Charles Sturt University, and long-serving member of its predecessor at the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, a man of letters and a Member of the Order of Australia is this day admitted to the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*).

Dated this Eleventh Day of May Two Thousand