E

EAST, Sir LEWIS RONALD (RON) (1899–1994), engineer and water commissioner, was born on 17 June 1899 at Auburn, Melbourne, second of three children of Lewis Findlay East, civil servant and later secretary of the Commonwealth Marine Branch, and his wife Annie Eleanor, née Burchett, both Victorian born. Ronald was educated at Ringwood and Tooronga Road State schools before winning a scholarship to Scotch College, Hawthorn, which he attended from 1913 to 1916, in his final year winning a government senior scholarship to the University of Melbourne (BEng, 1922; MEng, 1924).

Interrupting his university studies after one year, East enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on 17 January 1918 for service in World War I. He arrived in England in May as a 2nd class air mechanic and began flying training in October. In January and February 1919 he was attached to No. 4 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, at Cologne, Germany. His AIF service ended in Melbourne in June.

On completing his engineering degree with honours, in April 1922 East was recruited by A. S. Kenyon [q.v.9] to the Victorian State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC). Kenyon, who was later described by East as 'the most able and fast-working man I ever met' (*Aqua* 1965, 163), had wide interests beyond engineering and he had a great influence on East and his career. Working with Kenyon for thirteen years, East gained a broad knowledge of the water supply problems of rural Victoria. On 23 November 1927 at Spring Road Methodist Church, Prahran, he married Scottish-born Constance Lilias Keil, a schoolteacher and graduate of the University of Glasgow (MA, 1920), whom he had met while on leave in Scotland during World War I.

When Kenyon retired in 1935, East replaced him as one of three commissioners of the SRWSC. It was a difficult period, with the commission facing the financial stringency of the Depression, devastating floods in 1934 and 1935, and the appointment in 1936 of a royal commission into water supply in Victoria. In September 1936 the chairman of the SRWSC died suddenly and a fortnight later the other commissioner's health broke down, leaving East as the sole member. In October he was appointed chairman, a position he held until his retirement on 31 January 1965 (believed at the time to be the longest tenure as head of a government department or authority in Australia). An outstanding engineer, inspiring leader, efficient administrator, and astute political operator, he dominated successive water ministers with his forceful personality and unmatched knowledge of Victoria's water issues. He also served as a River Murray commissioner (1936–65), in which role he exerted great influence on water policy throughout south-east Australia. Among many examples, he argued successfully for a large increase in the capacity of the Hume Reservoir. Possibly the most famous photograph used to illustrate Australia's water problems shows East in 1923 literally standing astride the Murray River at Nyah. By the time of his retirement, the Murray had been 'drought-proofed' so that such a photo could no longer be taken.

During East's first decade as chairman, resources for capital works and even maintenance were limited by the continuing effects of the Depression, World War II, and the 'deliberate *immobilisme*' (Paul 1981, 378) of the Dunstan Country Party governments in power in Victoria for almost this entire period. East also believed that the work of the SRWSC was hampered by the control of its workforce by the Victorian Public Service Board (PSB), which made it difficult to recruit and retain talented staff. Despite these impediments, he led the SRWSC in developing and planning a visionary postwar program of water conservation and utilisation projects, notably the enlarged Eildon reservoir, the Robinvale irrigation settlement, and the first diversion of water across the Great Dividing Range to the interior (the Glenelg River to the Wimmera). Much of the design work was carried out by European refugee engineers, whom East, with Dunstan's support, employed in defiance of the PSB.

East played a central role in the Snowy Mountains scheme from its origins in the early 1940s until his retirement. He was a member (1947–49) of the committee of technical experts that devised the preliminary plan for

the scheme, proposing the formation of what became the Snowy Mountains Authority and arguing successfully that the Snowy and Eucumbene rivers should be diverted into both the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers, rather than just the Murrumbidgee. In 1965 the Victorian premier, Sir Henry Bolte [q.v.17], praised East's technical knowledge and stated that 'without Lewis Ronald East, maybe they'd have been only half way through the program that they have now completed' (*Aqua* 1965, 157).

In the late 1930s East revived a project to build a large dam on the Goulburn River, gaining government approval for it in 1946. To circumvent the PSB, he persuaded Victoria's Parliamentary Public Works Committee and then the Commonwealth government that the project should be put out to international tender, with the winning bid coming from the Utah Construction Company. The Eildon Dam was the 'biggest contract ever let by the State of Victoria and the biggest ever entered into in Australia for a single structure' (*Age* 1950, 1). When completed in 1955, Lake Eildon was the largest reservoir in Australia.

Between 1936 and 1965 East was responsible for increasing Victoria's water storage capacity threefold and more than doubling its irrigated areas. Storages initiated and constructed under his direction included Lauriston, Cairn Curran, Tullaroop, Rocklands, Devilbend, and Eppalock. Irrigation developments included the Murray Valley, Robinvale, and Nambrok-Denison soldier settlements; Red Cliffs, Merbein, Mildura, Nyah, and Woorinen subsurface drainage systems; and the enlargement of the Goulburn channel systems. Reticulated water supplies were provided to 114 towns and the number with sewerage rose from ten to fifty-five. Beyond his official role, East took an interest in the present and future needs of Victoria, using his political skills and influence with governments to help secure the establishment of the Town and Country Planning Board, the Soil Conservation Authority, and the office of the Valuer-General. He identified and addressed problems that were hardly recognised at the time—such as salination, pollution, silting, and loss of river flow—but later realised that he had been insufficiently aware of the deleterious effects of draining swamps.

Ronald East had a strong ethic of public service and a belief in the power of engineering to contribute to human welfare. His personal philosophy derived from his Methodist upbringing and the influence of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* (1879). In 1945 he set out his views in a speech called 'The Faith of an Engineer', in which he decried the fact that the benefits of engineering works went largely to 'the fortunate owners of land in the areas which receive the benefit of public expenditure' (East 1945, 184). He believed that engineers should have a broad education and be aware of the social and economic impact of their work.

Described by members of the engineering faculty at the University of Melbourne as 'politely forceful and discreetly outspoken' (East 1971, 305), East had strong and usually well-informed views on many issues. From outside the SRWSC he was often seen as an authoritarian figure, but among the commission's staff he was highly regarded for his nurturing of talent, ability to delegate, and appreciation for work well done. A lifelong teetotaller, he would reply when offered an alcoholic drink, 'Not for me, I'm a Water Commissioner' (East 1971, 294).

In 1951 East had been appointed CBE and in 1966 he was knighted. He was president (1952–53) of the Institution of Engineers, Australia, vice-president (1959–62) of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, and a member (1960–62) of the council of the Institution of Civil Engineers (London). A member (1943–65) of the faculty of engineering at the University of Melbourne, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of engineering in 1981. That year the university established the L. R. East medal for a final year engineering student.

Sir Ronald enjoyed a long and productive retirement. With broad interests from model engineering to history, he campaigned for the fluoridation of water supplies and was active in the Methodist (later Uniting) Church, Rotary International, the Returned and Services League, the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, the Henry George League, and the Old People's Welfare Council. When his cousin, the journalist Wilfred Burchett [q.v.17], was denied an Australian passport, he campaigned on his behalf. He was generous with his help and advice to family, friends,

and strangers. It was often said that no matter what your job, Ron East would tell you how to do it. Until the onset of ill-health at the age of ninety-two, he was a sought-after public speaker, able to speak on anything from gum trees to astronomy. Predeceased by his wife (d. 1982) and survived by his three daughters, he died on 9 March 1994 at West Heidelberg and was cremated.

Age (Melbourne). 'Eildon Contract Goes to U.S. Firm.' 23 August 1950, 1; *Aqua: Official Journal of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, Victoria.* 'Chairman Retires After Record 30-Year Term as Commissioner.' 16, no. 5 (January 1965): 100–105, 'Devilbend Reservoir Opening Ceremony.' 16, no. 7 (March 1965): 147–58, 'Farewell to Mr East.' 16, no. 7 (March 1965): 159–65; East, L.R. 'The Faith of an Engineer: A Discussion of the Land Problem.' *Journal of the Institution of Engineers Australia* 17, no. 9 (1945): 183–90; East, Sir Ronald. *A South Australian Colonist of 1836 and His Descendants.* Melbourne: Gardner Printing and Publishing, 1971; Paul, J. B. 'Dunstan, Sir Albert Arthur (1882–1950).' In *Australian Dictionary of Biography.* Vol. 8, edited by Bede Nairn and Geoffrey Serle, 376–79. Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1981; Personal knowledge *ADB* subject; Powell, J. M. *Watering the Garden State: Water, Land and Community in Victoria, 1834–1988.* Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989; State Library of Victoria. MS 8447, Reports and Papers of Sir Ronald East, 1907–1986; Wigmore, Lionel. *Struggle for the Snowy: The Background of the Snowy Mountains Scheme.* Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1968; Yule, Valerie (née East). Personal communication.

<div align="right">Peter Yule</div>

EATHER, KENNETH WILLIAM (1901–1993), soldier and executive director, was born on 6 June 1901 in Sydney, eldest of three children of New South Wales–born parents William Senior Eather, banker's clerk, and his wife Isabel, née Lees. Eather was educated at Abbotsholme College, Wahroonga. Leaving school at fourteen because of his family's poor financial situation, he became an apprentice dental mechanic.

Having served in the cadet corps at school, Eather was transferred to the Militia in June 1919 and commissioned as a second lieutenant. His career as a dental mechanic flourished and he established a practice in Macquarie Street. Concurrently, his part-time military career progressed and from 1933 to 1938 he commanded Militia infantry battalions. On 25 August 1923 at the

Methodist Church, Lakemba, the brown-eyed, fair-haired, almost 6 feet (180 cm) tall Eather had married Adeline Mabel Lewis (d. 1966), a tailoress.

At the beginning of World War II Eather was asked to form and command the 2/1st Battalion, Australian Imperial Force. He was a forceful leader and strict disciplinarian. Early in January 1941 the battalion spearheaded the Australian attack on the Italian fortress of Bardia, Libya. Notwithstanding heavy opposition the battalion, with Eather in the vanguard at critical moments, punched through the defences, capturing all its objectives and materially assisting in the surrender of Bardia. For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. The 2/1st Battalion was prominently involved in the capture of Tobruk later that month.

On 27 December Eather was promoted to colonel with the temporary rank of brigadier and appointed to command the 25th Brigade, within the 7th Division. The formation returned to Australia in March 1942 and was deployed to Papua in September. With most of the Kokoda Trail lost to the Japanese, the brigade immediately moved forward into the Owen Stanley Range. Eather was told to link up with the remnants of the existing Australian force trying to hold the Japanese at Ioribaiwa Ridge, take command of the entire force, and then drive the Japanese back across the mountains. Finding the Japanese already strongly entrenched, he withdrew to Imita Ridge and from there initiated a properly planned and successful campaign.

Although they faced difficulties of supply, mountainous terrain and, at times, strong enemy opposition, the 25th Brigade slowly advanced, occupying Kokoda on 2 November 1942. A few days later the brigade, together with the 2/1st Battalion, played the key role in destroying the large Japanese force at Oivi-Gorari. After besieging the Japanese garrison at Gona, Eather and the remnants of an exhausted and supply-starved 25th Brigade returned to Australia in December.

Awarded the American army's Distinguished Service Cross in January 1943, Eather led the 25th Brigade in the Ramu and Markham Valley campaign and took great personal satisfaction in capturing Lae before troops of the 9th Australian Division could do

so. For his gallant leadership he was appointed CBE in December. After participating in the invasion of Balikpapan, Borneo, for which he was subsequently (1947) appointed CB, Eather was promoted to temporary major general in July 1945 and appointed to command the 11th Division, based in New Britain. With Japan's surrender he became military governor of the island. Having led the Australian contingent in the victory parade in London in 1946, Eather transferred to the Reserve of Officers on 18 September. He had proved a bold and capable strategist and commander and had exhibited personal courage on numerous occasions, sometimes deliberately exposing himself to fire on the battlefield when he deemed personal example was needed to give confidence to his troops.

Eather became a poultry farmer near Penrith, New South Wales. He joined the Primary Producers' Association of New South Wales, of which he was president (1953–58). In 1959 he became executive director of the Water Research Foundation of Australia, responsible for implementing the board's policies and for general administration. Although the working environment was different from the one he was used to, he established good relationships with colleagues and the business representatives, scientists, public servants, and politicians with whom he came in contact. On 7 June 1968, at the registrar general's office, Sydney, he married Kathleen Henrietta Neill, an executive assistant. Eather retired in 1979. Despite his leadership roles, he never lost the common touch and at weekends delivered groceries from his wife's shop at Lakemba to local residents.

Survived by his wife and a son from his first marriage (a second son had predeceased him), Eather died at Mosman on 9 May 1993 and, after a military funeral at St Andrew's Anglican Cathedral, was cremated. He had been Australia's last living World War II general. His portrait, by Geoffrey Mainwaring, is held by the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

Dexter, David. *The New Guinea Offensives. Australia in the War of 1939–1945*. Vol. VI of Series I (Army). Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1968; Eather, Steve. *Desert Sands, Jungle Lands: A Biography of Major General Ken Eather*. Crows Nest, New South Wales: Allen and Unwin, 2003; Long, Gavin. *The Final Campaigns. Australia in the War of 1939–1945*. Vol. VII of Series I (Army). Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1963; Long, Gavin. *To Benghazi. Australia in the War of 1939– 1945*. Vol. I of Series I (Army). Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1961; Australian War Memorial. 'NX3 / Major General Kenneth William Eather, CB, CBE, DSO.' Accessed 24 October 2013. www. awm.gov.au/units/people_8143.asp. Copy held on *ADB* file; McCarthy, Dudley. *South-West Pacific Area – First Year: Kokoda to Wau. Australia in the War of 1939–1945*. Vol. V of Series I (Army). Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1962; National Archives of Australia. B883, NX3; *Sydney Morning Herald*. 'Second A.I.F. Officers.' 9 November 1939, 10, 'Honours for A.I.F. Men.' 2 April 1941, 13, 'Army Promotions.' 1 August 1941, 6, 'Four New A.I.F. Brigadiers.' 14 February 1942, 13, 'High Officers Decorated.' 11 January 1943, 4, 'World War II General Dies.' 10 May 1993, 7.

STEVE EATHER

EATON, BRIAN ALEXANDER (1916–1992), air force officer, was born on 15 December 1916 at Launceston, Tasmania, eldest child of Sydney Alexander Eaton, importers' agent, and his wife Hilda, née Mason. The family moved to Camberwell, Victoria. Brian was educated at Carey Baptist Grammar School, Kew, and Matriculation College, Melbourne. Although of small stature, he played cricket and football, and captained the school tennis team and the Eastern Suburbs Tennis Club. For four years he was a scout leader. He had intended to study medicine but after his father's death in a car accident that left the family struggling financially, he joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). Appointed to a cadetship at Point Cook on 20 January 1936, he graduated as a pilot and was commissioned on 1 January 1937. His initial training aircraft included the World War I types, the Avro Cadet and Wapiti, before he moved on to the Demon and Bulldog.

Eaton's early years in the RAAF involved flying and flying instructional duties. On 1 September 1939 he was promoted to flight lieutenant and a year later to squadron leader. Posted to Darwin as a fighter controller in March 1942, he was present during a number of Japanese attacks on the city.

In January 1943 Eaton joined No. 3 Squadron, RAAF, in the Middle East and assumed command in April. His record of service in operations over North Africa, Malta,

Sicily, Italy, and Yugoslavia from 1943 to 1945 was to be exceptional. In his first weeks in action he was forced down three times in North Africa, on one occasion landing in the middle of a tank battle and being rescued by New Zealand soldiers. Near Termoli, Italy, in October he led an attack that disrupted a strong enemy ground force. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his leadership, courage, and tenacity. Promoted to wing commander in December, he was posted to No. 1 Mobile Operations Room Unit, Italy, in February 1944. Two months later he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) in recognition of his effectiveness in inflicting damage on the enemy during many sorties and excellence as a leader and commander.

Elevated to acting group captain aged twenty-eight, Eaton took command of the Royal Air Force's (RAF) No. 239 Wing in August 1944. He led a strike in December against the Bjelovar barracks, Yugoslavia, for which he received a Bar to his DSO. His other decorations were the American Silver Star and Yugoslavia's Cross of Valour. Hostilities in Europe ceased in May 1945. At the conclusion of over two years of operational service without a break, in very trying conditions, he was exhausted and, also suffering from diphtheria, he underwent a lengthy convalescence in hospital in England. His brother, Roger, had been killed in action in 1943 while serving with the RAAF.

From September 1945 Eaton was in Britain attached to the RAF, during which time he completed the RAF staff course and other training. He also flew the Meteor, becoming one of the first Australians to pilot a jet aircraft. Between 1947 and 1949 he served in Japan in command of the RAAF's No. 81 fighter wing; as officer-in-charge, British Command Air Headquarters; and as RAAF component commander, British Commonwealth Occupation Force. Following a staff posting in Melbourne, he commanded (1951–54) the RAAF's No. 78 Fighter Wing, Malta.

On 10 May 1952 at the Presbyterian Church, Toorak, Melbourne, Eaton had married Josephine Rumbles. He was director of operations, Melbourne (1955–57); commander, RAAF Base, Williamtown, New South Wales (1957–59); and director overseeing joint staff plans, Canberra (1959–60). After completing the 1961 Imperial Defence College course in London, he held important staff and command appointments: director-general of operational requirements, Canberra (1962–66); deputy chief of the Air Staff (1966–67); air officer commanding, No. 224 Group, Far East Air Force (FEAF), Singapore (1967–68); and chief of staff, headquarters, FEAF (1968–69). Having been promoted to air commodore on 1 January 1963, he rose to air vice marshal on 1 January 1968. He was air member for personnel, Canberra (1969–72); and air officer commanding, Operational Command, Penrith, New South Wales (1973). Appointed CBE (1959) and CB (1969), he was universally liked and respected as a commander. Eaton was interested in everything and always keen to try new things. Retiring from the RAAF on 14 December 1973, he became an executive with Rolls-Royce Australia Ltd. In 1985 he suffered a stroke. Survived by his wife, son, and two daughters, he died on 17 October 1992 in Woden Valley Hospital, Canberra, and was buried in Gungahlin cemetery. A former chief of the air staff who knew him well commented, 'He was universally liked and respected as a commander' (Newham 2012). In 1996 his widow funded the Air Vice-Marshal B. A. Eaton 'Airman of the Year' award to recognise 'Significant contribution to both the Service and the community' by airmen and airwomen ranked corporal or below.

Herald (Melbourne). 'The Boss Packs It In.' 12 January 1974, 25; National Archives of Australia. A12372, R/344/P. A471, 27813; Newham, Air Marshal J. W. Personal communication; Stephens, Alan. *Going Solo: The Royal Australian Air Force 1946–1971*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995, *The Royal Australian Air Force: A History.* Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2006.

P. J. Scully

EBSARY, RICHARD VIVIAN (VIV) (1905–1992), inventor, biomedical engineer, and philanthropist, was born on 12 May 1905 at Narrogin, Western Australia, second child and only son of South Australian–born John Richard Ebsary, commission agent and later orchardist, and his Victorian-born wife Clara Antoinette, née Nenke. His mother worked as a matron of the Rest Home for the Aged Blind at Victoria Park, Perth. Viv—who seems to

have preferred to reverse his given names—left school at thirteen and became a self-trained fitter and turner. Arriving in Sydney in 1927, he established a factory in the city centre, before moving it to Darlinghurst. He was involved in establishing the Balmain Police Boys' Club sailing crew, and was a member of Bondi Surf Life-Saving Club. In the 1930s he successfully sailed the 18-footers *Kiwi* and *Miranda* in races. On 4 May 1938 he married Queensland-born Jessie Eleanor King, a secondary school teacher, in an Anglican service at the Church of St George, Maleny.

Ebsary's company—named V. R. Ebsary & Co. from 1932—expanded in the 1930s into specialised production and toolmaking. In World War II it was declared a protected industry and participated in a number of important projects, including manufacturing Sten guns and wing fixtures for Mosquito aircraft and creating a mechanism to detonate explosives in mid-air. It also constructed specialised naval equipment and repaired pumps in Allied warships.

A conversation with Andrew Distin Morgan, an anaesthetist at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, led to Ebsary entering the field of biomedical engineering. Following the war, it was difficult to acquire imported specialised medical apparatus, and Morgan required a new portable anaesthetic machine. This appliance became the first medical device that Ebsary produced. When Morgan requested a larger anaesthetic machine in 1949, Ebsary manufactured one that was well in advance of the technology of the period.

Since 1947 Ebsary's company, which specialised in the production of a range of different pumps for industry, had been called Ebs-Ray Pumps Pty Ltd, as that was simpler to spell and pronounce. In the mid-1950s the medical practitioner Moss Cass and the physicist Alan Harper [q.v.] asked Ebsary to provide a pump to circulate cooled water in a new hypothermia machine for St Vincent's Hospital. Despite a lack of funding for the undertaking, he complied, and his business devised and constructed 'the first complete hypothermia machine built in Australia' (O'Brien 2005, 17). The device was used for brief circulatory arrest to allow correction of atrial septal defects. At the request of Douglas Cohen, a cardiac surgeon, and Victor Hercus, an anaesthetist, Ebsary was

the perfusionist, running it during operations at the children's hospital, and at Royal North Shore Hospital, where hypothermia was used by the neurosurgeon John Grant. Between operations he prepared it for its next use, and conveyed it around the city as needed in his firm's Volkswagen Kombi van.

On one occasion Ebsary attended an operation during which it was found that the patient, a child, had a ventricular septal defect that could not be mended during the approximately ten minutes allowed by hypothermia. Learning that cardiopulmonary bypass—then not possible in Australia—was required, he and his company created a heart-lung machine, which he gave to the children's hospital in 1959. During the following decade, numerous of these machines were delivered to cardiac units in Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. He acted as perfusionist, voluntarily spending each Thursday at the children's hospital.

During the 1961 and 1962 polio epidemic, Ebsary designed and produced a respiratory intensive care unit with articulated retractable equipment at Prince Henry Hospital. With Bruce Johnston and Hercus, he also devised and fabricated a hyperbaric unit for Prince Henry Hospital, which began use in 1971; it was moved to Prince of Wales Hospital in 1998. Other equipment constructed by Ebsary included implants and other apparatus for correcting spinal deformity, and chair-lift appliances to enable patients in wheelchairs to enter and exit vehicles.

Ebsary's contributions to medical technology were enabled by the ongoing success of Ebsray Pumps. His ingenuity led to three patents for his main engineering business, while his 'inventive mind, quality of workmanship and generosity' made a major 'contribution to cardiac surgery in Australia' (O'Brien 2005, 20). In 1984 the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children named its cardiac ward for him, and in 1989 he was appointed AM.

Among Ebsary's leisure pastimes were sailing and swimming. As a swimming coach he helped his squad to reach Australian and international championship standards; one of those to do so was his youngest son, William (Bill). A passionate fisherman, he had been encouraged in his medical engineering activities by the paediatric surgeon A. C.

'Toby' Bowring, his fishing associate and friend. He also 'swam daily, including through most of the winter for his entire life', and 'walked regularly' for fitness (O'Brien 2005, 20). His family recalled him as 'a modest man' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1993, 4), who was 'practical and intuitive' (UQ 2014). He died on 31 December 1992 at Avalon and, after a funeral at St Mark's Anglican Church, was cremated; his wife and three sons survived him.

O'Brien, H. D. 'Vivian Richard Ebsary, A.M. Biomedical Engineer, Inventor, Philanthropist.' *Anaesthesia and Intensive Care* 33, no. 3 Supplement (2005): 16–20; *Sydney Morning Herald*. 'An Unsung Hero of Medical Technology.' 5 January 1993, 4; University of Queensland. 'John, a Noun Is a Name of a Place or a Thing.' 1 January 2014. Accessed 30 April 2019. alumni.uq.edu.au/article/2013/11/john-noun-name-place-or-thing. Copy held on *ADB* file.

BARRY BAKER

EDMONDS, FREDERICK JOHN LLOYD (1906–1994), teacher, public servant, and political activist, was born on 3 July 1906 in London, second of three children of English-born Frederick John Edmonds, printer's compositor, and his Welsh-born wife Mary (Mollie), née Lloyd. Migrating to Australia in 1911, the family settled in Melbourne where his father, being an admirer of Tom Mann [q.v.10], joined the Victorian Socialist Party and later established the Ruskin Press. His mother (d. 1933) was a member of the VSP's Women's League and was elected to the party executive in 1914. Lloyd remembered handing out anti-conscription leaflets during World War I and reciting the socialist catechism at the Socialist Sunday School at Sandringham, where the family moved in 1917.

Completing his education at Melbourne High School (1924–25), Edmonds became a probationary junior teacher at Black Rock State School in 1926. He qualified for a studentship at the Melbourne Teachers' College the next year, subsequently teaching under bond at one-teacher schools at Tonimbuk (from 1928) and Cocoroc South (from 1934). During a leave of absence in 1931, he returned to Melbourne and, with his brother Phillip, formed the Teachers' Industrial Union. As secretary of the Sandringham branch of the Australian Labor Party, he was a delegate to the 1931 State conference, where

he saw, to his dismay, the party endorse the deflationary Premiers' Plan. At the same time, he was studying philosophy at the University of Melbourne (BA, 1934). There he was secretary of the Labor Club, the socialist and internationalist stance of which he found more attractive than the demoralised and isolationist ALP. In 1935 he was expelled from the party for supporting Maurice Blackburn's [q.v.7] advocacy of sanctions against Mussolini's Italy for its invasion of Abyssinia.

Despondent about the left's prospects in Australia, Edmonds travelled to England in July 1936, intending to study at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Although he did not formally enrol, he likely attended lectures as an occasional student. He became deeply committed to the anti-fascist cause in the Spanish Civil War and, encouraged by the LSE Professor Harold Laski, he found his way via the Pyrenees to Spain. There he joined a transport regiment of the International Brigades in mid-1937. Although not an infantryman, he saw action as he ferried supplies to the front line and, along the way, encountered writers such as Ernest Hemingway. He often referred to his role in the war as a mere 'spear carrier' (Inglis 1994, 5), but it inspired his political commitment to communism, which was 'born of a deep idealism, tempered by the dogged work of soldiering but steeled by the conviction that he and his "premature anti-fascist" comrades were on the side of history' (Love 1994, 2). This conviction survived both the messy collapse of the Republican cause and his own harrowing escape from Spain.

Returning to Australia in March 1939, Edmonds resumed teaching at Alexandra State School (1940–42). On 20 April 1940 he married South Australian–born Jean Campbell Good, a hairdresser, at Mentone Register Office. During World War II he served part time in the 16th Battalion (1943) and 18th Battalion (1943–45) of the Volunteer Defence Corps and became an industrial welfare officer in the Commonwealth Department of Labour and National Service. Remaining with the department until his retirement in 1971, he was active in the Federated Clerks' Union of Australia and organised to bring white-collar workers into the union movement. As a communist, he campaigned energetically to defeat the Menzies [q.v.15] government's

Communist Party Dissolution Act (1950) and worked behind the scenes to support John Cain [q.v.13] senior in his factional fight with the 'groupers' in the Victorian Labor Party. Having first attracted the attention of the Commonwealth Investigation Branch when he applied for a passport in 1936, he was subject to surveillance by security agencies for several decades.

Steady and purposeful in style, Edmonds was an indefatigable activist across a remarkable range of progressive causes, from the Victorian National Parks Association to his local Meals on Wheels service. He was active in the Essendon branch of the Communist Party of Australia, was a regular delegate to state conferences, and gave long service to the distribution of the CPA's *Tribune* newspaper. For more than a decade he was secretary of the Melbourne Branch of the Labour History Society as well as editor of its newsletter, *Recorder*.

In 1985 a collection of Edmonds's *Letters from Spain* was published, edited by Amirah Inglis. When Edmonds unveiled the Spanish Civil War Memorial in Canberra in 1993, the Spanish ambassador was delighted to meet an Australian who had fought on the same side as his parents. The ceremony also allowed him to lay to rest the ghosts of screaming Stuka dive bombers that had haunted him since the 1930s. Survived by his wife and their son and daughter, he died on 18 September 1994 at Parkville, Melbourne, and was cremated. The memorial celebration of his life that filled the Council Chamber of the Melbourne Trades Hall on 16 October 1994 paid tribute to a modest, courageous, courteous, and generous-spirited man.

Aarons, Laurie. 'Ardent Communist Joined Freedom Fighters in Spain.' *Australian*, 6 October 1994, 15; Edmonds, Lloyd. *Letters from Spain*. Edited by Amirah Inglis. Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1985; Inglis, Amirah. *Australians in the Spanish Civil War*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987, 'Lloyd Edmonds.' *Labour History* 67 (November 1994): 4–5; Love, Peter. 'Lloyd Edmonds 3 July 1906 – 18 September 1994.' *Labour History* 67 (November 1994): 1–3; National Archives of Australia. A6119, 1767, 1768, 2974, 3268; National Archives of Australia. B884, V371467; Personal knowledge of *ADB* subject.

PETER LOVE

EGAN, CLYDE JOSEINA (1917–1993), army officer, was born on 13 August 1917 at Armidale, New South Wales, the fifth child of Irish-born Martin Egan, labourer, and his New South Wales–born wife Sarah, née McLaren. Clyde attended Stonehenge Public School until 1930. Standing 5 feet 8 inches (173 cm) tall, he worked as a farm hand and served with the Citizen Military Forces (CMF) as a corporal in the 12th Light Horse Regiment. On 11 July 1940 he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force. Although his superiors found him reserved and inclined to be nervous, he completed officer training at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, Australian Capital Territory. Commissioned as a lieutenant in December 1941, he embarked for service in New Guinea on 16 March 1943. There he joined the 24th Battalion and saw service at Wau, Lae, and Salamaua; the latter two while temporarily attached to the 58th/59th Battalion.

After spending January 1944 in hospital with malaria, Egan rejoined the 24th Battalion. From Saidor, between 10 and 24 June 1944, he led a patrol deep into the rugged Finisterre Range to clear the area of enemy troops who had been responsible for murdering New Guineans. He was later awarded the Military Cross for displaying 'outstanding ability and exceptional courage in his many encounters with the enemy' while in New Guinea. Specifically, he was commended for leading his platoon 'with gallantry, dash and determination in pursuit of the enemy' at Salamaua in August–September 1943; and for his 'determination, initiative and outstanding leadership' as a patrol leader in June 1944, when he cleared the Finisterre Ranges 'of enemy troops who had been responsible for the murdering of natives' (NAA B2458). Having returned to Australia in August 1944, on 29 December Egan departed for Bougainville, where, after suffering acute appendicitis, he resumed duty with the 24th Battalion for its next stage of operations. On 20 May 1945, following an intensive aerial bombardment, the battalion, supported by artillery, mortars, machine-guns, and tanks, began a successful attack along the Buin Road. It was during this action that Egan, leading his patrol, captured the Japanese headquarters at the position that was later named Egan's Ridge. Displaying the same

'courage and determination', and 'aggressive and skilful leadership' (NAA B2458) that he had shown in 1943–44, Egan was awarded a Bar to his Military Cross.

He was promoted to captain on 23 July, and transferred to Rabaul, where he joined the 55th/53rd Battalion in garrison duties. Admitted to hospital with malaria in November, he received treatment until he was placed on the Retired List on 7 March 1946.

On 11 May 1946 at St Patrick's Catholic Church, Glen Innes, he married Norma Joan Sullings, a nurse. While working as a superintendent with the Shell Co. of Australia Ltd, he returned to the CMF on 1 November 1953 as officer commanding the 34th Company, Royal Australian Army Service Corps, based at Glen Innes. He was promoted to temporary major in October 1954 and retired from the army on 31 August 1964. Active in the local community, he was patron of the Glen Innes Vietnam Legion Veterans Association, and was made a life member (May 1987) of the Glen Innes and District Services Club. Survived by his wife and three sons, Egan died on 10 August 1993 at Glen Innes District Hospital and was buried in the Catholic cemetery, Glen Innes.

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Rhys Crawley

EINFELD, SYDNEY DAVID (SYD) (1909–1995), Jewish community leader and politician, was born on 17 June 1909 at Darlinghurst, Sydney, fifth of seven children of Austrian-born parents Marcus Einfeld, chazan (synagogue cantor), and his wife Deborah, née Gabel. Marcus had left Borough New Synagogue, London, to become chazan at the Great Synagogue in Sydney, arriving less than a month before Sydney's birth. Sydney was named after the family's new city. The Einfelds were generous towards community members and encouraged their children to have

sympathy for the oppressed and to be active in pursuing social justice. Sydney attended Bourke Street Public, Paddington Public, and Fort Street Boys' High schools; at Fort Street he was a member of the first XV rugby team. After qualifying for matriculation he began work in sales. In 1930 he moved to Brisbane, where he met Sydney-born Sadie Rosabel (Billie) Appleboom, a saleswoman. Returning to Sydney, they married on 2 June 1934 at the Great Synagogue, and he became manager of a merchandise company. Throughout their married life the couple would often work together in community organisations.

Einfeld was a founder member and leader of several Jewish community groups, beginning with the Sydney Young Men's Hebrew Association in 1929. In 1945 he became a foundation member of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies. Two years later he was appointed chairman of the board's migrant reception committee. He often met refugees as they disembarked and helped them settle. In 1952 he became president of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society (AJWS) in Sydney; he would oversee its services for the next twenty-seven years. From 1947 to 1957 he was also an adjudicator for the City of Sydney Eisteddfod.

From the late 1940s, Einfeld's work developed a national and international focus. He repeatedly visited Canberra to lobby the Federal government on issues affecting Jewish refugees, such as liberalising immigration policy, and strongly supported Zionism. In 1952 he commenced the first of four terms as president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. He attended the 1954 meeting of the international Claims Conference to press for reparations to Holocaust survivors in Australia, and made regular international trips to organise Jewish migration to Australia. By the 1960s his reputation for leadership led to his appointment to a number of national and worldwide organisations, including the Australian Council for International Development and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies. He received the Maurice Ashkanasy [q.v.13] award for Australian Jew of the Year in 1969.

Einfeld also entered parliamentary politics in the 1960s. He had joined the Australian Labor Party in 1938, but had restricted his involvement to local branch

and electorate activity; in 1943 he had been campaign director for Jessie Street [q.v.16]. In 1961 he won the Federal seat of Phillip but lost it at the following election. Although disillusioned by his experience in the House of Representatives, in November 1965 he stood successfully for Bondi (Waverley from 1971) at a by-election for the New South Wales Legislative Assembly caused by Abe Landa's [q.v.18] resignation.

When Pat Hills [q.v.] was promoted to the Opposition leadership in July 1968, Einfeld moved into the vacant deputy leadership position. He was an effective critic of the government and one of Labor's best campaigners at the 1971 State election. Nonetheless, Hills and Einfeld lacked the youthful image that Labor now desired in its leaders and they were narrowly defeated for the leadership positions by Neville Wran and Jack Ferguson [q.v.14] in 1973.

After Labor's 1976 election victory, Einfeld became New South Wales's second minister for consumer affairs, and also held the cooperative societies portfolio. Having had the shadow responsibility for consumer affairs, as minister he embarked on an enthusiastic program of reform. Against opposition from industry groups, he amended the Prices Regulation Act 1948 to increase the government's power over the price of essentials such as bread and petrol. Amendments to the Consumer Protection Act 1969, between 1977 and 1981, introduced measures such as expiry dates on perishable goods. The Contracts Review Act 1980 gave courts wider powers to deal with unjust consumer contracts. He oversaw the expansion of the consumer affairs ministry into a fully fledged department, initiated Prices Commission inquiries into a range of industries, introduced a Rental Bond Board to give tenants greater protection, and increased the profile of the existing Consumer Claims Tribunal. This activity made him the most recognised minister in the government after the premier, being dubbed 'the housewives' friend' (Shanahan 2006, 239).

Following the 1978 election, housing was added to Einfeld's ministerial responsibilities, creating a workload which finally forced him to resign the presidency of the AJWS in 1979. In 1980 he lost the housing and cooperative societies portfolios but retained consumer affairs until his retirement in 1981. Appointed

AO in 1982, he also received the Queen's silver jubilee medal in 1977. He remained active in public affairs throughout the 1980s, including as a commentator on consumer affairs on radio station 2GB, as deputy chairman of the Advertising Standards Council, as chairman of the National Prices Network, and as director of the Australian Caption Centre. He also sat on the boards of Air New South Wales and Mirvac Funds Ltd.

An accomplished debater in his youth, Einfeld made an impression as an erudite and often impassioned political orator. His warmth, genuine concern for people, and dedication to practical action were more important, however, in securing the high standing he achieved within parliament and among the public. The Federal government's Syd Einfeld Active Consumer award and the Jewish National Fund's Sydney D. Einfeld memorial award were established in recognition of his work, and a B'nai B'rith unit named after him. Shortly after Einfeld's retirement, Rabbi Raymond Apple stated that the Sydney Jewish community owed 'more to him than it does to any other man' (Andgel 1988, 208). He died on 16 June 1995 at Woollahra, Sydney, and, following a funeral at the Great Synagogue, was buried in the Jewish cemetery, Rookwood. His wife and their son and daughter survived him. Marcus, his son, was a Federal court judge and human rights commissioner. Syd Einfeld Drive at Bondi Junction, and the Syd and Billie Einfeld Forest in Israel, commemorate him.

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Rodney Smith

ELLIOTT, SUMNER LOCKE (1917–1991), writer and playwright, was born on 17 October 1917 at Kogarah, Sydney, only child of Victorian-born Henry Logan Elliott, an accountant then serving with the Australian Imperial Force, and his Queensland-born wife Helena Sumner [q.v.10], née Locke, a writer. Orphaned by Helena's death the day after his birth, and effectively deserted by Logan, who had been posted overseas in February, he was taken in by the eldest of his mother's six surviving sisters, Lilian Locke Burns [q.v.10], and her husband George, Labor activists who were themselves childless. Sumner's earliest years were spent in their austere but loving household in southern Sydney, along with two other Locke aunts, Agnes, a Christian Science practitioner, and Blanche, an actress. His mother was always referred to as 'little dear'.

Initially Logan, Lilian, and a family friend, Ernest Ewart, were to be Elliott's custodians; but London-based aunt Jessie Locke moved quickly to obtain a deed of guardianship from Logan to replace him as a co-guardian, with Blanche as her Sydney stand-in. Blanche proved unsatisfactory and in 1921 Jessie returned home with the intention of taking custody of the child. Elliott's status as an only child and a Christian Science upbringing probably helped him through the ensuing tug-of-war. Given a toy theatre, he began to create plays. But his world was increasingly fractured by the shared custody arrangement (from which Ewart had withdrawn), and his schooling was drastically affected. Home taught by Lilian at first due to Jessie's objection to local schooling, he briefly attended preparatory schools in the eastern suburbs, a Jessie initiative against which he rebelled in mid-1927. This led to a custody case launched by Jessie, and a compromise, whereby he reluctantly became a boarder at Cranbrook School, completing primary school there as a day boy in 1929 following Jessie's death. Back with the Burnses, from 1931 living at Cremorne, he passed the Intermediate certificate at Neutral Bay High (second attempt, 1933).

Self-contained, sharp-witted, and amusing, Elliott seemed set for a career in theatre. Even as a schoolboy, he was writing and producing plays, attending acting and elocution classes, and taking parts in radio with the George Edwards [q.v.8] Players. In 1934, having taken classes in journalism and typing to improve his chances of employment, he gained a foothold with J. C. Williamson [q.v.6] Ltd. By then his plays were being produced around town; he had helped form a theatre company; and he had introduced himself to the *grande dame* of Sydney theatre, (Dame) Doris Fitton [q.v.17], who took to him. Probably by then he also realised he was gay (Clarke 1996, 96).

In the bohemian world of Sydney theatre in the 1930s and 1940s, the lively and talented young Elliott was a rare phenomenon, with a diversity of skills garnered in radio and theatre and what he later felt was brashness and an undue self-confidence. He earned a good living churning out radio serials for Edwards by day, and filled a variety of roles at Fitton's Independent Theatre outside working hours. Between 1937 and October 1948 the Independent staged seven of his plays, beginning with *The Cow Jumped over the Moon* and concluding with the now classic near-documentary *Rusty Bugles*, set in a World War II army supply camp at Mataranka in the Northern Territory, where the playwright served in 1944, and briefly banned for allegedly offensive language when first performed in October 1948. Regrettably, he never saw the play staged, having left for the United States of America two months earlier, but (with minor modification of objectionable words) it played to enthusiastic audiences nationwide over the next two years.

Elliott had begun full-time duty in the Citizen Military Forces on 5 January 1942. He served in ordnance depots in New South Wales (1942–43) and the Northern Territory (1944), then in Sydney with the 1st Australian Broadcasting Control Unit. When discharged from the CMF on 4 April 1946, he was a staff sergeant in the 1st Australian Entertainment Unit. During his service, he had come to appreciate ordinary Australians for the first time; the war showed a more sexually relaxed world was possible. But he found postwar theatre in Australia dull and, like his mother before him, he looked to the United States. When the breakthrough came it was in the new medium of television, which needed people with his skills. Reaching New York in 1949, he became a leading scriptwriter: between 1949 and 1962, he wrote or adapted some fifty plays for mainstream television. In 1955 he took out American citizenship.

By the early 1960s, when writing for live television drama was more or less over, Elliott realised that unless he moved to California and did screen work, it would be hard to go on working as a scriptwriter. He decided instead to write a novel. Of the ten novels published during his lifetime, five revisit his Australian experiences. The first, *Careful He Might Hear You* (1963), about his early years, won the Miles Franklin [q.v.8] prize that year with a successful film version produced by Jill Robb in 1983. *Water Under the Bridge* (1977), with its memorable portrayal of 1930s Sydney and rich characterisations, especially of Aunt Shasta (based on Blanche Locke), was made into a mini-series for television in 1980. Well regarded also are *Eden's Lost* (1970), which opens up a confused period in a young man's life, and *Waiting for Childhood* (1987), drawing on the history of his mother's family. *Fairyland* (1990), his last novel, is a significant 'coming out' narrative; he had not previously declared his homosexuality publicly. *Radio Days* (posthumous, 1993) also has documentary value. By contrast, Elliott's American novels have not been highly valued and now seem dated and slight.

Having come to feel distanced from Australia, Elliott nevertheless maintained an affection for his own country. Except for a brief trip in 1950, he did not return until 1974 when he attended the Adelaide Festival of Arts. In 1977 he received the Patrick White [q.v.18] literary award; numerous interviews indicate he was increasingly appreciated as an outstanding expatriate writer. Through his writing he attained a balance between past and present, and in later years, the happiness he always yearned for with his partner, Whitfield Cook. Believing in life's immensity and infinitude, he faced ill-health and death bravely. He died of cancer on 24 June 1991 in New York.

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JILL ROE*

EMSLIE, ALEXANDER RONALD (1916–1993), air force officer, was born on 4 September 1916 at Wangaratta, Victoria, younger son of Arthur Alan Emslie, farmer, and his wife Blanche, née Stephenson. Alexander attended Wangaratta South and Wangaratta Technical schools, but after his father died in 1928 he left school to manage the family farm. To finish his schooling he undertook night classes in electrical wiring and when his elder brother took over the farm, he applied to join the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) as a pilot. Although unsuccessful, on 8 June 1936, after reapplying to the RAAF for a radio apprenticeship, he was accepted and enlisted.

Following wireless operator and observer training at Laverton, Victoria, Emslie graduated in December 1937 as an observer with the rank of corporal and was posted to No. 22 Squadron at RAAF Richmond, New South Wales. As war clouds gathered, he participated in reconnaissance flights off the east coast of Australia to report any German shipping movements. After much persistence, he was accepted for pilot training the day after World War II was declared. A gifted pilot, he graduated top of his course in March 1940 with special distinction. He was commissioned that month. On 22 March 1941 at Holy Trinity Church of England, Wangaratta, Victoria, he married Louisa Jane Finnis. Postings to Cootamundra and Richmond, New South Wales, and Laverton, Victoria, were followed by navigator teaching duties at Nhill and Ballarat, Victoria. Instructing was not to his liking and he pressed for an operational tour. In March 1944, now a squadron leader, he commenced conversion to Catalina maritime patrol aircraft and, in August, was posted to No. 20 Squadron, Cairns, Queensland. His duties were to bomb enemy targets and lay mines in the waters to the north of Australia as far as the coast of China.

Emslie commanded No. 20 Squadron from 19 March to 14 October 1945. During his time with the unit he flew thirty operational missions. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross having 'displayed outstanding courage, keenness and determination' and an 'aggressive spirit' (NAA, A12372). No Catalinas or personnel were lost while the squadron was under his command. After the war he remained in the RAAF.

Promoted to wing commander on 1 July 1951, he was posted in August 1953 to command No. 1 Squadron at Tengah, Singapore, flying Lincoln bombers. The squadron's Lincolns attacked the jungle camps and suspected hideouts of communist insurgents during the Malayan Emergency. For his 'exceptional zeal as a commander and his personal leadership' (NAA, A12372), he was awarded a Bar to his DFC. After several months of combat flying in the tropics he succumbed to high blood pressure and associated heart disease, and was hospitalised in Melbourne in June 1954. He was given only a few years to live. His RAAF appointment was terminated on medical grounds on 16 March 1955, ending a distinguished career. Given his all-round ability, he would almost certainly have reached higher rank.

Although he never worked again, Emslie lived for almost another thirty-nine years, having benefited from new heart drugs at the Baker Medical Research Institute in Melbourne. He was quiet and earnest, 5 feet 7 inches (170 cm) tall, with a ruddy complexion and brown eyes. Residing at North Balwyn, he became involved in the administration of local sporting teams and joined the Balwyn Bowling Club, eventually playing at pennant level. He was also a life governor of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind. Survived by his wife, a son, and a daughter, he died on 14 November 1993 at Kew and was cremated.

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Mark Lax

ERI, Sir VINCENT SEREI (1936–1993), public servant, author, diplomat, and governor-general, was born on 12 September 1936 at Moveave village, Gulf Province, Territory of Papua, second of three children of Eri Haiveta, deacon of the London Missionary Society, and his wife Morasuru Lafe. Both parents died when Vincent was young,

his father during World War II after falling ill when carrying supplies for Australian soldiers on the Bulldog Track, Owen Stanley Range. An aunt and uncle cared for the children and Eri's early education was in Catholic mission schools at Terapo and Yule Island. At fifteen he enrolled at the selective Sogeri Education Centre, and after graduation remained there to complete a teacher-training course. Between 1956 and 1962 he taught at Gulf Province village schools. He married Margaret Karulaka, a nurse, at the Catholic Church, Orokolo, Gulf Province, in 1959.

To prepare the Territory of Papua and New Guinea for independence, the Australian administration sought promising local officers for quick advancement. Eri's leadership qualities and ambition were soon recognised. In 1962 he was promoted to acting district inspector of schools, and in 1965 joined the staff of the Port Moresby Teachers College. He helped form, and became president of, the short-lived Local Teachers Association. Granted leave to study, he was among the first to graduate from the University of Papua New Guinea (BA, 1970). As a requirement of his creative literature studies, he wrote a story about 'the white man's justice and the native, magic and superstition and its hold on my people' (Lloyd 1970, 24). His lecturer, Ulli Beier, had it published in 1970 under the title *The Crocodile*, bringing instant and lasting fame for Eri, as the first Papua New Guinean to produce a novel. Touring Australia to promote the book, he criticised the 'condescending manner' (*Australian* 1972, 9) of many white Australians towards his people, and was puzzled by a seeming apathy about how the large Australian investment in his country was being spent.

With his skills in high demand, Eri moved from one task to another as the need arose. From 1970 he was, in succession, a member of the committee of inquiry into higher education in Papua New Guinea, acting superintendent of primary education (1970), acting first assistant director of education (1972), and director of the Department of Information and Extension Services (1973). In 1974 he was appointed Papua New Guinea's first consul-general in Sydney, and then became high commissioner (1976–79) in Canberra. He returned to Papua

New Guinea in December 1979 when he assumed office as secretary of the Department of Defence. In 1981 he was appointed CMG.

Eri resigned from the public service in 1982 to pursue business interests. He became chairman (1984–90) of the finance committee of the University of Papua New Guinea. Increasingly involved in politics, in 1986 he was elected president of the People's Action Party, newly formed by the parliamentarian Ted Diro. In January 1990, to further the influence of his party, Diro, now deputy prime minister, broke ranks with government parties and, with Opposition support, had Eri appointed governor-general. Eri was knighted the following month. In September the following year a Leadership Tribunal found Diro guilty of eighty-one charges of corruption, but Eri precipitated a 'mini constitutional crisis' (Saffu 1998, 505) by refusing to dismiss him, as he was obliged to do under the constitution. Eri's action was prompted by a friendship with his fellow Papuan, and their close political allegiance. Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu initiated procedures to dismiss Eri but he resigned on 1 October before any action was taken; Diro resigned the same day.

At the 1992 general election, Sir Serei stood unsuccessfully for the parliamentary seat of Moresby North West Open. He died of a heart attack on 25 May the next year at his home at Hohola, Port Moresby; his wife and their four sons and two daughters survived him. After a requiem mass at Hohola Sacred Heart Church, at which Diro read the eulogy, Eri's casket was flown to Moveave for burial the same day. Described as embodying a mixture of 'anger and humour, of diffidence and strength' (Lloyd 1970, 24), he is remembered both for his achievements as a pioneer public servant, and for a failure to follow his constitutional obligations as governor-general in 1991. *The Crocodile* endures as an icon of Papua New Guinea literature and as an inspiration for other writers. In 2010 the annual national literary prize was named to honour the novel.

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Eric Johns

ESDAILE, JAMES CLAUDE (1899–1993), naval officer and farmer, was born on 3 October 1899 at Bendigo, Victoria, youngest son of Scottish-born parents Thomas Esdaile, science lecturer and later mining engineer, and his wife Martha, née Durie. Thomas's employment involved the family in several moves; James completed his schooling at Boulder Central School, Western Australia. In 1913 he joined the Royal Australian Naval College (RANC) as part of its inaugural entry of cadet midshipmen. Initially at Osborne House, Geelong, Victoria, the college was relocated in 1915 to Jervis Bay, Federal Capital Territory, where Esdaile graduated second in his class in the next year.

In 1917 he joined HMAS *Australia,* then part of the 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadron based at Rosyth, Scotland. His World War I service was uneventful and he returned to Australia in 1920, the year he was promoted to lieutenant. In 1923 he was one of the first two Royal Australian Navy officers to attend the anti-submarine specialist course in Britain. He excelled in his specialisation and remained on the staff of the training establishment HMS *Osprey.* Back in Australia in 1925, instead of proceeding to sea as would be the normal practice, he was posted to Navy Office, Melbourne, to help plan the navy's anti-submarine defences. In 1926 he joined the flagship, HMAS *Sydney*, as the inaugural fleet anti-submarine officer. Promoted to lieutenant commander two years later, Esdaile returned to *Osprey* to conduct experimental work. In 1931 he briefly commanded the destroyer HMAS *Anzac* before transferring to HMAS *Australia* as her executive officer.

He was promoted to commander in December 1933. On 4 December 1934 at St John's Church of England, Toorak, he married Désirée Ursule (Judy) Finch.

During the interwar period, Esdaile was arguably the most influential figure in Australia in the development of anti-submarine defences. In 1933 he co-authored an important report, 'Seaward Defence of Australian Ports'. For the fleet, he advocated that planning should be based on actual sonar performance in Australian waters, a concept ahead of its time. He and his classmate, (Sir) John Collins [q.v.17], were the driving force behind the Bathurst class corvette program that provided much needed locally constructed escorts during World War II. In England again, Esdaile attended the Royal Naval Staff College, Greenwich, in 1935 and the Imperial Defence College, London, in 1936.

Esdaile was appointed senior staff officer to the commodore-in-charge, Sydney (1939–40), and then commanded the depot ship HMAS *Penguin* (1940–42) as an acting captain. He was closely involved in the installation of Sydney's anti-submarine defences, for which he was appointed OBE (1941). In 1942 he took command of the cruiser HMAS *Adelaide*, then involved in convoy protection. In November *Adelaide* intercepted the German supply ship *Ramses* but she was scuttled before she could be captured. As naval officer-in-charge (1944–45), New Guinea, Esdaile was responsible for the inshore work of a heterogeneous array of small logistic and patrol craft that supported army operations. He was mentioned in despatches and appointed a CBE (1945) for his leadership.

After the cessation of hostilities Esdaile served as controller of naval demobilisation (1945–49), before retiring in 1950. A reserved but intelligent officer with keen powers of analysis and a good sense of humour, he had been highly respected by the officers and sailors under his commands, and by most of his superiors. At Upper Beaconsfield, Victoria, he took up egg and poultry farming. He and his wife lost their farmhouse and many of their possessions in the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires and they retired to Berwick. There, survived by his wife, son, and two daughters, Esdaile died on 12 October 1993 and was cremated. By virtue of his longevity Esdaile had the distinction of being the last surviving member of the RANC's 'pioneer' class.

Eldridge, Frank B. *A History of the Royal Australian Naval College.* Melbourne: Georgian House, 1949; National Archives of Australia. A3978, ESDAILE J. C., DA6769, ESDAILE J. C. D; *Royal Australian Naval College Magazine* editions 1913–1948; Stevens, David. *A Critical Vulnerability: The Impact of the Submarine Threat on Australia's Maritime Defence 1915–1954.* Canberra: RAN Seapower Centre, 2005; Private information from family.

Peter D. Jones

EWART, JOHN REFORD (1928–1994), actor, was born on 26 February 1928 in Melbourne, only child of Victorian-born parents Alfred Adam Ewart, insurance agent, and his wife Jennie Grace Lois Madge, née Macaulay. Encouraged by his mother, he established himself as an actor at an early age and never wanted to be anything else. Johnny played 'Dopey' in a 3XY radio production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,* aged four. He attended Scotch College, Melbourne, for three years (1942–44) but often missed classes due to his freelance radio broadcast work. His first success on stage came in 1944 when he was praised in a review in the *Argus* for his supporting role in the New Theatre's production of *Tomorrow the World*. He made his film debut in Charles Chauvel's [q.v.7] feature film *Sons of Matthew* (1949). The film, in which he played a leading role, proved popular with Australian audiences and was later adapted for release in Britain and the United States of America as *The Rugged O'Riordans.*

On 15 May 1951 at Littlejohn Memorial Chapel, Scotch College, Ewart married Lorraine Marie Croker, a beauty consultant from Sydney. The couple moved to Sydney and later divorced. From 1954 until 1972 Ewart co-hosted the Australian Broadcasting Commission's (ABC) radio show the *Children's Hour* as 'Jimmy' or 'Little Jimmy Hawkins'; he was also the voice of 'Argo 29', the 'Muddle-Headed Wombat', and other characters. In 1965 and 1966 he starred in the Phillip Theatre's comedy revue *A Cup of Tea, a Bex and a Good Lie Down.* The show was so popular that it ran for a full year and was performed over 250 times. Ewart rarely took a break. On 17 April 1966, he married Susan Mary Newton, a broadcasting presentation assistant, at Scots Kirk, Mosman. The marriage ended in divorce.

Ewart acted in numerous Australian television movies and series during the 1960s and 1970s, including *Bellbird*, *Division 4*, *Homicide*, and *Matlock Police*. Fulfilling his desire to return to film acting, in 1974 he was cast as 'Peter' in *Peterson*, a box office success directed by Tim Burstall. From then until 1992 he appeared in more than twenty Australian films, including *Sunday Too Far Away* (1975), *Caddie* (1976), *Newsfront* (1978), and *Bush Christmas* (1983). In 1976 he received two supporting actor nominations from the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts for *Let the Balloon Go* and *The Picture Show Man,* winning the award for his role as 'Freddie' in the latter film.

Sturdy in build and short in stature, with wavy hair and a wide grin, Ewart was no matinee idol. He joked that he usually played 'short, fat, curly haired idiots' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1994, 2). His larrikin charm, optimism, and good-natured likeability endeared him to others both on screen and off. On 24 December 1978 at the Wayside Chapel of the Cross, Potts Point, he married Patricia de Heer, a thirty-four-year-old divorcee who worked in public relations, but the marriage did not last. Ewart's fourth significant relationship was with Jane Fennell. Known for her role as 'Miss Jane' (1976–86) on the ABC's long-running television series *Mr Squiggle*, she was the daughter of the comedian Willie Fennell [q.v.], an old friend of Ewart's. They planned to marry in 1991, but the wedding was postponed when Ewart was diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus. After thirty months of treatment, when doctors told his family that his death was imminent, a marriage celebrant was called to his bedside. On 3 March 1994 at Greenwich Hospital he and Fennell married. Survived by his wife, the two sons from his first marriage, and the two daughters from his second, he died in the hospital five days later and was cremated.

Argus (Melbourne). 'Tomorrow the World.' 4 December 1944, 6; Craig, Michael. 'Michael Craig Remembers John Ewart.' *Filmnews* (Sydney), 1 April 1994, 13; Pate, Michael. 'Picture Show Man of Irrepressible Comic Appeal.' *Australian*, 11 March 1994, 17; *Sydney Morning Herald*. 'Actor Ewart Weds on His Deathbed.' 15 March 1994, 2.

<div align="right">JENNIE LEES</div>

EWENS, JOHN QUALTROUGH (1907–1992), parliamentary draftsman, was born on 18 November 1907 at Unley, Adelaide, eldest of three children of locally born parents Leonard John Ewens, bank inspector, and his wife Amy Effie, née Qualtrough. Excelling academically, John attended (1920–25) the Collegiate School of St Peter, on a scholarship. At the University of Adelaide he completed the five-year law course in only four years (LLB, 1929) and won the Roby Fletcher [q.v.4] prize for logic and psychology and the Stow prize in law. In 1929 he was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of South Australia.

Employed by Knox & Hargrave, solicitors, he worked principally in commercial law before losing his job in the Depression. He secured a legal assistant position in the Attorney-General's Department in Canberra in 1933. Profoundly influenced by contact with Sir Robert Garran [q.v.8], Ewens became a significant contributor to organisations that Garran chaired, including the councils of the Canberra University College and The Australian National University. In Adelaide on 4 November 1935 he married Gwendoline Wilson.

Exposed early to the gamut of the department's work, Ewens applied his love of language and the law to parliamentary drafting. His outstanding ability as a drafter was particularly evident in the development of national security legislation during World War II and he was promoted comparatively rapidly. As parliamentary draftsman (1949–70), and at times acting secretary of the department, Ewens put a distinctive and lasting stamp on Australian laws. Unapologetic about his meticulous standards, black-letter style, and rigorous approach to drafter training, he was responsible for vast amounts of important, occasionally controversial, draft legislation. He took personal carriage of the onerous bank nationalisation bill in 1947 and a comprehensive revision of the gargantuan Bankruptcy Act in 1966.

Widely respected for his intellectual integrity, formidable knowledge, logic, creativity, and precision, Ewens was passionate about his craft. In numerous Australian and international government fora he was a leading contributor to the collaborative development of uniform and complementary

laws. Recognised as the doyen of drafters, he prepared the widely circulated *Bibliography on Legislative Drafting* (1968) and was a highly influential member of the 1972 *Style Manual* committee.

Not always easy to work with, or for, Ewens was protective of his domain and intense in his efforts to have the importance of drafting recognised. He was instrumental in the creation of a separate statutory drafting office in 1970, and that year was appointed the inaugural occupant of the position of first parliamentary counsel. He retired in 1972.

Ewens continued to use his drafting skills in various capacities for the Commonwealth Secretariat, Norfolk Island Administration, and law reform and constitutional commissions. Surprisingly enthusiastic about adopting contemporary 'plain English' style, he was excited by the potential benefits of word processing for drafting. Appointed OBE (1955), CBE (1959), and CMG (1971) for services to government and the law, Ewens was belatedly appointed QC in 1984. A book of essays on legislative drafting was published in 1988 to commemorate his eightieth birthday. Survived by his wife and two sons, he died at home in Canberra on 16 August 1992 and was cremated.

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Carmel Meiklejohn