

Geoff Forster (29 September, 1925 - 22 July, 2019)



It is with sadness we announce that Geoff Forster passed away on 22 July 2019, aged 93. He is survived by his wife, Gwen, son Rohan and daughter Meredith. His daughter Rosemary had predeceased him.

Geoff was actively involved in the Georgist movement for over sixty years. He read *Progress and Poverty* at age 18 and was so inspired that he spent the rest of a long life endeavouring to advance the principles contained in the book.

Geoff held bachelor's degrees in both arts and sciences from the University of Melbourne and was employed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation as an editor of CSIRO journals. Even though Geoff was a man of wide-ranging interests and was involved in many scientific, religious and pacifist movements, this did not deter him from being one of the most active Georgists of his time,

generously lending his extensive knowledge and abilities to further the cause.

Everyone who met Geoff warmed to his gentle, humble nature. A deep social conscience saw him commit to the cause of economic justice via the Henry George League and its successive bodies, Tax Reform Australia and Prosper Australia, where he served on the executive committee. He was secretary for more than twenty years, making sure meetings were conducted appropriately and overseeing the organisation's day-to-day operations while working and engaged in his other interests. As secretary, he corresponded with people from all over the world, discussing Georgism at a level tailored to his audience. Whether it was a simple answer for a newcomer or a meaningful discussion on the more complex threads of economics, people were given a respectful and thoughtful reply. Geoff operated largely before the times of the quick email.

Prosper Australia has proudly published PROGRESS for 115 years. Before the age of computers, when the printed medium was more valued, it was published monthly. Geoff was always a consistent contributor to the journal and soon became its assistant editor. He finally came to edit the journal in tandem with Bruce Every. Even after relinquishing the position, he continued to contribute articles. PROGRESS came to be published less regularly in the internet age, and if publication was delayed, Geoff always rang the office to make sure he had not missed a copy, or to learn why it was late, which he thought to be regrettable, if not inexcusable.

From 1946 Geoff was an active and early participant in the activities and research undertaken by the Land Values Research Group. For many years, he was also a Trustee of the Henry George Foundation, founded in 1928 to fund the Australian Georgist movement.

Another area that flourished under Geoff Forster's guidance was the long running weekly radio sessions on 3DB-LK. These talks introduced Georgism to many people and Geoff held the role

of convenor of the broadcasting subcommittee. These radio broadcasts were delivered twice weekly from the 1950s until 1966, when 3DB budget cuts led to a requirement for self-funding to keep the broadcasts on air. Accepting the challenge, Geoff appealed to members and listeners for funds and had the broadcasts return to air for several years.

When the radio broadcasts ceased in the 1970s, Geoff was regularly to be heard delivering a Georgist interpretation of current socio-economic events at 'Speakers Corner' on the Yarra Bank until its demise, after which he moved for a short period to the City Square to deliver his orations.

He delivered the annual Henry George Commemorative Address twice: in 1964 and 1999.

In 1999 Geoff also contributed the Australian chapter to *"Land Value Taxation Around the World"*, a comprehensive study of the history and practice of the public capture of land rent contributed by significant Georgists from their own country. Built upon the premise that taxing productive activity, including structural improvements, is to discourage them, the book was a significant contribution to the worldwide application of Georgist principles. Geoff proudly expounded the extensive and successful Australian experience.

Geoff lived a life of voluntary simplicity, neither drinking, smoking, nor eating meat. He donated generously to the Georgist movement and will be sorely missed for his tireless devotion.

Vale, Geoffrey Arthur Forster.

Harold Bruce Every

(18 November 1938 – 22 August 2019)



Longstanding active member, Harold Bruce Every (Bruce) sadly passed away in August. Bruce was a Trustee of the Henry George Foundation (HGFA) and a member of its investment committee which assists to fund the Georgist movement in Australia.

In paying tribute to Bruce's outstanding contribution to the Georgist movement, we must acknowledge his service in the responsible and time-consuming role of chairperson of the HGFA for twenty years. We valued his forthright judgement and the timeless hours he spent in the management of HGFA affairs.

Bruce discovered the teachings of Henry George in the early 1970s. We remember that the late Mary and Alan Hutchinson, stalwarts of the movement at the time, were most heartened to have this young, capable and enthusiastic recruit to the Henry George League (now Prosper Australia), and to which Bruce was rapidly elected a member of the executive committee.

He soon became an active member of the organisation's working groups, the Land Values Research Group and the General Council for Rating Reform, the latter an organisation successfully encouraging local councils to make the switch from net annual value rating to the more progressive site value rating system. Bruce also became a director of the Henry George Club Inc. on 15 November 1990 from which position he retired as chairman on 25 March 2017, having also become highly respected in that particular role.

Bruce will be sadly missed. He has been a vital part of Australian Georgism for five decades and is regarded as a true friend of the movement. Our condolences go to Bruce's wife, Anne, and to his children Andrew, Melanie and Michael.