

# A True Friend

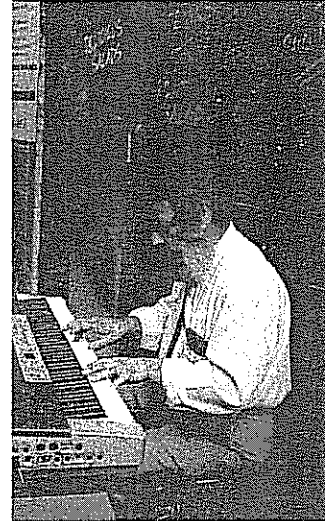
by Anne Schmid



Maurie as we knew him



Maurie and Doreen attending one of our functions.



Maurie playing the piano in Hardware Lane during our street party in 2006.

On Tuesday 15th May 2012 the Georgist movement in Australia lost a true friend. We all held Maurie Fabrikant in very high regard and valued his friendship. At the time of his death he was a Trustee of the Henry George Foundation (Aus), a Director of the Henry George Club, and a life member of Prosper Australia.

Maurie was appointed a Trustee of the HGFA in 1994. Maurie always put much energy into his belief in Georgism and was soon appointed minute secretary. In 2000 he took over the role of secretary when Bill Canfield retired. Significantly Maurie would then visit Bill on most weekends for many years afterwards.

Maurie stumbled across the Georgist idea from an advertisement in a Melbourne paper in 1983 and in his own writings, he explained how he used the scientific method to test Georgist theories. He also said that of George's writings, *Social Problems* was most helpful and that it contained wisdom presented in a relatively attractive form. *Dictator-Democrat* was also a booklet of significance to Maurie, one which he always recommended to new comers.

Maurie soon became an active member of Tax Reform Australia as we were then called and joined the Executive. He took on the role of presidency between 1997 and 2006. In that time he was a well liked, respected and capable president. We were sorry to see him resign his presidency but we were glad that he now had time for his other great love, trad-jazz. In recognition of the great and generous work that Maurie did for our organization, we conferred life membership on him.

Maurie's approach can be summed up in his own words printed in *PROGRESS*. "It has taken me about twenty five years – admittedly of only part –time thinking – to progress from zero Georgist knowledge to that which I presently have. Do I know it all? Hardly! If I did, I'm sure my success rate at persuading others to embrace Georgist ideology would be far better. Provided we have open minds, we will continue to learn....perhaps to the stage where we succeed in persuading sufficient citizens to demand the changes we believe necessary."

In his time as president Tax Reform Australia changed its name to Prosper Australia. Maurie was keen to move on from theory to implementation and wrote his own detailed implementation policy. As part of our teaching project, Maurie put together a precise presentation of our ideas which he delivered very effectively on numerous occasions. And of course he wrote numerous articulate and forthright letters to prominent people and politicians.

Many members have spoken of Maurie's welcoming presence, his willingness to support good ideas, his authoritative tone when needed and his love of truth. He did much tireless and unthanked work in furthering the cause, whether it was helping out administratively or with projects that others were undertaking. He gave countless support to others. And of course none of us want to forget that Maurie thoroughly enjoyed Prosper's social events and was an entertaining conversationalist. In Brian Kavanagh's words, Maurie was 'a truly lovely bloke'. We extend our sympathy to his wife Doreen and family.