

Newcastle
Young
Liberals

The News Castle

Issue 6

February, 2002

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Award winning newsletter!

For the second year in a row *The News Castle* received the NSW Young Liberals' accolade of 'Best Branch Newsletter'.

This means *The News Castle* has won this award every year since it began!

We are grateful for, and humbled by, this recognition and look forward to more issues to come!

Welcome!

Welcome to this first issue for 2002! Another year has begun, and already our clothes are last year's fashions and our cars have dropped in value yet again!

However, we can look forward to almost three full years of Federal Coalition governance, and those Young Liberals who involved themselves in the November 10th election campaign last year can now take a well-deserved rest and rightly feel good about the fruits of their labours.

Don't rest too long though—it's all about to begin again! But, of course, as young people, activists, passionate, and committed to our cause, we wouldn't have it any other way!

Editor, and Liberal Candidate for the Federal seat of Newcastle, David M. Williams.



Coming up later this month is the annual University of Newcastle O-Week, which is always a strong and important recruiting period for us.

Kara Densby speaks of this later in this issue, including her contact details—so, be involved!

Then, just over 12 months later we have the 2003 NSW state election! Already three years have passed since the last state election, and the then-battered Coalition opposition is now buoyed by a wonderful Federal result and recent solid hits on Carr.

Young Liberal, happy new year, and keep up the great work and look forward to the rest to come!

Memorial

The Newcastle Young Liberals wish to extend their deepest sorrow and sympathy to Kelsey and Morgan Andrews on the traumatic death of their triplets, born 21st December 2001.

Connor Isaac Andrews
Xavier Kyle Andrews
Elijah Kelly Andrews

Please remember Kelsey and Morgan and uphold them in your thoughts and prayers.

Election 2001: The wash-up and some predictions

By David M. Williams

Well, the 2001 Federal election is over, with plenty of material for analysts to interpret. Much of this will end up in digestible sound bites from spin doctors eager to justify the result their party attained. Nevertheless, there are some things which are, I feel, clear to us all.

Left-wing journos and red-necks

Firstly, I don't hold to the argument that international issues alone were the focus of the election, nor that the Government played a race card in any way. Yet, these were the claims of many a left-leaning journalist and the self-styled intellectual elite.

Those who had the temerity to applaud the Government's strong stance and conviction on the issue of illegal arrivals to Australia were derided as racist, callous and uninformed.

Those who choose to hold to the view that border protection played a significant factor in the election result must therefore conclude that the majority of Australians support the Coalition viewpoint.

Yet, this surely does not change the general consensus that Australians are peaceful, accepting and easy-going.

Rather, I would hope that this election result serves as a lesson to vocal critics that it really is possible for people to hold to a

different opinion from theirs and yet not be merely an ignorant red-neck.

The Democrats, preference flows and the GST

One result of strong interest is the Democrats poor result. The so-called dream-team of Natasha and the virtually absent Aden Ridgeway held little appeal as a

moderating force, a realistic alternative, or a third party—whichever cliché happens to be in vogue at the time.

Senator Stott-

Despoja's speed to blame the result on the item which prompted her ascension to the leadership - namely, the Democrat deal on the GST - is not supported by logic; after all, the Howard Government introduced the GST and increased its majority. The ALP campaigned on rolling back the GST, and has been shattered by the electorate. No, the GST played an insignificant - if any - role during this election. I can accept there are people who hold passionate views, but one of the clearest messages this election result sends is that the people of Australia are indeed 'relaxed and comfortable' about the GST.

One factor that may well have played against the Democrats, however, is that of preferences - and not the GST.

Following in Cheryl Kernot's clear left-wing ideologies, Senator Stott-Despoja led a ticket which strongly favoured the ALP over the Coalition.

When challenged on this issue—after all, don't the Democrats pride themselves on being an independent balance? - the Senator flippantly dismissed concerns.

To her, the Democrats had not favoured the ALP in any way, her argument being that voters have full control of their preferences. She was not forcing anyone to vote in any particular way whatsoever.

A dramatic reversal seems to have occurred in her thinking, then, since the 1998 Queensland election where the Coalition were greatly chided for placing One Nation above the Labor Party in their How-To-Vote cards.

Whether the Coalition were right or wrong in doing this is not the point; the fact is that Natasha can not have things both ways—it cannot be simultaneously true that the Coalition are wicked if they direct preferences to a particular party and the Democrats remain independent if they do so, because voters have control over their ballots.

The downfall of the Democrats has come, and will continue, because they have abandoned their roots.

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“The so-called dream-team of Natasha and the virtually absent Aden Ridgeway held little appeal”

Schedule of Events

Highlights this month:

- University O-Week—contact Kara Densby on 0418 972 936 or rykar@hotmail.com to be involved
- Young Liberal Council—the first for 2002. Keep an eye on <http://www.younglibs.org.au/> for details.
- Branch meeting—contact Kara Densby on 0418 972 936 or rykar@hotmail.com for date and venue.
- February 9th—South Australia state election!

February 2002

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

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Senator Stott-Despoja has led her party to become not an alternative major party, but an alternative left-leaning party, an imitation, perhaps, of the Greens.

However, Natasha shouldn't take all the heat: her former leader, Cheryl Kernot, needs to be apportioned some of the blame. After all, her defection to Labor was a clear signal that the Democrats may not be as pure as they proclaim. Further, whatever happened to the 'star recruit' ideals that the ALP had envisioned?

Instead, Cheryl Kernot turned out to be an embarrassment for the Labor Party - reflected in their feeble support for her re-election. The former member for Dickson was a whiner, she was a non-performer,

she was simply incapable and unsuitable.

To my mind, this sends the subliminal message about parties which are represented only in the Senate: Cheryl was the leader of the 'third force' in politics, with years of experience. Yet, there is a big difference between being #1 on a Senate ticket, and having to mix with the common people. There is a big difference between playing a minor legislative role, and having to balance the budget.

One thing the Cheryl Kernot experiment revealed was the gaping hole in leading the Democrats and acting as a shadow minister. If you will permit me to mix metaphors, when the rubber hit the road, she just couldn't cut the mustard.

So then, what does this suggest about Stott-Despoja, with her shorter experience both as a leader, and in politics and life in general?

Victory for next term

Allow me now to crystal-ball gaze a bit: John Howard's victory has secured him a place in both Australian and Liberal Party history. And, despite ALP claims to the contrary, this election result has clearly secured the Coalition even the term to come, starting in 2004.

The Labor Party have gone backwards. Two shadow ministers have lost their seats - including Michael Lee, former education spokesman despite the ALP trying

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to run on education. Kim Beazley has stood down, and Simon Crean has taken his place.

Crean is a former ACTU leader, almost as unpopular as his fore-runner Bob Hawke was popular, and a relatively inexperienced leader. After all, he has served only two terms in Government, and only one in the ALP leadership.

Crean has inherited a broken Labor party and its policy vacuum. If Labor stood for nothing before, it stands for less now, and needs to completely rebuild itself. Kim Beazley couldn't do it in five years; I can't see Crean doing it in three.

Although, it's not all so bad for Simon Crean - after all, with his sheer electoral unpopularity and open to charges of playing to the unions, he surely must be among the top of the Liberal Party's list for preferred Opposition Leader!

Democrats in the Senate

Getting back to the Democrats, it's well known the Coalition never enjoyed a fully cooperative Senate. Not much has changed. Although the Coalition returned all of their Senators - including the precariously placed Marise Payne and Ron Boswell - they still do not have control of the Senate.

Yet, according to my view of the 2004 election, the wheels have been put in motion for this to change.

The majority of the Democrats sitting Senators came in at the 1998 election, taking their seats in 1999. All of these are up for re-election in 2004. A strong Coalition result will increase Government representation in

the Senate - at the expense of the Democrats and One Nation. Now, I'm expecting a leadership challenge among the Democrats by none other than Meg Lees or even the recently-invisible Aden

"Bob Carr knows he is better off under a Federal Coalition Government"

Ridgeway but should Stott-Despoja survive, her inclinations and leadership are likely to all but strip the Democrats cupboard bare. Any Democrat quotas untouched by the Coalition result will spill to the Greens.

The 2003 NSW election

On to my home state, are there implications for the 2003 NSW election from this result?

I believe so, but perversely, contrary to the Coalition opposition. After all, Bob Carr was remarkably silent during the Federal campaign despite strong support for Kim Beazley coming from Steve Bracks and Peter Beattie.

The truth is that NSW has the largest economy of any state or territory in Australia, and Bob Carr knows he is better off under a Federal Coalition Government.

Simply put, John Howard's fiscal management makes Bob Carr look good.

The Federal result doesn't translate simply into nationwide Coalition support. Voters are, for the most part, able to discern state and national issues. And, undoubtedly, Bob Carr will be hoping to emulate the John Howard themes of leadership,

experience and getting on with the job.

Kerry Chikarovski should be buoyed, certainly, by the Federal result, but it is no guarantee for her. Her team, the NSW opposition, have been making real chinks in Carr's armour lately, but this has to continue, supplemented by strong policy directions, articulated to the electorate.

In particular, with less than one and a half years until the NSW election, any speculation of the NSW Coalition leadership must end in short time.

After all, leadership squabbles is, to my mind, part of what kept the Liberals out of power Federally during the 1980's.

The NSW coalition should take heart and strength from the recent Federal election result - and the anticipation of a 2004 Federal victory - but the intervening state election will be fought on different grounds, against a Labor party which bears little resemblance to Simon Crean's motley crew.

The time is coming up where the Liberals have to either change leaders or commit publicly and vocally to support Chikarovski with all their passion, heart and soul.

Let's see victory in 2003!

2001 in review

By Kara Densby

2001 was another successful year for the Newcastle Young Liberals, and the closely associated University of Newcastle Liberal Club.

We signed up a record number of recruits in February's University O-Week activities, and consolidated this by another strong influx in our September stall. Indeed, these two events brought us almost 60 new members!

We wouldn't have been able to achieve this without the support of a great number of people, especially our friends in the University of Technology, Sydney, Liberal Club and the Macquarie University Liberal Club.

In particular, I am grateful to NSW Liberal Students' Association President, Anthony Orkin, Michael Davis, Chris Hall, and Alex Hawke, for their support of our stall in September, which helped boost our numbers at the vital time of the eve of the Federal election.

The Club held a number of good functions during the year, including our BBQ with members of the 2001 NSW Young Liberal Executive. I thank those members of Executive who showed their support for the Club by attending: Andrew Constance, Ainslie Thomas, Lucy Wicks, Mark Coure, Gareth Ward; and former Newcastle Young Liberal

Greg Hansen. The Club also had a representative on NUSAC for the first time in 2001, which is an achievement of great measure.

Our next challenge is this year's O-week. Ryan and I are coordinating our O-week activities this year, so please be sure to get in touch with either of us to get involved! You can reach Ryan on ryan.densby@au.andersen.com or 0410 590 955, and me on rykar@hotmail.com or 0418 972 936. It's a great time to be involved, interest is always sparked by an election win.

The Newcastle Young Liberals have also held a number of good functions during 2001.

Our new members' night at Senator John Tierney's office proved a success, with lively debate regarding One Nation complemented by a delicious array of food and drinks!

Thanks go to Senator Tierney and Robyn Parker for facilitating this event. I'd also like to thank Alex Hawke, Andrew Jefferies (of Parramatta YLs) and David Clarke for their ongoing support of Newcastle Young Liberals, and lending their expertise for the organisation of our functions throughout the year.

Indeed, hopefully 2002 will see the ties between the Newcastle Young Liberals and the Parramatta Young Liberals strengthen.

Members of both the branch and the club volunteered their time during the election, with David Williams running as the Newcastle candidate, and help from our people in the Newcastle, Shortland, Parramatta, Robertson and Dobell electorates—not bad for a small branch in Labor heartland!

Finally, the Newcastle Young Liberals are most grateful for the assistance of Mike Gallacher, MLC throughout 2001.

Despite the heavy demands on his time, Mike always has time for the branch and the club. He attended many of our meetings in 2001, and, with his wife Judy, catered for a branch/club BBQ.

In 2001, Mike was named the duty Liberal MLC for the Hunter/Central Coast Province, and it is amazing to see what can happen when the people of the Hunter actually have a quality representative on their side!

In the middle of Labor heartland, Mike provides the branch with some contact with state politics, and that is very valuable. It is to the credit of the Liberal Party that one of the most talented and hard-working members of the NSW Parliament represents the people of the Hunter, as it lays a solid foundation for the growth of the Liberal Party in the region.

The Newcastle Young Liberals look forward to working with Mike long into the future!

2001—The year of Howard

By Kara Densby

2001 will long be remembered amongst Liberals as a great year.

Early in the year the political correctness brigade and its assorted hangers-on in the media wrote off the Howard Government, joyfully condemning Australia to the Prime Ministership of Kim Beazley. They should have known it is a grave mistake to underestimate our Prime Minister!

When John Howard emphatically announced at the Liberal Party State Council in July “We can win this”, the momentum seemed to turn towards the Liberals.

While rusted-on Liberals, such as ourselves, never doubted Howard’s imminent victory, it had seemed that the electorate was not so sure.

The Liberals suffered defeats in Queensland and Western Australia, and the threat of wall-to-wall socialism across Australia stared us down.

Don’t get me wrong—Labor has always been a lacklustre opposition, with a number of its policies bordering on nightmarish (particularly disturbing to me is Labor’s Industrial Relations policy), and could never match the stable economic management and wise, conservative policies of the Howard Government. The Liberals were clearly the only party capable of delivering good government.

However, the Labor Party was running strong on its GST scare campaign, voter apathy was high, and it is true that things had not been all smooth sailing for the Liberal Government. The key to the election would be the leadership of the respective parties.

And as it turned out, his opponents once again underestimated John Howard, to their downfall.

When I went for a job interview in mid-2001, I was asked to describe the type of leader I felt was most effective.

I named the four leaders in history that I most admire: Harry Truman, Ronald Reagan, Robert Menzies, and John Howard.

When discussing the reasons why, it was easy for the first three, as reflection on their careers was possible after the fact.

Harry Truman was a man of great courage, who made the tough decision to save the lives of his own soldiers and end the war with Japan by using the atomic bomb, and his decisive action and commitment to fight Communism saved millions of people from suffering under a Communist regime.

Ronald Reagan made a lasting impression on me when I first heard him, standing at the Berlin Wall, demanding, “Mr Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” His strength, communication,

and unwavering commitment to his beliefs make him a truly great leader.

On top of my list for Robert Menzies was his vision—as the founder of the most successful Australian political party his vision for the kind of party suitable to Australian politics was spot on. Backing up Menzies’ vision was his wit, and, like Reagan, his communication, and ability to guide the Australian people through good times and bad.

In the fullness of time, we will be able to study the leadership of John Howard, and determine all the intricate facets that make John Howard the leader he is today.

Of course, an immediate assessment was necessary during my job interview, and the word I went for was “tenacity” - not just a commitment to beliefs, but a determination to see ideas reach fruition. Over the next few months, John Howard’s actions validated my choice of words (and I did get the job, by the way, and I like to think that I convinced the two interviewers to vote Liberal as well!).

In John Howard we have a Prime Minister who is committed to the kinds of things that are important to the mainstream of Australia. Instead of pandering to minority and interest groups, Howard guides Government policy in the interests of average Australians, and this sets him apart from his

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predecessor, Paul Keating, and current elements of the Labor Party.

It is true that there is an 'elite' in Australian society, and it is also true that they tend to be annoying, trendy urbanites, who think it is entirely morally outrageous for the views of anyone other than themselves to be voiced in public.

If you disagree with them you are simply an uneducated red-neck who has no business trying to influence government policy.

The problem is, the vast majority of Australians, quietly going about their daily lives, are equally entitled to their opinions, and have long been searching for a politician with the courage to stand up for the beliefs and needs of ordinary Australians.

They found what they were looking for in John Howard. Howard's Government has focused on issues that are relevant to people, like lowering interest rates and taxes, and not wasted time on issues that have proven to be irrelevant, like the republic (even this proud republican admits that we lost the referendum and should now move on, thus avoiding the ludicrous situation of holding yearly referendums until everyone is satisfied with the result!).

He stood his ground on his refusal as Prime Minister to say "sorry", despite the barrage of media criticism, and the people, admiring his unshakeable conviction and shar-

ing his opinion, re-elected him over Kim Beazley, who was chafing at the bit to say "sorry".

Of course, the area where the strength and tenacity of John Howard will forever shine through is border protection.

It is imperative that Australia retains control over her borders, and this cannot be compromised by illegal arrivals.

Howard's words at the Campaign Launch: "We decide who comes to this country, and the circumstances in which they come" signified a renewed commitment to border protection.

It also highlighted a leader who would act decisively, and determinedly.

However, border protection did not, in itself, secure victory.

The key to victory was Howard's leadership. He communicated Liberal policies and costings—something Kim Beazley was unable to do, and he stood by his convictions—again something Kim Beazley was unable to do.

He helped reduce the alienation many people feel from the political process by concen-

trating on issues that matter to them—once again, not something the Labor Party appears capable of doing.

John Howard's leadership ensured that the Liberal Government was re-elected on November 10.

Often maligned as unpopular, clearly John Howard has the support of the majority of Australians.

With continued commitment to his conservative principles and the values and policies that are important to the Australian people, along with his trademark tenacity, John Howard will surely lead the Liberal Party to victory a fourth time.

While John Howard remains at the helm, the future of the Liberal Party, and Australia itself, is safe.

By the time Australia is celebrating its bicentenary of Federation, Howard will be recognised as the finest Prime Minister and greatest statesman Australia has produced.

Important note

An as-yet unknown troublemaker has been circulating an e-mail entitled "Spotter's guide to NSW Young Liberals". This e-mail contains disparaging and offensive comments about prominent members of the NSW Young Liberals. In particular, this e-mail makes hurtful descriptions of several members of the Newcastle Young Liberals. Should you receive this e-mail, the best thing to do is simply delete it and pay it no heed—editor



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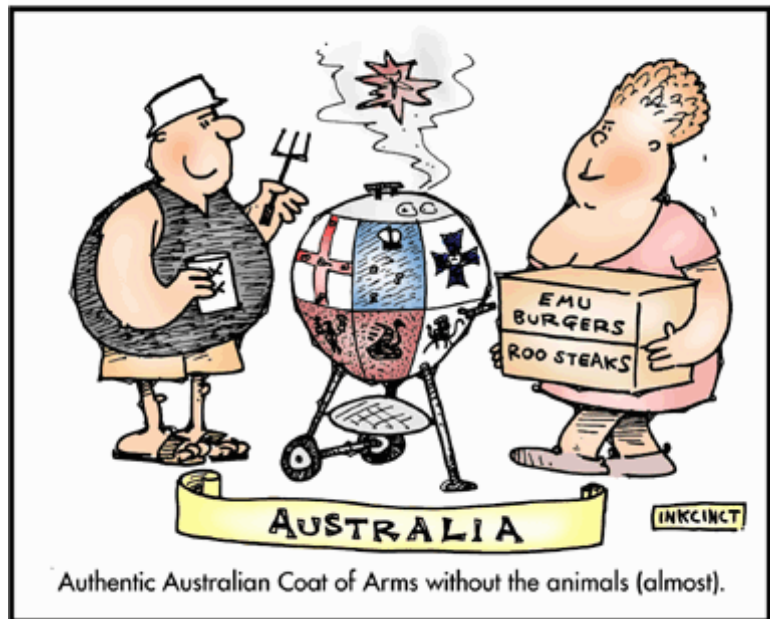
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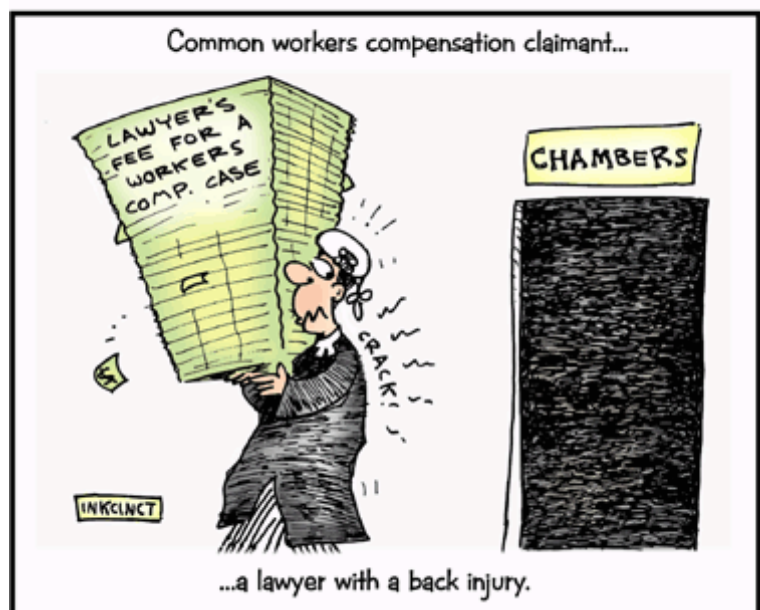
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