Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0115

Armstrong, Pauline

(1928 - 2001)

Born	19280904, Camberwell Victoria Australia
Died	20011021, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Occupation	Activist, Author, Historian, Trade unionist

Summary

Dr Pauline Armstrong was a long time activist and her later work as a researcher and historian resulted in the publication of her historical and biographical book *Frank Hardy and the making of Power without Glory* (2000). She was passionately involved in the Save Our Sons movement during the Vietnam War.

Details

Born in 1928, Pauline Armstrong came from a politically active family. Her grandmother and mother protested against Billy Hughes' attempts to introduce conscription during World War I and were disenchanted Labor Party members, later joining the Communist Party. Armstrong herself was introduced to the Eureka Youth League of the Communist Party by her uncle, Paul Mortier. She joined the Communist Party in 1947 and worked as a legal secretary from 1949 for lawyer Cedric Ralph, who represented the Communist Party at the royal commission into its activities in 1949-50. In other arenas she was active in campaigns for improved local services, and passionately involved in the Save Our Sons movement during the Vietnam War. Armstrong's son, Karl, was jailed twice during the Vietnam War for refusing to register for the draft.

At the age of fifty-six she entered university as a mature age student. She gained a Bachelor of Arts (Deakin University) – Literature, Philosophy, Professional writing; a Master of Arts (Monash University) – Australian Studies; and a Doctor of Philosophy (University of Melbourne). She was a member of the Fellowship of Australian writers and the Australian Society of Authors.

The publication in 2000 of Armstrong's book *Frank Hardy and the making of Power without Glory* was a major achievement and the culmination of 8 years of research. Armstrong also wrote feature articles for newspapers, short stories and made journal contributions. She collaborated with Rebecca Maclean on content for Maclean's documentary *S.O.S. Movement*, which was informed by Armstrong's MA thesis on the history of the Save Our Sons movement.

From her youth, Armstrong was involved in political activities, school and library formation committees, folklore and folk music promotion. In the 1940s she assisted on committees to remove restrictions on Sunday sport and promote daytime training for apprentices, and equal pay. Armstrong was also a trade union, Communist Party and Eureka Youth League activist.

Published resources

Thesis
A critical biography of Frank Hardy, Pauline Armstrong, 1998

A history of the Save Our Sons movement of Victoria: 1965-1973, Pauline Armstrong, 1991

Book
Frank Hardy and the making of <I>Power Without Glory</I>, Pauline Armstrong, 2000

Report
The formation of municipal libraries, Pauline Armstrong, n.d.

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Pauline Armstrong, 1990-2002 [manuscript]

The University of Melbourne Archives
Armstrong, Pauline

State Library of New South Wales
Audrey Blake and Jack Blake further papers, 1937-2004

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