

Sir Earle Page

Sir Earle Page was one of the founders of the Country Party in Australia.

Sir Earle's family came from the Clarence Valley in northern NSW. He was educated at Sydney Boys School and read Medicine at the University Of Sydney.

Following his education he returned to the Clarence Valley, where he helped pioneer new medical treatments and surgical practices.

During this period, he became involved in the movement which gave birth to the Country Party, and he was returned as the Member for Cowper in the House of Representatives in 1919.

Shortly after his election, Dr Page was elected as the first Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Country Party.

During his long parliamentary career of 42 years, he served as Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, as well as in many different ministries.

Sir Earle served his country with distinction as a surgeon with the AIF during the First World War, and as the Australian Minister to the Imperial War Cabinet during the Second World War.

By the end of a long and distinguished career of national service, he was the Right Honourable Sir Earle Page, Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George, Companion of Honour, Bachelor of Medicine and Australian College of Surgeons, and Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and an Honorary Doctor of Sciences from the University of Sydney.

The Sir Earle Page Memorial Trust

The Trust was established to honour the memory of the Rt Hon. Sir Earle Page, GCMG, CH, MB, ChM(Syd), FRACS, FRCS (Hon), DSc (Hon) in 1984.

The trust has held lectures at the University of Sydney and the Parliament of New South Wales on subjects of public interest. Our Guest Lecturers are chosen for their contributions to society as a whole and because the Trustees consider they have something worthwhile to say for posterity.

The previous lectures have been delivered by the following:

Professor Lauchlan Chipman, the Rt Hon. Ian Sinclair, MP, Former Senator John Stone, Mr John B Fairfax, Mr Robert V Gyles, QC, Mr Hugh M Morgan, the Hon Nick Greiner, Justice Michael Kirby, the Hon Sir Ninian Stephen, Dame Leonie Kramer and Sir Zelman Cowen and Chief Justice Murray Gleeson.

The National Party has long been regarded as the cement of conservative politics in this country. The lecture and the series held in memory of our founding leader, an icon, are evidence the National Party is a party of ideas on the practical side of politics.

Trustees

Senator David Brownhill Former Chairman National Party of Australia, The Hon Duncan Gay, MLC Shadow Minister for Energy, Shadow Minister for Local Government, Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Dr Ramon Bullock, MB, BS (Syd), FRACP, FACA, Hon Wendy Machin, BA, Mrs Helen Dickie Chairman National Party of Australia, Mr Lloyd Beeby, Mrs Shirley McKerrow, Mr Brian O'Sullivan, Mr Allan Marshall

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Mr Stephen Kensey

Stephen Kensey was the foundation trustee of the organisation and provided the initial impetus to have the trust established. He was a skilled public debater and had a sharp pen when it was required.

Educated at Christian Brothers' College, Waverley, he attended The University of Sydney where he studied religion.

Later he was to work for state and federal National Party parliamentarians in a research capacity before branching into a role as a lobbyist. He died in 1993.

Sir Adrian Solomons, BA, LLB, MLC

Sir Adrian was an influential man in the political arena, respected by parliamentarians from both sides of politics. He was a lawyer by profession, practising in Tamworth. He was one of the original trustees. He died in 1992.

Mr John Baker, JP, BE, FLE Aust, Chartered Engineer

John Baker was involved in the National Party in NSW for decades in various capacities including Chairman of the Metropolitan Branch and a member of the Central Council, Central Executive and many committees.

He was educated at The University of Sydney and was an engineer by training. His interests were broad and he always enjoyed questioning issues. He died in 1993.

Sir Earle Page Memorial Trust Objectives

- Provide Education
- Sponsor Scholarships
- Establish Essay Prizes
- Conduct Public Lectures
- Publish Records

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL PARTY HISTORY

The Sir Earle Page Memorial Trust was established in 1984 as a permanent recognition by members of the National Party (formerly the Country Party) of its own history and its intrinsic place in Australian history.

It was the inspiration of Mr Stephen Kensey who was determined that the National Party should never be forgotten as the cement of conservative politics. The trust was established as an autonomous but closely aligned organisation.

Inseparable from this purpose was the intention that the Trust should operate in such a way as to honour and commemorate the Party's foremost past leader, Sir Earle Page.

All political parties of any longevity must remember their origins in order to provide ballast against the tides of change implicit in population movements and attitudes in society as a whole. Not to do so implies a party's limited future. A sense of permanency is essential for party members to feel an attachment to the movement.

The National Party is unique in the English-speaking world in that a country and regionally-based party has not lasted elsewhere for the length of time the National Party has existed. One reason for this longevity has been its historical roots with which people can identify. This enables the party to distinguish itself from the Liberal Party and its predecessors as an alternative voice of conservatism throughout Australia.

One of the interesting features of national political debate has been the repetition of argument about how this country has been or is to be governed. This was exemplified by the tribute to Sir Earle Page delivered in 1992 by the Right Honourable Ian Sinclair.

Sir Earle Page, in his maiden speech, commented on issues as relevant today as in 1919. This might seem unusual but it should be remembered today by those from all political parties involved in the debate between economic rationalists and market interventionists.

The Sir Earle Page Memorial Trust chiefly concerns itself with publicising its annual lectures in both oral and written form. Its resources are limited but it does allow each speaker an unfettered opportunity to comment on issues as he or she wishes.

The trustees invite a guest lecturer each year to address the public on an issue of concern. The guest lecturer selects the subject matter and writes the speech. Later, the speech is published for posterity. In this way, a permanent record is kept of issues of concern to Australians.

The University of Sydney, Sir Earle Page's alma mater and Australia's premier tertiary institution, was chosen initially for delivery of the orations and lectures. Most have been given in St John's College because it is a fine, traditional institution. Later lectures have been delivered at the NSW Parliament House.

Editor

The Sir Earle Page Lectures were edited by National Party Legislative Councillor, The Hon. Jenny Gardiner.