

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

NAME OF COLLECTION: SOCIALIST FORUM

ACCESSION NO: 102/28

CATEGORY: Labour, organisations
ACTIVITY:

DATE RANGE: 1984 - 1998

SIZE OF COLLECTION: 1.22 metres (7 archive boxes)

DATE OF TRANSFER: 1 May 2002

ACCESS CONDITIONS: Open

HISTORICAL NOTE: The Socialist Forum was established in 1984, initially by disaffected members of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). Its membership included Australian Labor Party (ALP) members and political activists and trade unionists seeking an alternative to the factional constraints of the CPA and the ALP. Socialist Forum's stated aim was to contribute to the development of democratic socialism in Australia by facilitating discussion and analysis of ideas and experiences; providing education both for members and non-members; and developing links between political activists and organisations of political activists. Socialist Forum became an incorporated association in January 1986. It was not a political party, although there was an attempt by a section of the ALP Victorian Branch to prohibit members of the ALP from joining it. The structure of Socialist Forum was based on a policy-setting Annual Conference, an elected Management Committee responsible for administration and financial management, an elected Public Issues Committee responsible for the organisation's direction between conferences, and Interest Groups for education and information exchange. There were few paid staff members and Socialist Forum relied on subscriptions and donations. Membership was over 200 at its peak, but the level of active membership declined in the mid 1990s. A cost and accommodation sharing arrangement was negotiated between the Evatt Victoria Centre (EVC), the Australian Fabian Society (AFS) and the Socialist Forum in 1997. The EVC was itself an outgrowth of the Sydney based Evatt Foundation and the Victoria Foundation and had ceased to operate in Victoria by the end of the 1990s.

**NOTE ON
COLLECTION:**

The collection has been weeded. Two copies of Socialist Forum Newsletters have been retained in this collection. An additional set was sent to the State Library of Victoria.

Some low level administrative records, and financial records whose statutory retention period is seven years or less, have been destroyed, in accordance with normal administrative practice and as authorised by the depositor.

**NOTE ON
LISTING:**

Abbreviations:

Socialist Forum (SF)
Evatt Victoria Centre (EVC)
Australian Fabian Society (AFS)

**NOTE ON
ARRANGEMENT**

The original arrangement of the Socialist Forum files was by classified numbering system(s), although no index to the filing system was located and not all files had a file number. The files appear to have been reordered at various times and it was therefore difficult to establish the original order. As the control symbol numbers were also duplicated in many instances, that is, the same filing classification number was applied to different sequences of files, it proved impracticable to retain the original file numbers as the control symbols in this list. Series numbers have therefore been imposed and items rearranged under these series where a logical relationship was apparent. The series arrangement reflects the classification system as far as it could be ascertained. Where original file numbers existed they have been noted on the item folder and recorded in the finding aid in brackets following the file title. E.g. (6.2).

Files created by the Evatt Victoria Centre were found interspersed throughout the Socialist Forum files. These have been included in this accession as an Evatt Victoria Centre series. As there was no classification system evident, item numbers have been imposed.

**CONSERVATION
NOTE**

Some metal staples are yet to be removed.

**RELATED
COLLECTIONS:**

Communist Party of Australia

**LISTED BY:
DATE:**

Sarah Brown
13 December 2002

<u>Box</u> <u>No</u>	<u>Series</u> <u>Number</u>	Description	Date
1	1	Formation of Socialist Forum	
	1/1	Formation (6.2)	[1984]
	1/2	ALP proscription debate (6.4)	1985
	1/3	Comments and materials on Socialist Forum (6.5) [Note: contains one newspaper clipping and sheet re Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC)]	[1985]
	1/4	Strategy Document: Draft ideas on a strategy document for the Left 1985	1985
	1/5	Tax material [tax policy]	1985
	1/6	<i>What is Socialist Forum?</i> [leaflet written by SF organiser Julia Gillard]	c.1985
	1/7-8	Broad Left Conference, Sydney, 28-31 March 1986. [Two files including pre conference planning, participants' lists, papers]	1985-1986
	1/9	Socialist Forum 1985 – 1986	1985-1986
	1/10	Socialist Forum 1985 – 1989 [Note: both files include material on SF relationship with ALP and trade unions, ALP factionalism]	1985-1989
1	2	Constitution and Incorporation (11.)	
	2/1	Socialist Forum Constitution - drafts (6.3)	1985
	2/2	Documents on Incorporation (11.2) [Note: Certificate of Incorporation, 21 Jan 1986]	
	2/3	Voting records [concerning adopting Constitution] (11.3)	1986
	2/4	Annual returns 1985-1992 [under Associations Incorporation Act] (11.4)	1985 1985-1992
	2/5	Constitution: Draft changes to [Note: This refers to the development of a later constitution]	1995-1996
1	3	Annual Conference	
	3/1	Annual Conference: 1985 (3.3)	1985
	3/2	Summer Conference: 1986 (3.4)	1986
2	4	Annual General Meetings	
	4/1	Annual General Meetings 1986 – 1993 (7.1)	1986-1993
	4/2	1993 Annual General Meeting material [agenda and related papers including lists of Management Committee members]	1993
	4/3	1994 Annual General Meeting material [balance sheet and statement of income and expenditure only] Annual General Meeting 1996 [agenda, minutes and related papers]	1994
	4/4		1996

<u>Box</u> <u>No</u>	<u>Series</u> <u>Number</u>	Description	Date
2	5	Management Committee (9.)	
	5/1	Management Committee minutes (9.1)	1984-1989
	5/2	Management Committee minutes [includes related correspondence] (9.2)	1990
	5/3	Management Committee minutes (9.3)	1991
	5/4	Management Committee minutes (9.4)	1992-1993
	5/5	Management Committee minutes (9.5)	1994
	5/6	Management Committee minutes and agendas	1995
	5/7	Management Committee minutes and agendas	1996
	5/8	Management Committee minutes and agendas	1997
	5/9	Management Committee minutes and agendas [includes related correspondence]	1998
	5/10	Management Committee: Documents distributed to	1995-1998
	5/11	Management Committee: Statement of Identity: draft documents, discussion [undated]	n.d.
	5/12	Socialist Forum Executive Officer: Reports to Management Committee	1995
2	6	Public Issues Committee (10.)	
	6/1	Public Issues Committee minutes (10.1)	1987-1989
	6/2	Public Issues Committee related documents (10.2)	[1987-1989]
2	7	Interest Groups (1.)	
		[Note: Most files contain membership lists; some contain minutes, topics for discussion]	
	7/1	Interest Groups – General (1.1) [proforma letters]	1984-1986
	7/2	Industrial/Wednesday Morning Meeting Group (1.2)	[1980s]
	7/3	Peace and Disarmament Interest Group (1.3)	1984-1987
	7/4	Left Teachers Group (1.4)	1985
	7/5	Legal Workers (1.5)	1984
	7/6	Metalworkers' Interest Group (1.6)	c.1984
	7/7	Artworkers' Group (1.7)	c.1984-1985

<u>Box</u> <u>No</u>	<u>Series</u> <u>Number</u>	Description	Date
3	8	Membership and Donations	
	8/1	Donation records (4.10)	[1992]
	8/2	Members' renewal letters [proforma letters of 'invitations to renew'] (8.1)	c.1991-1994
	8/3	Subscribers' renewal letters [proforma and similar to above] (8.2)	c.1991-1994
	8/4	New members' letters [proforma approval of application to join] (8.3)	1985 – n.d.
	8/5-6	Membership receipt books [2 books] [Note: may be only complete record of SF membership]	1987-1989; 1990-1992
	8/7	Members mailing lists 1993 1994 1995 (5.3)	1993-1995
	8/8	Fundraising – general [proforma letter asking for direct debit contributions and list of members (names only) who paid direct debit payments] (7.3)	n.d.
	8/9	1993 SF renewals	1993
	9	Material distributed to members	
	9/1	Samples of subscription renewals, notices of meetings 'over the years' [Note: File created by SF titled "Samples..." as above]	1985-1998
	9/2	Socialist Forum circulars [most undated]	c.1990-1991
3	10	Financial Records	
	10/1	Financial Statements (4.7)	Sep 1984 - 30 Jun1989
	10/2	Annual Audits (4.9)	1986-1992
3	11	Fundraising Functions	
	11/1	Woza Albert (4.1)	31 Jul 1985
	11/2	Scandals (4.2)	14 Nov 1985
	11/3	Tracers (4.3)	3 Apr 1986
	11/4	Pearls before Swine (4.4)	18 Jul 1986
	11/5	Book Fair (4.5)	9 Aug 1986
	11/6	Annual Dinner 1986 (4.7)	1986
	11/7	Fundraising Dinner 1987 [includes photographs of Premier John Cain, the night's speaker]	Aug 1987
	11/8	Last Train to St Kilda (4.9)	1 Sep 1987
	11/9	BOHPA (4.10)	30 Mar 1988
	11/10	Annual Dinner 1988 (4.11)	1988
	11/11	Annual Dinner 1990 [also contains tickets to 1989 dinner] (4.14)	1990
	11/12	Dubcek Dinner 1991	8 May 1991
	11/13	Quiz Night 1993	1993

<u>Box</u> <u>No</u>	<u>Series</u> <u>Number</u>	Description	Date
3	12	Contact lists	
	12/1	Contact lists – Parliament and Ministerial Advisors (1.1)	1985 –1987
	12/2	Contact list – Press (1.2)	c.1985
	12/3	Newsletter contact list (1.3)	c.1990
4	13	Press Clippings	
	13/1	Press clippings and related correspondence (2.1)	1985-1987
	13/2	Press clippings – general (2.2)	1985-1988
4	14	Conferences, Seminars, Summer Schools	
	14/1	Summer School: General (3.1.1)	[1985]
	14/2	Summer School: Registrations (3.1.2)	[1985]
	14/3	Summer School: Speeches (3.1.3)	[1985]
	14/4	Public Sector Seminar – General, 27-28 Jul 1985 (3.2.1)	1985
	14/5	Public Sector Seminar Registrations (3.2.2)	1985
	14/6	Public Sector Seminar Speeches (3.2.3)	1985
	14/7	[Trade] Union Power Seminar (3.5)	c.1986
	14/8	Summer Conference – 1987. <i>Socialism – Renewal or Irrelevance</i> (3.6)	1987
	14/9	Disarmament Seminar [file almost empty] (3.7)	n.d.
	14/10	Summer Conference series (3.8)	n.d.
	14/11	Carmichael meeting	c.1986
	14/12	Topic of the Month [Flyers on public meetings]	1986
	14/13	March 1994 Seminar [flyer for proposed Joint AFS/SF Seminar ‘ <i>Labor and the left in the 1990s: going beyond the old answers</i> ’; proposed 1993 speakers’ programme]	1993-1994
	14/14	Past functions 1993 and 1994	1993-1994
	14/15	Rationalist Society of Australia [Cold War lessons: debate between Bernie Taft and Robert Manne, 22 November 1995, transcript]	1995
	14/16	Joint events, forums SF and AFS: correspondence, newsletters, flyers, advertisements	1995-1998
	14/17	Functions attendance [attendee lists for discussion sessions]	1992-1994
4	15	Past Study Circles	
	15/1	General (5.1)	c.1985
	15/2	Major Political Traditions – Study Circle (5.2)	c.1985
	15/3	Economics Study Circle Material (5.3)	c.1986
	15/4	Industrial Relations Study Circle (5.4)	[1985 – 1988]

<u>Box</u> <u>No</u>	<u>Series</u> <u>Number</u>	Description	Date
5	16	Correspondence inward and outward [Note: 1988 correspondence not located]	
	16/1	Past Correspondence [1984-1987] (6.1)	[1984-1987]
	16/2	Correspondence 1986 (3.1)	1986
	16/3	Correspondence 1987 (3.2)	1987
	16/4	Correspondence 1989 (3.4)	1989
	16/5	Correspondence 1990 (3.5)	1990
	16/6	Correspondence 1991 (3.6)	1991
	16/7	Correspondence 1992-1993	1992-1993
	16/8	Correspondence 1994	1994
	16/9	Correspondence 1995-1998	1995-1998
	16/10	Correspondence – outwards [letters of thanks]	1995-1996
	16/11	Correspondence – outwards [to AFS re cost sharing arrangements]	1995-1996
	16/12	Correspondence [re SF, EVC and AFS joint arrangements]	1997
	16/13	Correspondence – Pamphlet series [concerning publishing of pamphlets jointly by SF, AFS, Pluto Press] (13.1)	[1987-1992]
5	17	Humanist Society of Victoria Incorporated	
	17/1	Humanist Society of Victoria Incorporated [notices of meetings]	1995
6	18	Socialist Forum Newsletter Committee	
	18/1	Newsletter Committee: Minutes of meetings	1991-1993
6	19	Socialist Forum Newsletters: Originals [Note: Newsletters pasted up ready for photocopying; marked up drafts and related papers. 1992 was not located]	
	19/1	Newsletters: drafts/papers (2.2)	[1985-1987]
	19/2	Newsletters: drafts/papers (2.2)	1988-1989
	19/3	Newsletters: drafts/papers (5.1) [includes samples of letterhead]	1990-1991
	19/4	Newsletters: drafts/papers	1991
	19/5	Newsletters: drafts/papers	Aug 1993
	19/6	Newsletters: drafts/papers	Oct 1993
	19/7	Newsletters: drafts/papers	Dec 1993
	19/8	Newsletters: drafts/papers	Mar 1994
	19/9	Newsletters: drafts/papers	Jun 1994
	19/10	Newsletters: drafts/papers	Aug 1994

<u>Box</u> <u>No</u>	<u>Series</u> <u>Number</u>	Description	Date
7	20	Socialist Forum Newsletters: File copies. (2.) [Note: Final 'file copies' which were generally distributed incorporating an attachment titled <i>What's On.</i>]	
	20/1	Newsletters [1984] - 1985	c.1984 – 1985
	20/2	Newsletters 1986[including undated paper Socialist renewal: Facing up to the issues] 1	1986
	20/3	Newsletters 1987	1987
	20/4	Newsletters 1988	1988
	20/5	Newsletters 1989	1989
	20/6	Newsletters 1990	1990
	20/7	Newsletters 1991	1991
	20/8	Newsletters 1992	1992
	20/9	Newsletters 1993	1993
	20/10	Newsletters 1994 - 1998	Mar 1994 – Feb 1998
7	21	Evatt Victoria Centre	
	21/1	Evatt Foundation/Evatt Victoria Centre [Note: includes minutes, correspondence and reports re establishment of EVC; involvement of SF and AFS]	1995-1997
	21/2	EVC Management Committee: Minutes and associated papers [incomplete]	Dec. 1996-Dec. 1997
	21/3	EVC, AFS, SF Memorandum of Understanding	9 May 1997
	21/4	EVC accounts and receipts to SF [re cost sharing]	7 Jul 1997 – 1 May 1998
	21/5	EVC Launch, 11 September 1997	1997
	21/6	EVC Reference Group mailing lists	n.d.
	21/7	EVC correspondence to Janet Hase, Secretary SF	29 Jun 1998