

# OBITUARY

## BOB (ROBERT) SUTHERLAND

30/10/1939 – 08/12/2021

Bob Sutherland passed away at Canberra Hospital on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 aged 82 after a short illness. Even though he had poor health in his last few years, he was still vitally interested in many things and particularly politics and was working as a volunteer until Covid arrived in 2020.



Following his time at Newcastle Boys High School, leaving in 1956, Bob gained admission to the University of Newcastle College of the University of NSW which was then situated at Tighe's Hill and enrolled in a B. Commerce in Economics. He was a part time student and worked at Peter's Ice Cream factory and at the Hunter Valley Research Foundation under Prof. Cyril Renwick to support himself while a student.

On graduating from university in 1963 he successfully applied for a position in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in the Federal Public Service in Canberra and moved there in 1963. In those days Canberra was a small town of hostels and young people but it was a vibrant community. The lake site was still slowly filling but in October 1964 he was able to see Lake Burley Griffin full and being 'opened' by PM Robert Menzies.

Bob loved Canberra and was always a very strong supporter of it as the capital of Australia and a pleasant place to live but he always held a strong attachment to his home town of Newcastle and his school and university. He used to very much enjoy attending the school reunions.

Bob worked in several Federal Public Service departments over the years. - the Bureau Of Agricultural Economics, Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dept. of Northern Development and the Federal Office of Road Safety in the Dept. of Transport.

Following Bob's retirement in 1994 from the Federal Public Service, a work colleague suggested that he should apply to the National Gallery of Australia to train as a volunteer guide. He was accepted into their program and there he spent some of his happiest days as he was a very sociable person and loved meeting and talking to the visitors and of course, he enjoyed the art.

A few years later he expanded his guiding by becoming a volunteer guide at "Old Parliament House" – now known as the "Museum of Australian Democracy". This was a good fit as he had a strong interest in and extensive knowledge of Australian history and politics.

Among Bob's favourite occasions in Canberra were the election night parties with Malcolm Mackerras and later Antony Green on ABC TV providing progress of results and with his friends providing vigorous commentary and debate.

Bob was also involved in community politics and was for several years chairman of the Weston Creek Community Council in Canberra. It was in this capacity, he was invited to meet the Queen by Kate Carnell who was then Chief Minister. This was somewhat at odds with his republican beliefs. He was also Chairman of U3A in Canberra for a short time too.

