



## JULY 2013 NEWSLETTER

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- Seminar 17<sup>th</sup> July Dr Peter Abelson, Economics of Local Government

Dear members,

We begin this newsletter with some sad news. Helen Hughes, AO, Distinguished Fellow of the Economic Society, and an inspiration to many of us, passed away on 15<sup>th</sup> June. She will be greatly missed. In this newsletter, NSW Branch member, Professor John Lodewijks has provided a brief reflection on this truly remarkable person.

Also earlier this month – on 19<sup>th</sup> June – we held the 2013 annual general meeting (AGM) of the NSW Branch of the Economic Society. At the AGM the office bearers and council members for 2013/14 were appointed. It's pleasing that we have a healthy mix of returning members and new council members. On behalf of the society I'd like to thank the outgoing Secretary, Ellis Connolly, and council member Isaac Gross who have each done so much for the society over the last few years.

There are a few events of note coming up. Early in July (7-10 July), the Economic Society of Australia's premier event, the Australian Conference of Economists (ACE2013), will be held in Perth. This newsletter contains additional details; better still go to the ACE2013 website (<http://www.ace2013.org.au>).

We're delighted that the NSW Branch monthly seminar program is kicking off this financial year on 17<sup>th</sup> July with a talk by Professor Peter Abelson, Mayor of Mosman on the economics of local government.

I'd also like to draw your attention to the LinkedIn group we have created for the NSW branch. LinkedIn is a networking site for professionals. This group provides an opportunity for economists to network with each other, discuss interesting topics and provide feedback to the society. It is a members-only group. Further details are contained in the Newsletter.

**Richard Tooth | ESA President (NSW)**

# Helen Hughes, AO

## Distinguished Fellow of the Economic Society of Australia

by Professor John Lodewijks\*

Members of our Society were saddened to hear that Professor Helen Hughes had passed away on Saturday the 15th June, aged 84. Only recently she had been a speaker at our Emerging Economist Series. Helen was presented the Distinguished Fellow Award by the Economic Society of Australia in 2004 - which is the highest honour that our Society can bestow.

Born in Prague, she emigrated with her family to Melbourne in 1939 because, as she said “we would have been killed if we hadn’t! It seemed a good alternative”. Many members of her extended family died in the Holocaust. She went to Melbourne University and then completed a PhD at the LSE. She taught at various Australian universities before taking a “15 year sabbatical” at the World Bank where she rose quickly up the ranks to become Director of the Economic Analysis Department and initiated what is now known as World Development Indicators. She returned to Australia in 1983 as a Professor at the ANU, and Director of the National Centre for Development Studies, and in 1993 moved to Sydney where she was associated with the Centre for Independent Studies. She began working on Aboriginal issues in 2005.

Helen Hughes broke many “glass ceilings” both here and overseas. In the 1960s she was a female academic economist in a very male dominated profession. When she started at the World Bank there were 2000 professionals, six of them were women. Helen was the first female Director of that institution. She said that now “my grandchildren take equality of men and women for granted, they expect women to work, to have careers”. Widely described as Australia’s most prominent female economist, she bristled at that description and just wanted to be known as a good economist. Helen has been variously described as a “fiery character” and “pugnacious”; and she described herself as a “boat-rocker ... I stick my neck out and fight on issues of principle”. With her passing Australia loses one of our most fascinating and controversial economists.



\* Professor of Economics & Finance at the University of Western Sydney. John is also the author of 'A Conversation with Helen Hughes', Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy, 23, 2007.

# NSW Branch Annual General Meeting

The NSW Branch of the Economic Society AGM was held on 19<sup>th</sup> June. At the AGM reports were presented by the President, Treasurer, Secretary and the Young Economist Network. Some highlights are:

- The Young Economist Network has been established
- The branch hosted many successful events over 2012/2013, including:
  - monthly seminars
  - a number of new evening events
  - Emerging Economist Series
- Membership numbers are steady
- The branch maintains a healthy financial position

At the AGM the council for 2013/2014 was finalised. The council will be:

## Office bearers

**President:** Richard Tooth

**Vice-president academic:** Paul Oslington

**Vice-president business:** Robert Smith

**Treasurer:** Mathew Dunn

**Secretary:** Kevin Lane

## Council members

Daniel De Voss

John Diller

Hayley Fisher

Helen Hughson

Danielle Merrett

Tony Stokes

Ed Wilson

Alex Yildirim

## LinkedIn

### NSW Member Group LinkedIn established

We have created a LinkedIn group for branch members. By joining this group you can participate in interesting discussions, get connected to others members and get early updates on ESA activities.

The group is The Economic Society of Australia - NSW Branch. It is a member-only group. We have pre-registered group members using the email address on record. If you can't get access please try joining using the same email address as recorded with your membership or sending a quick email to our administrator. To join the ESA NSW Members Only Group, login to [LinkedIn](#) and search for The Economic Society of Australia (NSW) Branch or alternatively follow this link:

[http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4379477&trk=myg\\_ugrp\\_ovr](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4379477&trk=myg_ugrp_ovr)

# ACE

42nd Australian Conference of Economists

# 2013

Perth, Western Australia

July 7th – 10th

The Economic Society of Australia (ESA), in conjunction with Murdoch University, invites you to participate in Australia's largest annual conference of economists.

**Conference theme:** Beyond the Frontiers: New Directions in Economics

**When:** Sunday, July 7, 2013 - Wednesday, July 10, 2013

Key note speakers include:

- Robert Sugden
- Richard B. Freeman
- Kala M. Krishna
- Karen Mumford
- Graham Loomes
- Glenn W. Harrison
- Robert (Bob) Gregory
- Andrew Clark
- Vijay Krishna

For details and registration go to <http://www.ace2013.org.au/>

**Lunchtime Seminar**  
**Speaker: Dr Peter Abelson**  
**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

**Presenter:** Dr Peter Abelson

**Topic:** The Economics of Local Government, with special reference to recent reports by the NSW Treasury Corporation and the Independent Local Government Review Panel

**Time:** 12:15 pm for 12.30 pm, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2013.  
Presentations usually conclude by 1.15 pm to 1.30 pm

**Venue:** Ground Floor East Seminar Room, Reserve Bank of Australia, 65 Martin Place, Sydney

**Cost:** Free, light refreshments provided

**RSVP:** Please respond to [ecosocnsw@ecosoc.org.au](mailto:ecosocnsw@ecosoc.org.au)

In this presentation, Peter Abelson will discuss the economics and finances of local government. In the first part, Peter will discuss systemic economic issues of local government. He will then critically analyse the NSW Treasury Corporation's report (2013) "Financial Sustainability of the NSW Local Government Sector" and the Independent Local Government Review Panel's report (ILGRP, 2013) "Future Directions for NSW Local Government".

Peter Abelson held a Personal Chair in Economics at Macquarie University from 2001 to 2005. From 2006 to 2012 he researched and taught public finance at Sydney University. Peter's text, *Public Economics: Principles and Practice* (3E, 2012, McGraw Hill) is the main Australian text on public finance. As an economic consultant, Peter has prepared reports on local government finance and the Henry Tax Review for the Australian Local Government Association, on the fiscal capacity of local governments for the Productivity Commission and on rate pegging for the NSW Treasury. In 2012 Peter was elected Mayor of Mosman.

## UPCOMING PARTNER EVENTS:

### **Anika Foundation & Australian Business Economists**

**Presenter:** Mr Glenn Stevens, Governor, Reserve Bank of Australia

**Topic:** Current Issues in Economic Policy

**Date:** Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> July 2013

**Time:** 12:15 pm – 2.00pm

**Venue:** Grand Ballroom, Four Seasons Sydney, 199 George Street, The Rocks

**Cost:** \$225 pp or \$2250 for a table of 10

**RSVP:** [Click here](#) or contact [info@abe.org.au](mailto:info@abe.org.au) / call 0419 256 339

## Seminars at Universities

These seminar dates are subject to change. Please check the links provided to confirm.

These events are not hosted by the Economics Society, but are by organisations with a relationship with the Society. You should go to the link provided for further information.

**Note:** Partners may not recognise Economic Society membership for discounts.

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### [University of New South Wales](#)

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Date	Time	Place	Speaker	Topic
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No seminars currently advertised for July; please see [website](#).

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### [University of Sydney](#)

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Date	Time	Place	Speaker	Topic
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No seminars currently advertised for July; please see [website](#).

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### [University of Technology, Sydney](#)

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Date	Time	Place	Speaker	Topic
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5 July	4:00-5:30	Room D301	Ian Walker	TBA
11 July	4:00-5:30	Room D301	Thomas Buchmueller	The effect of public insurance eligibility on access to dental care

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### [Macquarie University](#)

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Date	Time	Place	Speaker	Topic
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No seminars currently advertised for July; please see [website](#).

## JOBS FOR ECONOMISTS

Researcher, Economic Geography or Economic Modelling – New Zealand.  
<http://www.ecosoc.org.au/node/607>

Principal Analyst – Economic Regulation Authority WA.  
<http://www.ecosoc.org.au/node/589>

Job openings are advertised on the Economics Society Central Council website (<http://www.ecosoc.org.au/cc/jobs>).

If you would like to advertise a job opening in the field of economics with us, free of charge, please email details to [ecosocnsw@ecosoc.org.au](mailto:ecosocnsw@ecosoc.org.au)