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Full transcript of
an interview with:

Lynn Arnold

Conducted on: 10 March 2022
Interviewer: **Allison Murchie**
Transcribed by: Trudy Dalgetty

For:

The Don Dunstan Foundation 20th Anniversary Oral History Project

1999–2019 celebrating 20 years of action for a fairer world



DON DUNSTAN FOUNDATION 20th Anniversary **ORAL HISTORY** PROJECT

NOTES TO THE TRANSCRIPT

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A series of dots, indicates an untranscribable word or phrase.

A dash, – indicates a pause or a digression as occurs in informal conversation.

Sentences that were left unfinished in the normal manner of conversation are shown ending in three dashes, - - -

Spelling: Wherever possible the spelling of proper names and unusual terms has been verified. A parenthesised question mark (?) indicates a word that has not been possible to verify to date.

Typeface: The interviewer's questions are shown in **bold print**.

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Lynn Arnold.mp3

This is oral history, 11:52 card number 16. It's Allison Murchie interviewing Lynn Arnold at the State Library on the 10th of March 2022 as part of the Don Dunstan Foundation series of oral history interviews. Just like to acknowledge country first. I acknowledge that we meet on the land at the Kurna people. We pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. Firstly, thanks for coming along.

Thanks, Allison.

It's a delight to have you back in the library again. As we've discussed, this is a series of short oral history interviews of people who were involved with either Don or with the Don Dunstan Foundation. I don't think we need to go into a long-winded introduction as to who you are. You're very, very well known as a long term, long serving state politician and leader of the party and Premier of the state and since leaving, you've also had a very long career with World Vision and the Anglican Church and now at St. Peter's. That's all recorded in other places, so I don't think we need to go into detail today. What I'm particularly interested in is your relationship with Don. How did you first meet Don? I think you met him as a young man, didn't you?

Well, first of all, let me just say, [acknowledgement of country in an Aboriginal language], I think, which I'm wishing to acknowledge that we're meeting on Kurna land.

Thank you.

The, I first met Don when Don didn't meet me. We had arrived in this country in August 1960. I am eleven years nearly twelve and have from the youngest age that I can remember been interested in the politics of the places I've been in. So, we arrive in South Australia in the latter part of 1960 and I very quickly, entering high school in sixty-one, find that I'm very interested in politics and I'm looking at what's happening in state politics. So, when the 1963 election comes around, I'm watching it avidly. I'm fourteen years old and I'm very interested in what's going on. I'm appalled at the gerrymander that's taking place and I distinctly remember Tom Playford justifying this by saying that 'why was Labor complaining because the, while it's true that Labor held the largest seat in the state in terms of voters, it also held the smallest.' It held the seat of Enfield, which had forty thousand electors and it held the seat of Frome that had four thousand electors. Anyway, at this time, I'm watching TV stories and reading in the paper and there's this young MP who really impresses me. Frank Walsh, with all due respect, lovely fellow undoubtedly, but I'm a fourteen-year-old lad and I was captured by this vibrant young politician, Don Dunstan. I share this at school with my mates and one mate who obviously came from a

liberal family said, 'oh, he sits in the gutter with all sorts of criminals' and so on. So, and I thought, well, anyone who goes and sits on the street, literally sits on the street with people who need help has won my support. So that was the first time I met Don Dunstan, was through TV and news reports and I liked what I saw. Of course he then, in 1965, Frank Walsh wins government and I was excited by that and this young MP for Norwood becomes the attorney general. The next I really think about this is 1968. In that election, when this whole issue of the playmander played out dreadfully with fifty-four percent of the vote, Don Dunstan, who is now the leader, loses the election to Steele Hall on forty-six percent of the vote, all on the back of Tom Scott, who played a pivotal role in the sixty-two election, keeping Playford in power and then played a pivotal role in bringing Steele Hall into the Premiership. Along with many in South Australia I was very angry about that. I was part of university at the time, the Students for Democratic Action and Peter O'Brien and Rob Durbridge were actively demonstrating and organising demonstrations against that, but I still hadn't met Don Dunstan.

Would it be fair to say he was an early hero?

Oh, he was undoubtedly an early hero, I mean I knew that this fellow I admired enormously and so, another person who I was admiring at the time, going back to sixty-three was this contestant on a quiz show whose social attitudes were just so good because Bob Dyer and his co-host Dolly Dyer asked him one night about capital punishment and he said how opposed he was to it and I knew he was a hero too, one Barry Jones, who later on would become a very personal, a very close personal friend and still is to this day. Anyway, I become active in the anti-war movement, and there's been enough talked about that on other interviews. So, by 1970, I had become the chair of the anti-war movement. In 1968, Don Dunstan was prepared to nail his colours to the mast and became one of, what you would, I guess you would call patrons of the Campaign for Peace in Vietnam. They had a number of, probably about fifteen people whose names appeared on the side of the letterhead and so, he was one of those names, but I still at that stage hadn't got to meet him personally directly. He had been at some events that I was at but we hadn't spoken personally. 1970 he is the leader of the opposition. The May moratorium is going to take place in early May and the state election is going to take place in late May and we are wanting to have the moratorium, the May moratorium and I remember at the time Andrew Dunstan talking to us to say, 'well, don't rock the boat too much because we don't want public opinion turning against us and costing Don the election'. In any event, I don't believe we did because the Adelaide moratorium was a

much more sedate affair than the interstate ones, we didn't do it on a Friday afternoon, we did it on a Saturday morning. So, there wasn't the stopping the city that took place in Melbourne on the Friday May the eighth and would take place in Adelaide on September the eighteenth, months later, but this particular one, we followed a very straight down the line sedate kind of approach and Don was quite happy to come publicly out and talk in favour of the march and I met him during that process. To me, this was a huge privilege to be able to meet with the man himself and of course he then got elected just weeks later, re-elected as Premier of the state. I mentioned the sedate May moratorium because the September moratorium was a different affair and I was a key player in that process. I was chair of the Vietnam Moratorium Campaign, which was auspiced by the Campaign for Peace in Vietnam, of which Don Dunstan was still one of these patrons. The VMC monthly meetings had decided that we should in South Australia do the same as they'd done in Melbourne, in other words have the September rally on a Friday and stop the city, as they had done in Collins Street in Melbourne. Brian [Medlin], who was deputy chair and myself, were therefore charged with the task of making this possible. At that particular point there was something of a divide, a falling out that took place between Don Dunstan and the VMC. Really, in all honesty, looking back on it there was a disingenuous act on the part of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee, of which I was chair. We agreed to the publication of an advert in the paper that would say the march will stop and it was supported by the Campaign for Peace in Vietnam and we named all the patrons. Don, who had already made his view known that he did not support there being a stopping in the intersection, resigned from the CPB and so, there was this falling out and other members did too, by the way. So, this was a breakdown in the relationship. There had been some months before I'd actually gone around to Don's house in George Street and met with him in his home to talk about the moratorium activities. Now the situation was more distant, and so it was Peter Ward who worked for Don Dunstan at the time, who would call Brian [Medlin] and myself into a meeting in Parliament House to try and negotiate a more modified response by us. We felt honour bound to continue with the idea of a stoppage and we had discussions with the police and we wouldn't tell them where, we did decide, Brian and myself in the end that we would not stop on the return journey, it's going to be Elder Park, Victoria Square, Victoria Square, Elder Park and we'll stop on the return leg. Brian and I, however, decided we would stop before then. That then resulted in what I talked about previously a large demonstration with lots of arrests, one hundred and thirty-eight, I was one of them, court cases. Don Dunstan's response was to say he was angry at us for having done that, but he also was disconcerted by the reaction of the police, which he felt

was an overreaction and he felt that there was a right to demonstrate that should be explored and so in what I think was a pioneering activist action on his part, he convened the Wright Royal Commission to investigate what should have, well what had actually happened on that day, to report on that and what should be the advice to government on the rights of demonstrations to take place and on the rights of the rest of society in the context of those rights. Now, I refused to give evidence to the royal commission because we were not given legal help and that has its own story, which has been separately recorded elsewhere. But I regard what Don did then in the convening of that royal commission as being really significant in South Australian public opinion right to express a feeling because the Wright Royal Commission came down and while criticising the decisions of Brian Medlin and myself had made, also gave advice about the rights of people to demonstrate and the rights of people to do so that may inconvenience others and I think that gave us the best demonstration laws in the country. So, in a kind of way, I say that our activities sparked that, but a more significant way Don Dunstan enabled that to translate into a positive outcome for democratic opinion. But at that stage, I think it's probably still fair to say that we were not in close contact.

You weren't getting together for Friday beer?

We weren't getting ready for a Friday beer. However, notwithstanding that, I was admiring what he was doing as Premier of the state, watching the dramatic social change that was taking place, setting an entire new tone even before the Whitlam government got elected and then, of course, the Whitlam government gets elected and takes all of that to a national level. I'm then becoming active in the Labor Party; I joined the Labor Party in 1973 because of Don Dunstan really. I wanted to be, I want to say also because of Whitlam, but more it was because of Don Dunstan. I wanted to be a part of this significant social movement for progressive change. I joined the Salisbury sub-branch, whose MP was then Reg Groth and I remember going with him to various meetings, including one that Don Dunstan spoke at in 1975 at the Shedley Theatre at the Elizabeth Town Centre. This was the week when things were looking very bad. The polls for Whitlam were disastrous and the rub on effect for the Dunstan government was also pretty serious and in the seventy-five election, Don Dunstan spoke at the Festival Theatre at a public meeting and repeated virtually the same address at the Shedley Theatre which I heard saying we are hurting by the public's reaction to the Whitlam government. Do not punish us for the things you're unhappy with. That speech in the end, I think, was the difference between government and opposition because it managed to save Jack Slater's seat of Gillies, where he just got over

the line, which took the government to one seat short of a majority. The other seat that was to give them government was a seat that they had expected to win, Port Pirie, but there had been an argument over the preselection of a, somebody from outside the area, and Ted Connolly, the Mayor of Port Pirie, had stood, a former Labor Party member, had stood for the seat in protest of a non-local being preselected and Ted Connolly won the seat and Ted was given the position of Speaker by Don and that gave the casting vote for the government. The next time I would have some contact with Don, the local member who I was now working for as his electorate secretary, Reg Groth, I became his secretary in 1976, said that there was going to be a special edition of I've, not I've got a secret, This Is Your Life, the TV program, a national program at the time and so Don said, Reg said ---

When was this? Seventy-six still?

Seventy-six or seventy-seven. I can't remember which. He said, 'I've got tickets to be in the audience would you like to come?' and so there am I sitting in the front row of the program, which Don knew nothing about, where his life story is then told.

Where did they do it?

They, I think they must have done that in the channel nine studios in Tynte Street but I ---

So, what was the pretence to get him there?

Oh he was told he was going to some interview in a back room there and then he was going to, they did the interview, this mock interview and then while the audience are watching and the program was being hyped up and then the host, whoever that was, it may have been Ray Martin I can't remember, then says 'and now our guest is ---' and Don, who's thinking he's leaving the building is walking into the studio and Don Dunstan; this is your life and so anyway, that was seventy-six or seventy-seven, I can't remember but I was working for Reg Groth at the time. But really, between the 1970 personal contacts with him and a one on one, there hadn't been any more. I say that because that's significant about what took place in 1978. My predecessor Reg Groth, my boss at that stage had said to me, 'you should go for this seat when I retire and I'm looking to retire the election after next.' In other words, what on the scales it should have been, that should have been 1983, if it had been three-year terms. The seventy-seven election would graduate in 1980 and the 1980 to eighty-three and the Reg said he would retire and he would, that I should be, go for the candidacy. Well, things turned out differently to that and in 1978, Reg Groth was told his health was not in a good shape, he really should go out on

ill health at the next state election. The election had been held in seventy-seven so, Reg said that 'I'm going to announce my retirement from the 1980 election and I now support you to be the candidate'. I put my name forward. Nominations were not yet open, but Reg came back to me one day and he said, 'Lynn, there's troubles, the troubles are this is a safe seat, you are not a union person, you're seen as an academic egghead', the irony is that by that stage, I still actually hadn't got a degree under my belt, I'd been such a bad university student that I dilly dallied and still didn't have a degree. So, he said, 'they say you should run for a marginal seat and a union official should get this seat'. I actually partly understood that and I said, 'well, maybe I should run for the seat of Adelaide' and Reg said 'no, the danger is you will win that seat' and I said 'what's the danger there?' He said, 'well, you'll win it and lose it at the following election'. Oh, it was the seat of Torrens it was called then, the seat of Torrens that was held by John Coumbe and then later would be held by Michael Wilson and Mike Duigan would, in fact, for one term, hold the seat and fulfill the problem of a seat like that, that you win it once and you don't hold it. Anyway, I've digressed. So, but Reg said, 'no look, I'm going to talk to Don' and so he went to Don and he said 'Don, do you want Lynn Arnold in Parliament?' and Don said, 'yes, I do.'

Apparently, at the same time, Geoff Virgo had faced a similar problem in his seat, he was retiring from the seat of Ascot Park and he wanted John Trainer to be the member and John Trainer was facing the same objections that I faced and so he had also said to Don, 'do you want John Trainer in parliament?' and Don said, 'yes, I do.' Well Reg said, 'you're not going to have it because the union movement don't want a nonunion person and indeed, they've already nominated somebody they want and that's Malcolm Skinner of the Transport Workers Union' and I have separately told the story, the impressive story of Malcolm Skinner, a wonderful human being whose loyalty was second to none, to the party and to me who then became the member. But so, he said to Don, 'Don unless you get involved, you will not have Lynn as the member for Salisbury,' as the seat was still called. So, Don then decided to have discussions with different people and he said, 'What is it that would take it to get Lynn and John Trainer elected?' At the time it appeared that a main mover in the discussion and you know the person I'm about to mention was George Apap, who was particularly upset from the Storemen and Packers Union, he'd come from Victoria to South Australia and Don said, 'Well, why don't we give George a seat?' and the ... it might be Charlie Harrison was the member for Albert Park and he was retiring too at the seventy-nine election. Well, at that stage we still thought it was going to be the 1980 election, by the way and he said, 'Why don't we give him that?' and they said, 'No, George will lose that seat, it's too marginal, we should give him Semaphore.' Long story short, of

course, George didn't manage to win Semaphore because Semaphore had the same issues the Port Pirie had. That is that they very much were locally focused, wanted local people. As it happens, it probably would have been better had George stood for Albert Park because that didn't have the same particular idiosyncratic local almost chauvinism that ultimately cost him the chance to get into Parliament. So, Don does that and Malcolm Skinner comes to me and says, 'Lynn, I'm withdrawing my candidacy, but I support you.' At the time, I thought, well that's very gracious because he had the seat on a platter. That's very gracious and when he said he was going to support me fully, I thought, yes, that's a gracious comment to make, too but I had no right to expect him to do it because he had lost the chance to be in parliament and may not get it again and indeed, he didn't. But he did honour his word and not only at that election, when he actively supported Reg Groth as my campaign director, he, after every other election, after that he was my campaign director and worked solidly for the rest of my time in parliament to back my candidacy, which was the sign of true loyalty to the party and to me as a friend. Anyway, so I'm now preselected on the day before my wedding, my wife and I got married on the Queen's birthday Monday on June the 5th, 1978 and five, six, seven, eight and I'm preselected the evening of the Sunday evening, June the fourth and I'm really excited because now I'm going to be elected to Parliament in 1980, when the next election was due and serve under Don Dunstan, who at the time we all believe would go on being the Premier because the government would go on being elected and he would be its leader. It was quite shattering then, just seven months later, in February 1979 to wake up to the news that Don Dunstan had taken ill. He was in the Calvary Hospital in North Adelaide with exhaustion and a suspected aneurysm and he's announcing from a wheelchair in a dressing gown that he's leaving parliament. Here this thing that I'd looked forward to was no longer going to happen. He did leave. Des Corcoran was elected and Des Corcoran, unfortunately, decided he needed his own mandate and chose to go early. The problem was the electorate was tired of early elections, it had had an early election in seventy-five, another one in seventy-seven. So, we'd had two, two-year parliaments and now we were having a third two-year parliament. The electorate for that and other reasons had had enough and voted the government out and so I enter parliament, having expected to be a government backbencher, becoming an opposition backbencher. For me personally, of course, that turned out to be a silver lining to a cloud because it enabled me to be in contest for shadow ministry positions to which I was elected eighteen months later. Don had left the state he had gone to Perugia to study Italian to take a break and I admired what he did by doing that. It's something I would follow years later when I left politics by

going overseas, something I recommended to John Bannon that he should do. Allow the ghosts of the past to evaporate so when you come back, they don't haunt you. Don did that, in fact he extended it, he came back briefly and then was appointed to administer, a Director of Tourism by the John Cain government in Victoria. There is some, I think, some sad history to that. Don would have liked to have stayed in South Australia and would have liked to have been appointed to something by the government. John Bannon, who had been mentored by Don and Don had pushed him very actively after his election to parliament in seventy-seven to actually enter the ministry quite early. So, he spent a minimal time on the backbench and yet John didn't feel comfortable. He felt it was still too much ghosts of the past, haunting the Dunstan legacy of the latter part that led to its defeat, albeit that it was Des who was the leader and John would not consider appointing Don to anything locally and I think that's one of the sadness's of time Don deserved something. Anyway, he gets a position in Victoria, goes off to Victoria and shows some remarkable flair. I recall being in the car one day, bursting out laughing, listening to an ad from Victorian tourism department in the middle of June and the ad is not spoken by him, but it was clearly his kind of brainwave. The ad is 'What does Melbourne have that Noosa doesn't have? What does Melbourne have that the Gold Coast doesn't have? What does Melbourne have that Byron Bay doesn't have? Winter!' and then it goes on to talk about all the cultural things of Melbourne in winter and so on, which was, but it was just a brainwave of a coming at something from a totally different side, that is Don, whether he actually was the author of it I don't know, but it would have been something that I easily thought he could have done and if somebody else had done it, he would immediately relate to it. But he stayed there some years he also, by the way, gave me another inkling of possibilities because he became the chair of Freedom from Hunger campaign and this was a message that you can do things after politics and this was a non-paid position. Freedom from Hunger was a small organisation and he, I think, oversaw its amalgamation with Austcare, the Australian Campaign for Refugees. Anyway, I just put that as an aside. Time goes on, I carry on in government. We get re-elected in eighty-five and eighty-nine, albeit the minority government status and then the State Bank disaster happens. John Bannon valiantly tries to steer this ship of state as far as possible and without any pressure from anybody that he might go, everybody knew he would make his own decision. He did his best to stabilise the ship until he knew he couldn't do it any longer and coming into Cabinet one Monday at the start of the meeting, he said I have some things to talk about at the end of the meeting. This is September the third of 1992, and we all, there was nothing special about that because he often said, I have things to discuss at the end of the meeting. So, we went

through an incredibly ordinary cabinet meeting of just doing item by item and having discussions this way and that and listening to Treasury advice and whatever. You could not have picked that meeting as any different from any normal Monday meeting of ours and then at five o'clock, he said, 'Oh, now I've got some things to discuss. I went a long run yesterday and I've thought it, I've seen the polls, we are going to lose every seat on current polling. I can't bring the saving of this government that I have tried so hard to do. I'm now burdened. I should go.' We argue the toss and he said, 'Look, I appreciate that. That's not what I've come to ask you. I've come to tell you, I'm leaving.' I'm paraphrasing, but this is the gist of what he said. He looked up at the list of Premiers on the wall and there's one spare photographic round in the bottom of the big frame. 'I've often wondered who will be there? It looks like it'll be you, Lynn.' And anyway, long story short, the next morning I was elected by the caucus unopposed and on September the fourth I was sworn in, actually September the fourth was a Thursday, so must be September the first was the Monday, when he told us. I immediately knew I had a few things to do and one of them was to create a coalition government and that's when I had discussions with Terry Groom and Norm Peterson and Martin Evans. But the other thing I knew I should do was listen to advice and so I did talk with John about his views about what the road ahead was, but I contacted Don Dunstan because I was particularly keen to hear his advice and so for a few times over the following month, certainly over the formation of the coalition, which was deeply opposed by some sections of the Labor Party, because the Labor Party and the state had not been in coalition with anybody since 1906 and it was regarded as a heresy to even think about not letting a labor person take a ministry but giving it to a non-labor parliamentary member and I asked Don, 'Am I doing the right thing?' and Don said, 'You are absolutely doing the right thing, this is a must.' and so steeled with that strength of opinion from him, I proceeded down that path and the coalition government was formed. There are some members of the caucus who were really aggrieved by that and some who it took some time to resolve personal relationships with. But even after that, I continued to meet Don from time to time, ask him to come in and it was a great tribute to the man that he, this was some years before he died ---

You said he'd come in; is this is when he'd come back to Adelaide?

Yes, he was already back in Adelaide really.

So, he would meet you at Parliament House?

No, in the State Admin Centre.

Okay.

And in the office that was still in the decor that had been redesigned in the 1970s when he was Premier, orange carpet and black leather furniture, very seventies. Nobody had since then thought to change what had long since gone out of fashion, but it made him feel at home, I guess. So, I would bring him in and say, 'Don, what do you think, what do you think?' and so his throat was already in a problem. He was having to drink ice cubes and water to ease the harshness of the therapy he was receiving, but he'd still come in and we would talk about it and I remember that, particularly with great warmth, that he was going to do what he could. The, we go to the election, of course, the election is lost. Oh, before we go to the election, there was some thought that we might extend into the 1994. There's a quirk of the sitting dates of parliament, as to when an election can be held and I forget the exact issues here, but we'd been elected in seventy, in eighty-nine, re-elected. The election should have been ninety-three, but by the virtue of when the House first sat after the eighty-nine election, it didn't sit till 1990. There was a possibility of the election not being till 1994 and various people were recommending to me that I should delay the elections to 1994, including Chris Schacht and others. Don Dunstan invited me round to his home in George Street for a dinner and his son Andrew was there, Paul [Dunstan] might have been there too, I can't remember. I'd known Paul in another context and I listened to them. Don was saying, I should wait the distance. My worry was that we would be seen to be hanging on to the bitter end, which would cause us more damage than enough. I knew we were going to lose but I felt we would lose worse had I been seen to be clinging on to the last desperate date. It is, of course, something John Olsen did do in 2001, when the election should have been held in late 2001, he hung on to the following year. Well, he at that stage lost the job and Rob Kerin had replaced him but it was John Olsen's motivation I think that said they should carry on to the last possible minute.

Did Don give you a reason why he thought you should continue on?

Well, he just felt that we had a better chance of winning.

And you thought the opposite?

I don't know that he felt we had a chance of winning. He felt we had a chance of not losing too bad.

Doing better, yes.

Anyway, we lost the election and Don then met me afterwards and said what I was myself also wondering about after the loss of the election. He said, 'Remember sixty-eight? We came back. I lost the election in sixty-five.' Now I did actually think about that and so one of the things I did wonder about in that first couple of months after the December ninety-three election, was whether I could do the impossible and bring back. However, it was not like with like, because in sixty-five Frank Walsh had beaten the Tom Playford government on fifty-two percent of the vote or something, I forget what the fifty, maybe it might have been fifty-four or whatever was over fifty percent, which was hardly any surprise because the sixty-three election Playford had won less than fifty percent and Playford had not won more than fifty percent since the early 1950s. So, when Don loses the sixty-eight election with fifty-four percent and gets re-elected in seventy, you knew he was going to get re-elected on any rights of justice. We, however, had lost the eighty-nine election on a plurality, we'd won it on seats but lost it on plurality and then we lost the ninety-three election on a bigger margin. So, it was not the same context of thinking we could win ninety-seven. Anyway, separately, that's all being recorded that I chose to leave parliament and hand over to Mike [Rann], who I knew was the natural successor. It was, in fact and it was deemed he would be the successor even when I carried on as leader of the opposition. The deal was Lynn you carry on as leader, stabilise the party and then after the next election we'll replace you. No problem with that. I then went overseas and then came back ninety-four to ninety-six in Spain, came back to Adelaide for a brief time, then went overseas to everywhere, I went straight to Melbourne with World Vision, didn't have any direct contact with Don, but my parents did because there was a special event held for the opening of Peter Duncan's new restaurant in Victoria Square.

Was it called something on the square?

Yeah, something on the square, yes and because Peter and I had become quite close in my time as leader of the opposition and in my time overseas because he came and stayed with us in Valencia, he and Julie, his late wife Julie, and their daughter Georgie and so we'd become quite close and so Peter invited me to the opening of his restaurant. I said, 'I can't go.' He said, 'Well, why don't your parents come?' because he knew my parents because he had met them in Valencia too and so they went and he was very keen that they sit next to Don and so my father and Don and my mother, but my father particularly, and Don at this stage was very ill. It's one of these things about people who have serious illness as to how other people react. Some people don't know what to say and they feel awkward and uncomfortable. Some people feel bravado is the answer. 'You'll get over this

Don, you'll ---'and I remember my parents saying this at the early... .. 'You'll beat this Don' and yet the truth of the matter was Don was in the final phase of his life and what he really wanted was, my parents were feeling, was just a chance to be in that space that is an awesome space, a difficult space and not have too much noise about the issue and so they didn't speak about that sort of issue. They just spoke with him as a person of intelligence and on intelligent topics and my father and he apparently had a really deep conversations on all sorts of things, never mentioning that the tough part of life's journey that he was going through. We would get to know that more closely because it would be only a year later than my father would be diagnosed with cancer, which ultimately would kill him and so we got to know this feeling of what, for, not everybody, but for some people, helps and doesn't help. Anyway so, but I wasn't able to be there because I was in Melbourne and so Don then died and I wasn't there but I wrote to the family, of course. Well, it would be some years later, Greg Crafter had come across to Victoria to talk about setting up a branch of the Dunstan Foundation in Victoria. He was the, he wasn't the first chair of it, I think George Lewkowicz was the first chair.

George was first, yep.

And, but Greg was the second and he managed to set up a branch in Queensland that was with Kim Mayes being there, but the Victorian one never got off the ground. Anyway, long story short, I'm not in South Australia until 2008, I visit often but I'm not living here, I'm first of all in Melbourne and then in Thailand with World Vision.

You have settled down in Adelaide again though?

So, 2008 we come back to Adelaide and I start going to Dunstan Foundation things and then in 2009, Greg Crafter asked me, he said, 'Lynn it's time for me to go from the foundation, would you be prepared to take over the chair?' and I wasn't sure that I was but ---

Why was that?

Well, I was busy with my new job and Anglicare and I just wondered about the time.

If you had time.

It wasn't any dispute with the foundation I strongly ---

No, so it's just the time factor?

No, it's just a time allocation factor. The then Chancellor of the university, which would be James Maguire spoke to me and so I said, 'OK, I'll go for it.' and so then I had the great privilege of being the chair of that foundation from 2010, which is when I took office, to 2020, when I stood down and became patron, one of the patrons. I think Lowitja O'Donoghue is another patron and I think there's some others as well and so to actually be part of that remembrance of Don's legacy and how it would echo in our time, but more importantly, how the memory of his passion and mission could communicate to a generation who had never actually known him. Because, you know, well I was a teenager when Don first gets elected to government but now there were teenagers who, well, they were teenagers after he'd died and so how would they know and so one of the challenges was how can we spread that message of this great man? Aha, yes, 'I want my death to be useful, my fervent hope is that public support will allow the Don Dunstan Foundation to become a driving force in the making of a better, fairer society for us all.' Because you see the foundation ---

Just a little quote that I came across and I thought you'd relate to that.

That's beautiful, absolutely beautiful and that 1970s orange behind it. But that's, because the foundation was actually deliberately set up before he died and so there has been this strong feeling of loyalty to him that we need to keep that, treasure that memory by service to the future with the way in which he looked at the world. That is a beautiful quote.

Do you, I'll give you a copy of that later. Do you think you've succeeded in doing that and are succeeding?

Well, yes absolutely.

Because Jane's now taken over.

I mean, we did all sorts of activities, sort of educational activities, migration seminars, several immigration seminars on Aboriginal issues, loads of [Lowitja] Donoghue oration, which has been a stunning series of orations. If you look at the list of speakers who've been part of that, but I think ---

And that's something you really brought in, wasn't it?

Well, it was before my time ---

But you, are heavily responsible ---

Heavily provided for that sense and that I was, in fact myself an orator in the series in 2016. But I think just to summarise, in short, as a testimony to how significant the Dunstan Foundation was, I and I'm going off on a sidetrack but I'm coming back to a point, in 2009, anti-poverty week had been a national event since about 2002. Every year, a series of events would take place around the country in October focused around, it's a U.N. International Day against Poverty, for the eradication of poverty, which is October the seventeenth. They decide to have a series of activities over a week and organisations and individuals were invited to do something in that week to raise the debate about poverty in this country and in the world. The chair of that was Julian Disney and he was a wonderful chair of that. Anyway, I'm in Anglicare and I get invited to be the state chair in 2009 for a couple of years, co-state chair and I willingly accept it because this is something I strongly believed in. Now I get to meet Julian Disney, who I'd seen off and on years before but never closely met and I'm at a public meeting about homelessness, a national meeting and Julian Disney says, this is about 2010, he says, 'the national debate about homelessness in this country was reinvigorated in 2006 by work of the Don Dunstan Foundation in South Australia. They raised the issue at a state level and a national level and we now talk about it' and I thought, what a tribute to the role. That was before my time in the foundation, but what a tribute to the capacity of an organisation like the Dunstan Foundation following the legacy of Don Dunstan and involving volunteers, I mean it has a small paid staff, very, very small, but just working on activities to change public narratives, which is exactly what Don wanted to do, change public narratives and so anyway, he said that was the Dunstan Foundation did that and so I've used that since when I've spoken at Dunstan things. Well, if we're going to be part of something, are we going to challenge the narratives that need to be challenged and are we prepared to take it to a new level with national effect certainly? Who knows, maybe international too.

I think that's actually a perfect place for us to finish.

Okay.