

Ian Hore-Lacy – Who Loved God’s Creation

John Pilbrow’s recollections – 4 Dec 2021

Ian died as he lived, in God’s Creation that he both loved and enjoyed.

We were of course all shocked to learn of his death while camping with a group of young men he was mentoring, serving the Lord in the way he had done for so long. We all mourn with Libby and the family at this time.

I first remember meeting Ian during the during the late 1960’s when he worked as an IVF¹ Staff Worker. I learned that he had studied science at the University of New England in Armidale and that while there he’d become a Christian through the Evangelical Union. He then gained an MSc in Environmental Science at Melbourne University.

In those days Ian owned a Land Rover in which many Anglican Missionaries in training at St Andrew’s Hall learned the rudiments of driving in rough terrain! This activity continued, I believe, well into the 1970s!

After a short stint teaching Biology at Geelong College, Ian took up an appointment as an Environmental Scientist with Conzinc Rio Tinto [now known simply as Rio Tinto]. He remained with Rio Tinto for about 20 years in a variety of roles. And it was during the early years in that appointment that he became a passionate advocate for Nuclear Energy. I recall attending a Public Forum on Nuclear Energy back in 1976 at the Beaumaris Town Hall [in Bayside, Melbourne] where Ian was one of 4 or 5 Panel Members, including the Dean of Engineering at Monash. There was much heated discussion concerning the disposal of nuclear waste and regarding the cost of building nuclear power plants. Ian was not moved by the counter-arguments.

I still have on my shelves two short books I purchased at that event:- , *Mining and the Environment*, authored by Ian for the Australian Mining Industry Council and *Nuclear Electricity: An Australian Perspective* jointly authored by Ian and, Ron Hubery, an engineer with Mary Kathleen Uranium Ltd. I believe I bought them at the 1976 Public Forum referred to above. [A complete list of Ian’s books may be found in his Wikipedia entry].

Ian ran the Uranium Information Centre in Melbourne from around 1994 until 2001. Then from 2001 for about 16 years, he commuted to London for several months each year to work with what became known as the World Nuclear Association. Since ‘retiring’ Ian has been its Senior Advisor. As recently as October the 20th this year, Ian was interviewed on on **Titans of Nuclear** (<https://www.titansofnuclear.com/experts/ianhorelacy>); his responses provide more details to his life and commitments..

As a committed Christian, Ian consistently advocated responsible stewardship of God’s world, a world in which he believed nuclear energy would need to play a part. His was a minority view amongst Christians who engaged in environmental issues. Ian always argued with grace and fairness, while acknowledging that not everyone would necessarily agree with him.

During the early days of ISCAST here in Melbourne, we remember with gratitude, Ian and Libby’s frequent hospitality in their gracious home in Mont Albert. Among the many important visitors who led our

1 IVF – InterVarsity Fellowship. Today it is known as AFES, Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

discussions in their home over the years, I particularly recall UK Geneticist, Prof John Bryant; noted Historian of Science and former Prof of Chemistry, Colin Russell who explained the rise of creationism in the late 18th Century in Britain; and the discussion on Genomics led by former ISCAST President, Prof John White, then Secretary of the Australian Academy of Science Policy Committee. These and many such occasions involved lively discussion and opportunities for us all to enlarge our perspectives.

I had the privilege of serving with Ian on four Anglican General Synods and I was always encouraged by his positive attitude to the importance of Synod discussion and decisions. The 1989 General Synod occurred during the early days of what became a prolonged Pilots' strike and by the end of the Synod, our return tickets could not be used². As we were all trying to work out how to get home at the end of Synod, Ian arranged the charter of an aircraft on which 30 of us travelled in comfort on the appointed day. So we not have to resort to train or other modes of travel. This was typical of Ian – seek the best solution to the problem in hand – and he knew where to look.

Ian will be missed. His often deeply insightful comments at Faith-Science events, including some of the recent ISCAST-NZCIS Webinars, were always pertinent and helpful. In some ways Ian was a 'one-off' and we won't see his like again very often. We thank God for a good friend, mentor to many and, above all, for his Christian witness both inside and outside the Church.

To Libby and the family, I join with others in extending our condolences to them all at this time and to assure them of our prayers.

2 The Melbourne Diocese eventually received a refund from Qantas for the unusable tickets!