

Paul Madden - A Life Remembered

This article appeared in the CAN bulletin shortly after Paul Madden died on November 20, 2022 and is reprinted here to mark the dedication of the Paul Madden Memorial window on November 26, 2023

It is with deepest sadness that we record the sudden death of long-time CRA member, Paul Madden, 20 November 2022; two days before his 76th birthday. We express our most sincere sympathy to his partner Helen and their family.

For five decades Paul made significant contributions to social justice at both a local and national level. His personal and professional life was committed to social justice and alleviating poverty and homelessness. His unique and selfless vision was for transforming local churches and pubs, into cultural hubs, accessible to all.

Following his graduation as BA & MBA, Paul worked with Rev. Prof. Brian Howe at the Fitzroy Centre for Urban Research and Action. His research led to anti-poverty programs and development of community housing. He led in advocating for public housing tenants across all inner Melbourne highrise estates.

In the 1980s Paul worked in Canberra as Private Secretary and Ministerial Advisor to recently elected Federal Member for Batman, Brian Howe. Brian was ultimately Minister for Social Security, Minister for Defence Support and Deputy Prime Minister, in the Hawke-Keating Governments, 1983-88. Brian described Paul as his 'right hand man'.

Following momentous years in Canberra, Paul became Victorian State Manager for Comcare, then General Manager of the Victorian WorkCover Authority, followed by Director of New Tourism Australia.

In 1997 Paul's life took new directions as General Manager of the Stork Hotel, which he transformed into a cultural hub. Though the not-for-profit Stork Theatre, Paul staged numerous literary, opera, cabaret and philosophical events, which continue at the time of his death. Amid all this activity, Paul was Chair of St Kilda Community Housing; he transformed the Carlton Church of All Nations (CAN) into a high quality liturgical and adaptable performance space.

A Memorial Service for Paul was held at CAN on 29 November 2022. We will all miss his diverse skills, warm personality and wise counsel.