

Serendipity forges deeper knowledge of union's history

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The union's connection with one of Federation's founders grew stronger earlier this week when four grandchildren of an early president came face-to-face with the union's centenary banner, featuring his image.

It was luck that brought Federation and the family of the second president, Ebenezer Dash, together. A great, great grandson was researching him on the internet, when he chanced upon an article on Federation's news website, "[Story of our union banner](#)", reporting the unveiling of the centenary banner.

Ebenezer Dash's grandson, Keith, wrote to Federation: "On behalf of Ebenezer Dash's descendants I wish to thank you for the recognition you have given him. It is much appreciated."



The correspondence prompted Federation to host a morning tea for Ebenezer's descendants at the union's headquarters in Surry Hills, where the banner presides. His grandsons — brothers David, Keith, John and Bob Dash — attended.

Keith said the family was "blown away" by the "tremendous honour" Federation had bestowed on Ebenezer, and indirectly the Dash family.

It turns out the photograph Federation used as a reference to depict Ebenezer on the banner is the same portrait that hung at the end of the Dash's dining table when the brothers were children.

Keith said his five siblings and two cousins only knew Ebenezer "in photos and by reputation" — all were born after his death, aged 57. Keith said he really only started to learn about Ebenezer when he asked his father, Bayne, in the final year of his life.

Ebenezer, greatly admired by Bayne and his siblings, died when Bayne was just 20, but a newspaper clippings file recorded Ebenezer's public union life.

The family provided Federation with copies of some artefacts held by the family, which enrich the union's account of the second president. They include an exquisitely decorated document thanking Ebenezer Dash for his services to the union (pictured). Federation was able to give the family some further information about Ebenezer's union activities. A further exchange of information is planned.

— Kerri Carr