

Vale Allan Terry

May 15, 2020

Allan Terry was a proud Life Member of Federation. He died unexpectedly on 3rd May after a long illness.

Allan attended Balmain Teachers College in 1966/67 and it was here that he first joined Federation.

He began his distinguished career in 1968 at a one teacher school in Kiah, during which time he took part in Federation's first 24 hour strike.

From 1969 to 1971 he taught at Wave Hill Aboriginal Settlement School in the Northern Territory.

The Gurindji people, led by Vincent Lingiari, had walked off the Wave Hill Cattle Station to protest against their terrible working and living conditions and, most importantly, to demand the return of their traditional lands. This strike lasted nine years.

For Allen it was a time of great learning and he remained a passionate supporter of the Aboriginal peoples' struggle for land rights and justice. His time at Wave Hill had a profound influence on his life.

While at Wave Hill Allen encountered many Aboriginal children who were deaf or had hearing loss.

As a result he undertook training as a teacher of the deaf in 1976 and moved the following year to Armidale to work as a teacher of the deaf. That year he was elected as the Fed Rep, a position he held until his transfer in to Walgett in 1981.

He chose to go to Walgett in order to continue working with Aboriginal students who were deaf or had hearing impairment. It was there that he married his beloved Jung Ran.

He was Fed Rep at most of the schools where he taught as well as being a member of Federation Council.

In the mid 1980's Allan joined TAFE as a Teacher Consultant for the Deaf. Again he was heavily involved in union activity. He helped form the Hunter branch of the TAFETA and was its first president.

His long commitment was acknowledged in 2000 when he received Federation life membership. He was particularly grateful that the union gave recognition to activists at the local level because he staunchly believed the union's strength was based on grass roots activity.

Allan was a caring and dedicated teacher. His experience in far-flung Indigenous communities made him an activist for social justice and a fairer society. He was a committed unionist who fought hard for public education.



Allan's health didn't recover after serious complications from hip surgery in 2014. He never complained about his difficulties and nothing would deter him from attending union functions where he could meet up with his comrades.