

Ray's ready to ring in right recruits

THE job of union representative can be likened to that of a tightrope walker, and representing the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) is no exception.

CALM forest worker Ray Jarvis of Dwellingup district has represented the AWU for nearly 10 years and has witnessed massive changes in the work place.

Such changes include industrial reform, enterprise bargaining, award restructuring, consultative committees and public sector down-sizing.

Ray sees his task as representing his work-mates, to protect their working conditions and interact with the managers and decision-makers of the Department.

"This means I'm often caught in the middle of the tightrope, between the old ways of doing things,

by Tammie Reid

and the way they have to be done today if CALM and our jobs are to survive," Ray says.

"Sometimes I find myself trying to pass on the new ways of thinking to the younger members of the crew who want to keep to the old ways - I'm one of the older blokes and here I am trying to teach the youngsters the new tricks!"

Ray sees the joint consultative committees at the districts as a good way to improve workplace conditions and resolve problems locally rather than let them grow into full-blown conflict on a wider scale.

"Plenty of good ideas are coming from these committees and we can learn a lot by sharing them between districts," he said

Ray says that a big problem with joint consultative committees seems to be the lack of time to follow up on all the things needing attention and fixing.

"We want to work towards improving morale and team work, and we want job security and recognition for the work we do," he said.

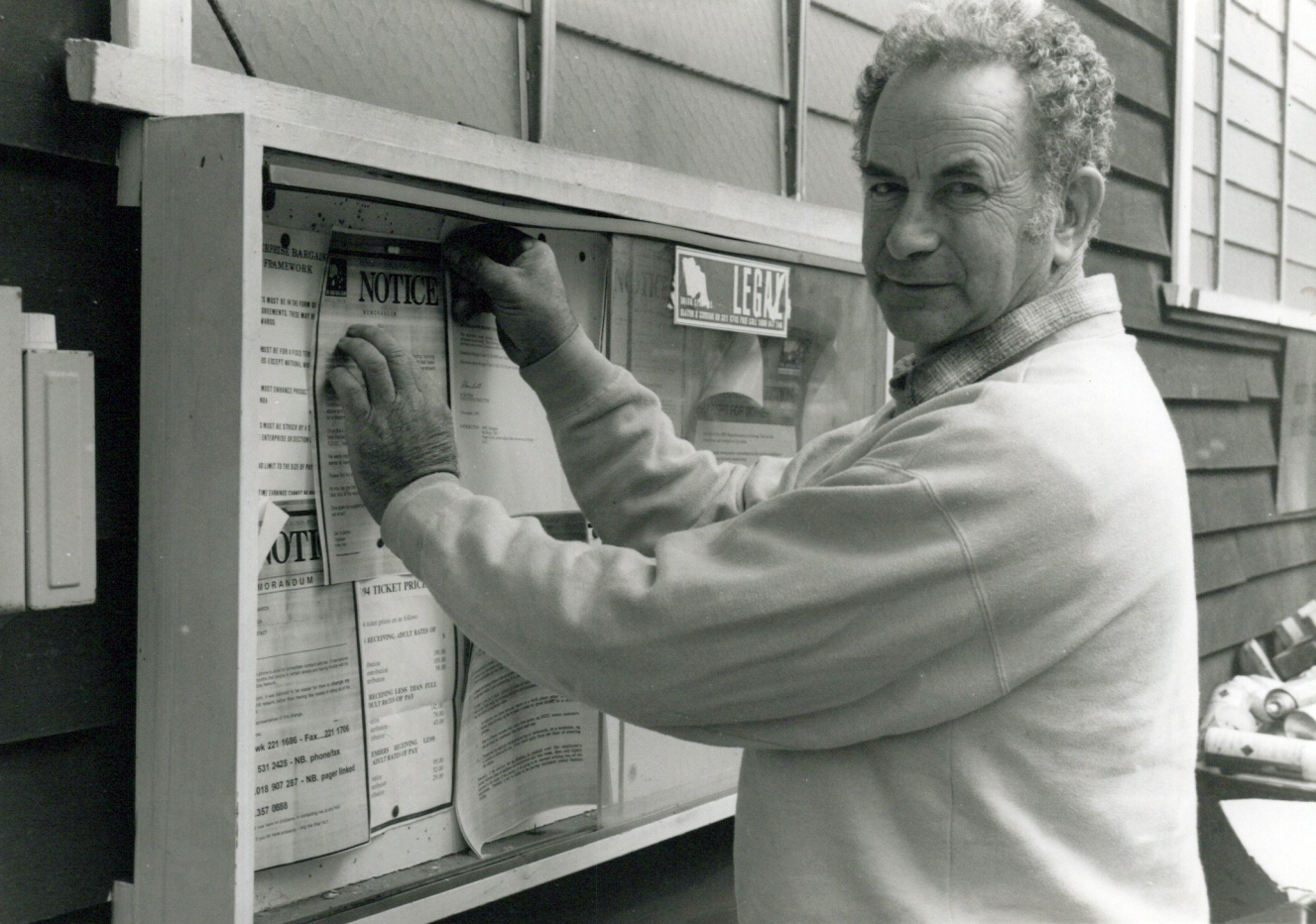
"The biggest challenge I see is working out a fair system within enterprise bargaining, how we can be more productive, save money and still retain our positions.

"I've been working in the forest for 28 years and there've been a lot of changes in this time.

"I like to think I've done a good job, but now I'd like to see someone else wanting to fill the Australian Workers' Union rep position - it's time for new blood."



Ray Jarvis puts up an AWU notice outside Dwellingup district store. Photo by Tammie Reid



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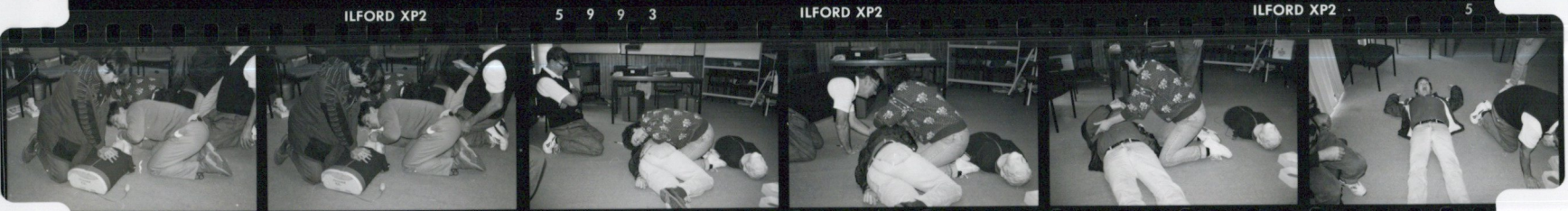
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Photos by Tamme Reid

30.5.94

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