

Author

Dr. Christopher Reynolds - B.A. (Flinders), B.D. (Melbourne), Dip. Ed. (Flinders), M.A., Ph. D. (Claremont)

Christopher Reynolds was first listed in the International Book of Who's Who Historical Society in 2006. Dr. Reynolds has held appointments with both the United States Senate and House of Representatives. As Professional Staff for the House Committee on Children, Youth and Families, Reynolds received a Commendation from President Ronald Reagan for his work. As Senior Professional Staff with the US Senate Committee on the Judiciary, he was responsible to Senator Mitch McConnell. He has also been the Executive Officer for the NSW Minister for Public Works, Roads, Ports and Darling Harbour, and the Executive Director for the Sydney World Trade Centre.

Dr. Christopher Reynolds is an academic, author, former teacher, political advisor, legislator, marketing specialist and is a committed Christian. Yet, his teachers in Sydney at the Chester Hill primary and high schools may never have imagined Christopher to be more than a local larrikin with some measure of sporting prowess and ability to win the argument on the school debating teams. The opinion of him by his teachers was not helped by his friendship with Malcolm Young, (who went on with his brother, Angus, to form AC/DC)

At home, there were only two books on the shelf: *The Collected Verse of A. B. Patterson*, and the *Poetical Works of Henry Lawson*: He still has them. He was a Boy Scout and a Queen Scout by age 16. Christopher was determined to attend university and studied late into the night in order to gain a scholarship. His 12 years of full-time university education then led to a fascinating life and career paths.

Christopher was raised in a working class post war Housing Commission home. The family were from an Irish Catholic heritage and settlers in the 1860's. His family name, Reynolds, was a well-established Irish name, with its link to the ClanRanald in Ireland and to the ClanRanald of the Macdonald clans in western highlands of Scotland. The family heritage could be traced back to 580 BC. However, the Reynolds family in Maroubra, Sydney, during Christopher's childhood was a long way from ancestral Irish or Scottish chieftains. The poor Reynolds family were Labor Party people, holding local Party meetings in their lounge room.

A keen interest in history and politics was developing out of Christopher's natural curiosity, along with his of spirit of adventure. This would see him travel the world to follow his passion for uncovering the truth and making a difference. And so began a comprehensive educational journey.

His first experience of university life was at Flinders University in South Australia, where he studied economics, politics, and history. It was at Flinders that Christopher met and became life-long friends with Bernard (Doc) Neeson – who was the lead singer with the rock band, The Angles. With a Bachelor of Arts with two majors, Christopher then completed a post graduate Diploma in Education, and specialised in history and Aboriginal studies (a new course with Christopher among the first students).

Before attending Flinders, Christopher went to work on the cranes as a Dogman in the Shell Oil Refinery at Silverwater in Sydney and then worked as a rigger. He was a member of the BLF (Builders Labourers Federation) Union, and then the AWU (Australia's Workers Union – started by William Spence in 1886) when the BLF was banned by a Labor government for its radical political policies. He continued working on building sites during university holidays which enabled him to travel around the Asia Pacific and experience other societies.

The 1975 – 76 financial crisis saw Christopher's intended teaching career path dissipate as 80% of students were unable to finish school and find employment. Teaching paled in significance against helping people in need. Christopher started a community house to help youth and young adults who couldn't get work. With financial support from some friends, he bought a big old double storey stone house on the outskirts of Adelaide. He called it 'The House of the Rock'. Over the next five years, Christopher open up another four houses, where more than a thousand people stayed during that period. He fostered five children through school, employed 22 full time staff, and had an 85% success rate at helping people get their lives back on track. He successfully started the first community house for people with physical disabilities – a model that was to be repeated across Australia. In this period Christopher continued his studies with visits to Melbourne to complete a Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) from Melbourne University.

Still a member of the Labor Party, he formed friendships with the then Premier of South Australia, Don Dunstan and Federal Senator, Mick Young, and worked with them to see the Pitjantjatjara people gain land rights in north-west South Australia: The Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act passed in 1981.

In 1980, Christopher gave a series of lectures at the World Council of Church (WCC) Conference in Melbourne. This led to a fellowship which funded his study trip across Europe for six months to investigate the para-church movement.

On his marriage to Joan Maddox, an American, Christopher applied to study in the United States. Forgoing his acceptance into Harvard, he chose to study for his Ph.D. in California. At Claremont Graduate University, one of America's most prestigious universities and modelled after Oxford and Cambridge. Christopher studied Philosophy – with other course work in political science, constitutional law and ethics. He was a Claremont Fellow in 1982 and 1983, which covered all his tuition and accommodation fees. He completed his Ph. D. within three years - a university record, and for his dissertation, he rewrote the Executive Government Section of the Australian Constitution, working under the guidance of Leonard Levy, the famous American constitutional law professor. Forming friendships with the renowned Peter Drucker and Alvin Toffler, Christopher gained insights into economics and a changing world that would influence his thinking throughout his life.

Between semesters, Christopher worked for worked for Governor Jerry Brown on his election campaign for the US Senate, and then, worked for Senator Alan Cranston's presidential election campaign in Washington D.C. Christopher was then accepted into the Hubert H. Humphrey Student Training School program. As a fieldwork project for Claremont University, Christopher designed a project for the Pomona City Council that he called and became the 'Neighborhood Watch' program.

Christopher and his family moved to Washington D.C. Christopher was determined to get a job in the Congress and wore out the soles of his shoes walking the halls of the Congress with

hope of employment. A friend in the Library of Congress told him, in his southern drawl; 'you're not going to get a job in this town, boy, for four reasons: You're too well educated, you're too old at 33, you're foreign and you're married'. It made sense. But Christopher was a rugby player - you don't stop playing to win just because you're bleeding.

A year later, finally, he got his break. Republican Congressman Frank Wolf from Virginia took him on with "I don't care where he's from. If he can understand and sort out the Unfunded Liability of the Civil Servant Retirement System likes he's done, he can work for me".

Christopher was away. Pledging to uphold the Constitution, keep secrets, and be a good Green Card holder, he started as Wolf's Legislative Assistant. Republican Dan Coates then offered Christopher a position on the House Select Committee of Children, Youth and Families. Reynolds worked on legislation for children's programs and drug and alcohol abuse. His efforts earned him a Commendation from President Ronald Reagan. Two years later, after a promotion to Senior Professional Staff, a new Senator from Kentucky required a specialist staffer. Reynolds swapped sides of the street to go to work as Senior Professional Staff for the US Senate Committee on the Judiciary, under Senator Mitch McConnell. Reynolds worked on legislative amendments to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. He wrote, and saw passed, McConnell's first legislation through the Senate. McConnell remains a senior US political politician today. During this time, he contributed to the placement of missing children photos on to milk cartons sold across the US.

In Washington, Christopher met influential people and came away with numerous memorable experiences: He was involved in the organisation of three Presidential Prayer Breakfasts, sitting among the leaders of the nation; he and his wife stayed in the home of Congressman Bill Nelson (later a Senator and now the Administrator for NASA), and watched as Nelson launched into space on the Shuttle the following day; and he once dined in the exclusive US Senate dining room in the company of Senators John Heinz, John Glenn, Teddy Kennedy and Jay Rockefeller.

Returning to Australia, Dr. Christopher Reynolds worked as the Executive Officer for the New South Wales Minister for Public Works, Ports, Roads and Darling Harbour. Then, leaving politics, he worked for Network Communications, writing the 'Grim Reaper AIDS Campaign', and managed BHP's campaign to stop the Sydney Harbour Tunnel going ahead on the wrong side of the Harbour Bridge. At one stage, he had contracts with five divisions of the BHP working on strategic planning. With the success of a number of public relations campaigns, Reynolds was made a life member of the Public Relations Institute of Australia. He travelled to New York and gained the rights from the World Trade Centre to establish a WTC in Sydney, become the Executive Director for Business Development of the Sydney operation.

Returning to education, Reynolds has been an Associate Professor in Australia and Southeast Asia. He was a member of the Brunei Economic Development Council Subcommittee on Oil and Gas Diversification, and the Chair of the APEC 2000 Study Centre Consortium Meeting.

Reynolds has more than 50 newspaper and academic articles published, along with five books.

With his wealth of experience, Dr. Reynolds presents a revealing new look at Australian history based on years of research of original documents, legislation and correspondence. *What a Capital Idea – Australia 1770-1901* challenges accepted dogma about Australia's past as Reynolds brings to life an exciting story of Australia's development over 120 years.