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Editorial

One focus of the Brisbane Labour History Association this year has been facilitating regular presentations and seminars in areas of interest to our members. This issue of the journal contains transcripts from two events that have taken place in 2018.

Back in May, Adrian Skerritt delivered a presentation detailing his attendance at this year's Labor Notes Conference in Chicago. The Labor Notes conference attracted around three thousand rank and file trade unionists to this biennial event. Adrian explains that there are currently sound theoretical and academic arguments for being optimistic about working class mobilisation in the USA. After 40 years of neoliberal attacks on working conditions, and with little support from trade union or political leaders, rank and file activists are becoming better organised and Adrian describes recent successful campaigns of teacher unions. We include Adrian's presentation in full.

In June our annual Alex MacDonald Memorial Lecture was given by former ABC journalist Matt Peacock, author of the book *Killer Company*. Matt talked about his experiences investigating

James Hardie's campaign to put profits from asbestos mining and use before the health of its own workers and that of the general Australian public. He details how trade union activists were crucial in uncovering the dangers; although unfortunately, sometimes they had to do this in opposition to their own union leadership.

With the anniversary of the Armistice at the end of World War One imminent we include an article from Deb Jordan on the role of radicalised women in the anti-war campaigns a hundred years ago. She highlights the lack of historical focus on these activists and how tragedy at the end of the war disrupted the legacy of the women's movement in Queensland.

Howard Guille reviews the book *Red North* by Diane Menghetti. Howard focuses on the original work from 1981 and the rationale behind the recent republishing of the work by Resistance Books.

In memory of Hughie Williams this issue also includes an obituary by Bob Reed.