



DR SALLY LEIVESLEY



Dr Leivesley is distinguished by being the first female member to be elected to the Club Committee in 1997 - 1998

Sally Leivesley was schooled at the Milton State School and Somerville House in Brisbane, and attended University of Queensland for social science and planning fields of study. She lived for some time in Toowoomba after graduation from university, where her experiences in the Toowoomba hailstorm disaster in 1976 led to her moving to London for her further studies.

Her doctorate, at the University of London, focussed on catastrophic loss events ranging from nuclear war to train accidents. Following that, Dr Leivesley trained as a scientific advisor with the British Home Office and was subsequently contracted to the Home Office. The training covered all-out nuclear attack and chemical and biological threat and involved extensive exercising at all levels of government.

Sally lived between England and Australia in the 1980s and 1990s, and re-settled in London in 2000.

We thank the History Interest Group and other volunteers who have researched and prepared these Notes. The series will be progressively expanded and developed. They are intended as casual reading for the benefit of Members, who are encouraged to advise of any inaccuracies in the material.

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In Australia she had a role as troubleshooter for emerging threats and she advised governments from the 1970s for 25 years. The incidents covered natural hazards, chemicals, emergency services, occupational health and safety and international exhibitions and sporting events. She has worked on sites to advise on policy and plans for underground coal mines, power stations (gas, coal and fuel oil), bulk storage protection, shipping, petrochemical and gas explosions including fuel air explosions, bleves and other incidents, chemical and fuel spills and rail systems for transportation of hazardous materials.

She was appointed by the Queensland Government as Commissioner of Review of Fire Services in 1978; and in 1980 she advised the Queensland State Government on the development of forward monitoring of hazardous chemical spills. As Coordinator of a 'toxic hazards' recovery unit for a suburb contaminated by liquid toxic waste she designed a 'CHEM' unit (later renamed) which was Australia's first rapid mobile response unit and this was attached to the Queensland Fire Service.

Amongst her work and publications Dr Leivesley has been involved in assessing the scale and effects of nuclear power plant disasters (Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima); in the energy sector she spent 1999 exercising and assuring system safety with a range of large scale field tests and desk top scenarios for five power stations (Australia and UK); she is a specialist in top threats from terrorism including chemical, nuclear, radiological, explosives and cyber; and she has had extensive experience in underground rail tunnels in Australia and the UK. .

Her work continues to specialise internationally in the protection and assurance testing of critical infrastructure against all hazards; both as an advisor and as a participant in a number of international agencies and forums.

In coming into the United Service Club in 1989, Dr Sally Leivesley was interested in the role of the Australian services in past wars and the unique capabilities of small team training and resilience. As the first female member to be elected to the Committee, she explained to an ABC interviewer at the time that the Club would naturally consider females on the committee as men and women worked very well together in the services. She had been involved before her Club membership as a member of the United Service Institute in Brisbane and this had been a natural continuation of a longer term membership with the Royal United Services Institute in London during her time in London, where she remains a member.

Sources included:

- Various web pages
- *United Service Club, Queensland: The First Century, 1892-1992* by Flight Lieutenant Murray Adams and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Charlton
- Club Meeting Minutes, Annual Reports and sundry documents
- Contribution from Dr Leivesley