



Honest History lecture series

Monday, 18 August, 5.30 pm for 6.00 pm, Manning Clark House, Canberra

Pamela Burton: 'John Burton: undermined by dishonest history'



Dr John Burton headed the Department of External Affairs in 1947 at age 32, it then being led by Herbert Vere Evatt ('the Doc'). He and Evatt shared a joint vision for an Australian foreign policy independent of Britain and the United States. In his short public service career Burton had significant influence over Australia's foreign policy. Ahead of his times, he held the view that Australia's security in the Asia-Pacific region depended upon better understanding of and engagement with its neighbours. To achieve this, he advocated 'open diplomacy'. His work and influence has been the subject of numerous scholarly works. Curiously, alongside the honest historians, there has been a concerted effort by some ideologues writing to discredit Burton and what he stood for. Sixty years on, malicious writers continue to skew the historic record by asserting that Burton betrayed his country. Why? And how can the record be put straight?

Pamela Burton is a Canberra lawyer and writer. She is also the daughter of Dr J. W. Burton and has felt compelled to defend her father's reputation, sullied after his death in 2010. She is the author of *The Waterlow killings: The Story of a Family Tragedy* (MUP, 2012), winner of the Sisters in Crime 13th Davitt award for Best True Crime, and *From Moree to Mabo: The Mary Gaudron Story* (UWAP, 2010), and *Deviant*, under the pen name Georgia Dale, a satirical fiction, (Ginninderra Press, 2000).