

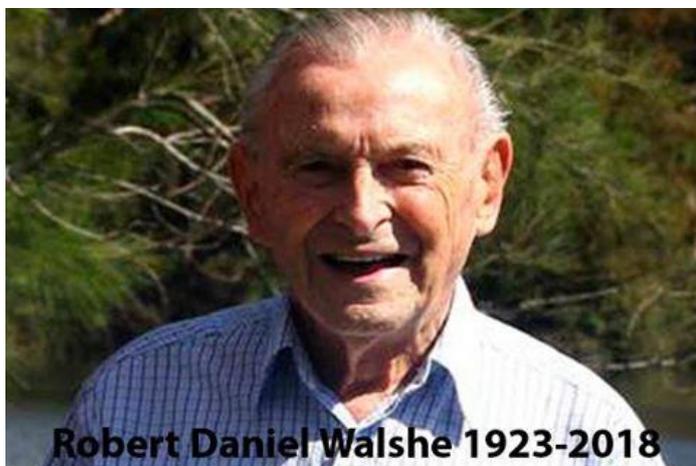
## R.I.P. Bob Walshe

Bob Walshe was not only a champion of The Shire, his impact went back to the early environmental activism in Sydney of the 1970s. He died last week in hospital aged 94.

With the vision of King Arthur and the serenity of Buddha, he fought tirelessly to defend his Camelot -- Sutherland Shire.

He wrote often and elegantly in the classical style of the historian that he was, and as a pioneer of environmentalism in The Shire in his later decades.

Bob left us a wealth of achievement, but also a vacuum that we will struggle to fill. -- Don Pagé, WVRA Inc



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For those of us who have had the pleasure of working with Bob, he will be sorely missed. Bob was not a resident of Woronora but he had a keen interest in our community and wrote many articles on the importance of maintaining the village atmosphere of Woronora. Without fail, I would get a phone call from Bob prior to Clean Up Australia Day, asking for particulars on what area of the Valley we would be working on. On bush-care days, Bob would meet us on site and knew every native species that grew in the area.

His love and care for Woronora Valley was shown by his dedication in preserving its amenity and natural environment.

Goodbye, dear comrade, we will miss you terribly. -- Norm Dixon, WVRA Inc

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[Sutherland Shire Environment Centre](#) (6 March 2018)

Last night our much admired founder and patron Robert Daniel Walshe passed away. Bob's nephew David and David's partner Flora were with him at the end and told us: "We talked to him about good friends and comrades, happy times, worthy causes and noble battles fought and won. We held his hand, stroked his hair, read to him and finally at around 8:15pm... I think somewhere in the last few stanzas of 'The Man from Snowy River'... he quietly left us, calm and pain-free."

Bob will be missed so much by so many, especially here in Sutherland Shire where he has been so well known and respected.

A memorial service will be held and details provided as they are available.

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### **Bob Walshe OAM, twice Shire Citizen of the Year**

By Murray Trembath, [The Leader.com.au](#) , 8 March 2018

Bob Walshe, OAM, who has died at 94, has been described as an "icon" of Sutherland Shire for his tireless work for the environment and contribution in other ways to the community. Mr Walshe is the only person to have received the Sutherland Shire Citizen of the Year award twice – in 1995 for his work on the environment and in 2001 for his writing and support for people staying healthy in mind, body and spirit as they age.

A former teacher, he was a prolific writer, and continued with a passion even as his health deteriorated in recent years.

Following a fall, he died in hospital on Tuesday night as the *The Man From Snowy River* was read to him.

Mr Walshe, who lived at Jannali, was the foundation chair of Sutherland Shire Environment Centre in 1991, holding the position for 10 years.

A quiet man with a warm personality and enormous energy, he was just as eager to help school students who contacted the centre looking for help with an assignment as he was to lead protest marches.

Mr Walshe was at the forefront in many big battles, including the protection of Towra Point from a proposed airport, nuclear waste at Lucas Heights and the “mega tip” campaign in the 1990s, sandmining, the desalination plant and overdevelopment.

In 1972, he joined with others, including Milo Dunphy, in establishing the Total Environment Centre which he named.

In recent years, he was a leader of the First National Park movement, campaigning for World Heritage listing of Royal National Park.

“We are all a bit shell-shocked,” said the executive officer and former chair of the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre Jenni Gormley.

“Bob was such an icon in Sutherland Shire – it’s hard to imagine The Shire without him.”

#### **AN OUTSTANDING AUSTRALIAN**

“He was involved in so many things and made a contribution in many ways.”

“Bob will be missed so much by so many, especially here in Sutherland Shire where he has been so well known and respected.”

A memorial service will be held and details provided as they are available.

Mr Walshe and his wife Pat settled in the shire in 1946 after his discharge from the AIF at the end of the war. They built a timber and fibro house at Como, and were active in Como Progress Association.

Pat Walshe died many years ago. The couple did not have children.

Mr Walshe was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 1998 for “services to education and the environment”.

The Sutherland Shire Environment Centre wrote in 2015:

*“In a long career in education, as R.D. Walshe, he was widely known as an author and editor of many books and article.”*

*“Early in his teaching career, at Sutherland High School in the mid-1950s, he had written a play for local schools acclaiming Sutherland Shire's good fortune in being chosen as the site – at Lucas Heights – of Australia's nuclear reactor. (‘We were all so pie-eyed then about ‘peaceful uses of the atom’,’ he said.)”*

*“In later life, anxiety about the environment changed his mind and his direction.”*

Mr Walshe was described as “an outstanding Australian” in a speech in Parliament by Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon in 2013. She praised his “incredible energy and the way he inspires people and organisations he has got involved with.”

“He brought together about a dozen colleagues, including Milo Dunphy, in the early 1970s when we really had what many have called the first stage of the environment movement.

“This led to the establishment in 1972 of the Total Environment Centre, a centre that continues to do some excellent work to this day. It was actually Bob's idea to have the name Total Environment Centre.”

<http://www.theleader.com.au/story/4200756/shire-icon-bob-walshe-dies-at-94/>