

Land law review in new year

The Law Society and the Land Law Review Committee will conduct a seminar/workshop on a proposal that legislation be enacted to reform and consolidate the property law of the Northern Territory.

The seminar will be held sometime next year over three days and will be led by a leading academic.

The basic property law of the NT is largely unaffected by any statute law made in the 20th century.

The reforming and consolidating of the property law acts of Great Britain and all the Australian states have not been duplicated in the NT.

The consequence is that the property law of the NT is a mish-mash of the common law, imperial law (such as the original Statute of Frauds) and South Australian acts as in force on 1 January 1911.

The law is certainly inaccessible and, most likely, somewhat uncertain in the extent to which it is being applied by lawyers trained outside the Northern Territory.

Expressions of interest concerning participation in the project are sought from legal practitioners in the private profession, government and the University.

Such expressions should indicate preferences and suggestions concerning timing, extent of participation and content of the seminar.

If you are interested in either participating in the seminar or in being provided with the background documentation please advise Robert Bradshaw, Registrar-General, GPO Box 3021 Darwin, phone 896063, fax 896026 or Robyn Smith at the Law Society on fax 411623.

Blackburn settlement

The final legal chapter in the bizarre case of Harry Blackburn was concluded in Sydney last month when the New South Wales Attorney-General, Peter Collins, announced that the parties had settled.

The settlement figure is not known but is believed to be over \$1 million. That figure would make the settlement the largest in Australasia.

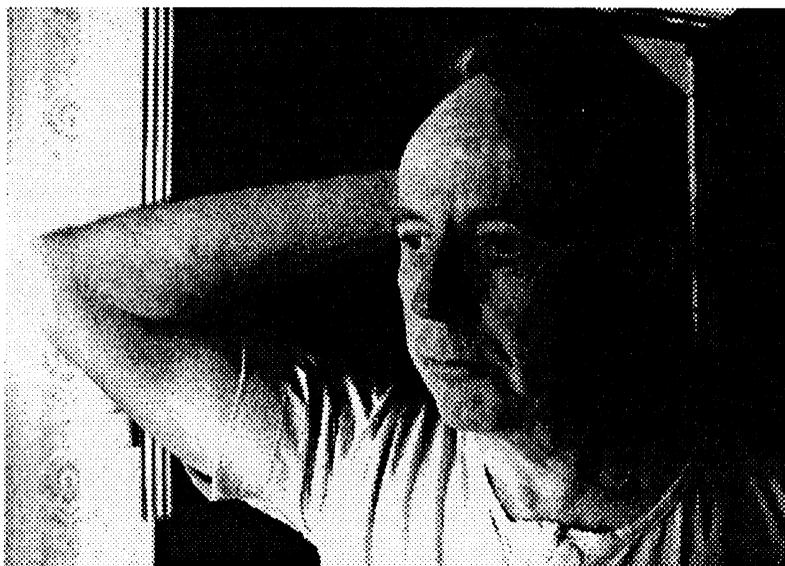
Former NSW police detective Harry

A Royal Commission headed by Mr Justice Lee some four months after the arrest vindicated Mr Blackburn and was a damning indictment of the NSW police.

Mr Blackburn sued the NSW Government for damages.

Earlier this year the government moved to joint some 11 media organisations to the proceedings.

The cross-claims were later withdrawn



Blackburn was arrested on 24 July 1989 and charged with serial sexual assault.

He was then "walked" before a battery of media which had been alerted to the arrest earlier in the day.

The charges were later dropped by the Director of Public Prosecutions who said there was no evidence to support them.

and the government was the sole defendant.

The Blackburns did not sue any media organisations.

Speaking from her Gold Coast home, Lyn Blackburn said the couple had no immediate plans.

"We're just plodding along," she said. "We'll take each day as it comes. But it's definitely a load off our minds."

JUSTICE: a commodity which in a more or less adulterated condition the State sells to the citizen as a reward for his allegiance, taxes and personal service.

LAWYER: one skilled in circumvention of the law.

Ambrose Bierce *The Devil's Dictionary*

When there is a rift in the lute, the business of the lawyer is to widen the rift and gather the loot.

Arthur Garfield Hayes