

Hardy wins National Young Lawyer award

Following that interview, Ms Hardy explained that Kiribati is a coral atoll which is 500 metres at its widest point, hence the constant crab traffic.

She said there was a crab heading towards her as she was speaking on ABC Radio.

Ms Hardy said the staple diet was fish and coconuts and that one went off to sleep at night to the sound of waves breaking on the beach [sounds tough...].

She said the pitfalls, however, were that running water was only available three times a day (and never at shower time), and fresh food supplies come in about once every six weeks.

The spectacle of people milling around the supplies to buy their share was likened to a "Myer spring sale".

Ms Hardy said a Court appearance in Kiribati requires robes and wigs, but no shoes or, in the alternative, thongs.

Mr Henwood said Ms Hardy did not know she had been nominated, much less won, until he telephoned her following the news from the Law Council.

In his testimonial, the Attorney-General, Daryl Manzie, said: "Ms Hardy deserves the public recognition afforded by this national award.

"Conversely, I believe the award would also gain status by selection of a person of Ms Hardy's calibre."

Ms Hardy's parents flew to Hobart from Melbourne for the presentation.

Accepting the award, Ms Hardy said that no one person can achieve anything alone, and paid tribute to the volunteer practitioners and the staff at the Community Legal Service.

"I am very proud to accept this award on behalf of Alicia Johnson and myself," she said.

The award was judged by Justice Sir Harry Gibbs, the President of the Law Council of Australia, Robert Meadows and the Immediate Past Chairman of the Young Lawyers Section, Maria Panagiotidis.

Victoria's Chief Justice breaks with convention

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria last month took the unusual step of writing an open letter to the Editor of *The Age*.

His Honour Justice Phillips wrote the letter [which appeared on 13/9/93] in response to an editorial headed *Give women real justice* which called for more women on the bench.

His Honour's opening paragraph said there had been a long-standing convention that judges avoid involvement in public controversy concerning the judiciary and that he had decided to break the convention.

His Honour said: "You charge and convict 'the men who control the law' of discrimination against women in that they are responsible, you say, for preventing women pursuing the law as a career from 'reaching the top'. If this was meant to imply that appointments of women to the Supreme Court of Victoria have been blocked, nothing could be further from the truth. In

recent years two eminently suitable women have been offered appointments to this court. This must have been known to *The Age*, for it has been mentioned several times in the print media. I was consulted by the Attorney-General about both appointments. Far from blocking them, I strongly supported each one. As it happened, for personal reasons, each woman declined the appointment. The judges of this court would welcome the appointment of an appropriately qualified woman."

His Honour also took issue with *The Age* on sentencing and the Court's 'clannish and masculine circle' to the exclusion of new ideas.

The letter finished: "Oscar Wilde's typical response to critics of his work was to say 'If only I had written that about myself!'. So, too, the judges are prepared to accept criticism -- all we would ask is that it be accurate and balanced."

Admission rules debacle

This month's admissions were adjourned because none of the applicants satisfied the new Rules under the *Legal Practitioners Act*.

The Rules, which took effect on 1 October, do not allow for a transitional period so did not accommodate those already "in the system".

All the applicants for admission had applied under the old rules.

Two local applicants had their admission deferred: one went through later in the day as a "paper admission" under the *Mutual Recognition Act*; and the other was admitted the following morning after further affidavits and certification were produced.

Two applicants from Hong Kong left Darwin not knowing their fate.

Under the new rules (r 16), applicants from overseas (other than New Zealand) may apply to the Court for

directions in order to satisfy the admission requirements (r 8).

Rule 8 deals with the Court being satisfied as to the applicant's fitness to practice, completion of academic and practical requirements and other compliance with the rules.

Overseas applicants must also satisfy the Court of a sufficient command of the English language to practise as a legal practitioner of the Court.

All applicants are now required to demonstrate an understanding and competence in: criminal law and procedure; torts; contracts; property both real (including Torrens system land) and personal; equity (including trusts); company law; administrative law; federal, state and territory constitutional law; civil procedure; evidence; and professional conduct and trust accounting.