

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria

Mr Shirrefs: Did you put two keys in the envelope?

Witness: (Inaudible)

Mr Shirrefs: Looking at the prosecution won't assist you, Mrs Hoffer.

Witness: I was looking at that mug, I'm sorry.

His Worship: That's no way to speak about prosecuting counsel, Mrs Hoffer, either one of them.

(Verbatim, Victorian Bar News, Victorian Bar Association, No 93, Winter 1995)

Fledgling partner

In the Fledgling's Foibles series on fledgling partners, they welcomed a recently appointed partner at a large city firm.

Apparently, a short time before being made partner, he requested that a secretary stay back and work until midnight — and was none too impressed when this person actually went home at that time. Fledglings heard mutterings about "a lack of dedication" because the secretary concerned did not continue working into the wee small hours of the morning. Sounds like the sort of thing a partner would say.

(Fledglings' Foibles, Brief, Law Society of WA, Vol 22, No 6, July 1995)

Sounds of mediation

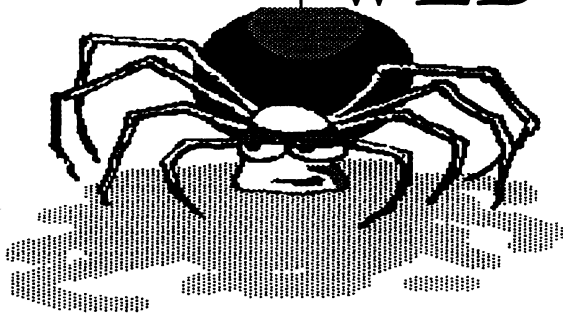
Application by Jack Strahan for inclusion on the Bar's List of Accredited Mediators concluded:

"Could you call me when you have a moment and inform me whether I am now entitled to call myself qualified/accredited and have my name included on any and what lists, or what further I need to do to bring this about? ..."

PS. It would also be useful to have some large letters after my name. Am I now a Fellow in Alternative Resolution Techniques? ..."

(Verbatim, Victorian Bar News, Victorian Bar Association, No 93, Winter 1995)

THE SPIDER'S WEB



What rich lawyers?

So many newspapers and dinner party guests have told the Dog that lawyers make absolutely wads of cash that the Dog had actually started to believe it.

This made the Dog feel rather inadequate because the Dog does not actually make very much money.

Taking into account the reputed extraordinary wealth of every other lawyer in the world, this pitiful state of affairs was something the Dog was forced to attribute to its own stupidity.

For this reason, the Dog felt slightly embarrassed as it picked up the BRW Rich 200 edition, which lists the 199 richest Australians and — for some reason — Mel Gibson.

Anyway, if you are wondering how many lawyers appeared in the list (people who made their wealth practising law, not those who happen to have a law degree) the answer is none.

Manufacturers? Heaps. Property investors and developers? Loads of them. People involved in resources, engineering, media, transport, farming and construction? Can't take a step without falling over them.

But — along with social workers, priests, nurses and other groups more interested in making society a better place than selfishly pursuing money — lawyers just don't crack a guernsey.

(Drover's Dog, Brief, Law Society of WA, Vol 22, No 6, July 1995)

Bad language

The Law Institute library recently received the following fax requesting copies of some articles listed in Library Bookshelf. Names have been changed to protect the guilty.

Dear Sirs,

Library Bookshelf

I, Alex Steven Butterworth-Toast, Solicitor, hereby request you to make and supply to me a copy of the following:-

1.
2.

I declare that I have not previously been supplied with a copy, that I require the copy for research or study and I will not use it for any other purpose.

Yours faithfully,

Alex S. Butterworth-Toast

Arch Lever Solicitors

It is terrifying to think how such people must propose marriage.

(The Gist, Law Institute Journal, The Law Institute of Victoria Vol 69, No 8, August 1995)

Computerising the red tape

EDX, the electronic arm of Ausdoc, sent a press kit announcing a new system for the South Australian Courts Administration Authority called SABREnet. One of the press releases announcing the launch of this impressive service was a little curious:

SA Courts Administration Authority to lead the way using electronic document exchange services.

In 17th Century England, using red tape to tie official documents launched the expression we use to describe bureaucratic delays. Today, an announcement from the legal community in South Australia will alter the future of red tape well into the next century.

So much for efficiency and time saving technology. Seems like it is beaten in this round and red tape is here to stay.

(The Gist, Law Institute Journal, The Law Institute of Victoria, Vol 69, No 8, August 1995)