

BALANCE

MAY 1996

The Official Publication of the Law Society of the Northern Territory

From Bacon & Eggs to Macerated Dates

That Was the Law Week That Was

Law Week 1996 (12 - 17 May) has been declared a success from its somewhat unusual launch at a breakfast in the Mall to the well-attended and apparently equally well-enjoyed Law Week lunch.

Monday morning saw members of the profession gathering in the Mall to hand out free breakfast vouchers to members of the public, many of whom stayed around to watch the inaugural Law Week Tug-of-War.

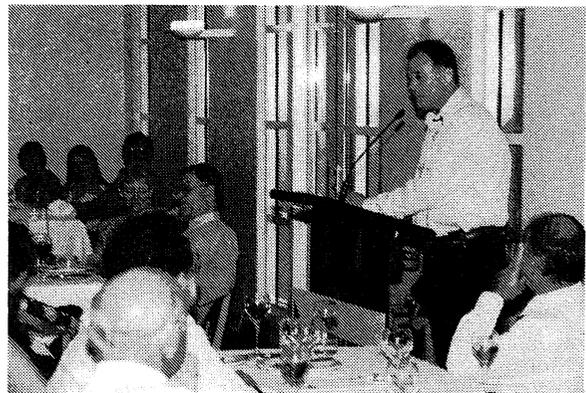
The latter was a closely fought test of strength between representatives of various departments and firms. The winners' trophy was deservedly collected by a well-trained and dedicated band of personnel from the DPP, trained, inspired and led by the Director Mr Rex Wild. The Hon Steve Hatton launched Law Week at this function with a short speech and presented the trophy to the winners.

Throughout the week, the public had the chance once again to attend Law Walks through various legal buildings and were also able to view law-related videos at public libraries in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Katherine.

A most successful collaboration between the Law Society and NTLAC led to a 25% increase in the number of calls to Legal Aid's information hotline which was promoted this year instead of running Law Line as in previous years. Legal Aid also ran an information session at their offices which attracted a good turnout.



Law Week Launch - Attorney General, Hon Steve Hatton, presents the Tug-of-war trophy to the winning side, DPP.



Law Week Lunch - Guest speaker Richard Ackland holds the audience's attention

Equally well-attended was the seminar on legal issues involved in urban and non traditional aboriginal art given by Stephen Grey of the NTU at the Commonwealth Law Courts. NTU also offered a seminar at their Casuarina campus on strata title in Malaysia.

The promised *Lawyer on Black Thunder* promotion, to the disappointment of the many volunteers for this activity, did not eventuate due to organisational problems. However, Territorians did get the opportunity to hear Peter Tiffin of the NT Attorney-General's Dept adjudicate the worst of the lawyer jokes submitted to radio station *Hot 100*. Unfortunately Peter was not offered any jokes he hadn't heard before.

Law Week lunches

A small but dedicated group of Alice Springs practitioners gathered to mark Law Week 1996 at a lunch at *Ristorante Puccini*, where they were able to preview the delights in store for Darwin as Richard Ackland provided them with an informal after-lunch talk.

The Darwin Law Week lunch, held this year in the Dining Room at Parliament House finished off Law Week on a high note. This function attracted the largest gathering of the legal fraternity ever, with 100 people attending to enjoy the food of C & C Catering, the very lovely setting at Parliament House

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Mission Law Week 1996 successful

and the wit and intelligence of the speaker, Richard Ackland. Law Society President Terry Gardner introduced Richard after a short speech recapping on the success of Law Week 1996 and paying tribute to the sponsors of Law Week activities - Sedgwick, represented at the gathering by its chief executive, John Clayton, Qantas represented by General Manager Grant Pitman and Sales Executive Mandy Bluett and above all to the major sponsor, the Law Society of the NT Public Purpose Trust.

Richard, having been welcomed to the Law Week lunch as a "Daniel into the lion's den", indicated to the crowd he saw it somewhat differently, describing his appearance as that of a reptile of the media at a shysters' lunch.

His speech focussed on the many common features of journalism and the law - the poor pay and work conditions,

lack of respect and the dedication to self interest. He proceeded to expand on the sense of propriety, ethics and justice found in both these professions and illustrated his points ably with a number of anecdotes which left his audience alternatively blushing and rolling in the aisles. After noting that it was probably true that lawyers and journalists were only in those professions because they were no good at maths or alternatively in order to make their mothers proud of them, Richard continued to regale the crowd with anecdotes collected during his time as a legal journalist.

Richard welcomed his invitation to address the Law Week lunch in Darwin as a chance to avoid Law Week in Sydney and coincidentally the journalism awards. The members of the Darwin legal community who attended the lunch to hear him speak undoubtedly felt that Sydney's loss was the Territory's gain.

After inviting the crowd to "enjoy their macerated dates" during dessert, Richard was asked to draw the door prizes and the hilarity continued as several attendees were made even happier. The 5th prize of champagne and a champagne cooler courtesy of Jeany's was taken home by Robin Dyll of the Environmental Defence Office, Peter Boyce from the Ombudsman's Office won a pack of gourmet goods and Jim Moore of Barr Moore & Co, a bottle of cognac. Both these prizes were presented by Sedgwick, as was the 2nd prize, a dinner for two at *Yots* which delighted John McCormack. The main prize of the afternoon, a trip for two to Cairns donated by Qantas went to Robyn Davis of NAALAS.

Following completion of the official part of the lunch, many opted to while away the rest of the afternoon enjoying the ambiance of the venue, the views it provided and the company of their colleagues.

It was a fitting end to a well supported Law Week and the Law Society thanks all those who supported the activities.

Amendment to Professional Conduct Rules

On 16 May 1996 the Chief Justice approved an amendment to Rule 4.1 of the Professional Conduct Rules.

The rule has been amended by adding the word "conveyancer" after the words "tax agent" and now reads:

"4.1 A practitioner shall not describe himself in connection with his profession as other than a legal practitioner, lawyer, Solicitor-General, Crown Counsel, barrister, Queen's Counsel, solicitor, proctor, attorney, tax agent, conveyancer, Notary Public or Commissioner for affidavits or by one or more of these descriptions."

High Court of Australia E-mail Judgment Service

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Balance is grateful to Mark Neely of Computer Manufacturers NT Pty Ltd for this snippet.

Diploma of Mortgage Lending

Securities Institute Education are considering running a program on mortgage lending either in Darwin or by remote education. As a means of identifying the amount of interest in such a course, the SIE asks that those interested contact them on 02 376 6799.

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