

It's a Worry

In the April *Victoria Law Institute Journal*, Elizabeth Wentworth, in giving a sneak preview of her new book mentions the following reasons why female lawyers are a worry:

1. Since they don't usually wear ties, there is no way of knowing at a glance which school they went to.
2. Their intellectual capacity cannot be gauged by the width of their pinstripes.
3. They don't play by the rules but instead apply an outrageous mixture of legal argument and common sense.
4. Today's women don't cry if you shout at them. They shout back.
5. They treat an invitation to dinner as an opportunity to discuss business.
6. They don't pat you on the back in the way your mother used to. And if you try to pat anything of theirs, you get the sack.

Hearing problems

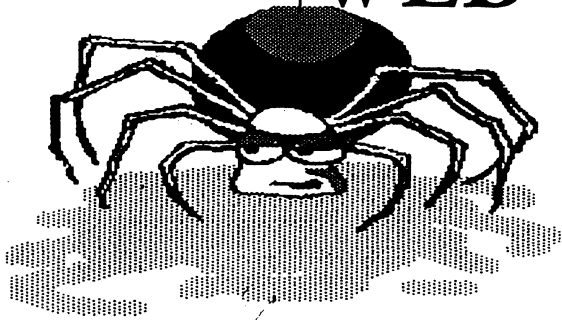
The long hearing in relation to a commercial cause in an English county court finalised on Friday with the judge, a crotchety and anachronistic man who was almost deaf, reserving his decision until Monday morning. The judge decided to attend his country retreat for the weekend and there he wrote his judgment.

Counsel for the plaintiff and defendant and their respective solicitors assembled in court on Monday at 9.30 am for the hearing of the reasons for judgment. The judge took his place and apologised to counsel and solicitors advising that he had left the reasons for judgment at his country retreat some two hours away and explaining that he would need to adjourn the proceedings until the next day.

Counsel, who is more familiar with modern instantaneous means of communication piped up to the judge 'fax it up'. The judge purportedly replied 'it does rather, doesn't it'.

Proctor Vol 16 No 3, April 1996

THE SPIDER'S WEB



What goes around...

Users of e-mail, browsers of the Net (and regular readers of *Balance* - this story appeared in the April 1995 issue) will recall the bizarre but nifty story of Ron Opus which floated around the ether for some time.

Ron was shot through the head on the way down during a suicide jump from a 10 storey building. The story goes that the bullet came from a gun fired by an old man who was in the habit of threatening his wife with an empty shotgun during arguments and did not know it was loaded.

The gun was loaded previously by the man's son who, angry with his mother over her denial of financial support, had hoped that his father would accidentally shoot his mother during one of their frequent arguments. Same son, in despondency had then decided to take the big jump and collected the bullet on the way down. Debate on whether this constituted murder, suicide or who really cares raged.

The Gist in *The Law Institute Journal*, May 1997 reports that the creator of this story has finally been unmasked in an article first appearing in *The Washington Post*.

The article on "Netmyths" (urban myths of the Internet) reveals that the story was written by Don Harper Mills, past president the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and that it was delivered in a 1987 speech at the group's banquet. Mills was justifiably proud of his story and admitted he did it strictly for entertainment. Bet he wishes he was more copyright-conscious.

Know how he feels?

Senior Solicitor Allen Chubb, whose firm operates in Belgravia was recently fined about \$2,100 for assaulting and imprisoning a client following an argument about his costs. According to Glasgow's *The Herald* (Scotland), Chubb could now be struck off after 27 years in the legal profession.

The lawyer was privately prosecuted by his victim, Laura Harold, after he dragged her across the floor on her bottom, threw her down a flight of stone steps and later rugby-tackled her when she returned to retrieve her fur coat.

Fortunately for Chubb, the judge said "I don't think it is necessary to impose any punishment upon you apart from ordering a payment of compensation..." Chubb was also ordered to pay another \$2,100 towards the costs of the prosecution.

NSW Law Society Journal, May 1996

Good Advice

The history of crime offers few figures less suited to undetected burglary than Mr Philip McCutcheon.

He was arrested for the twentieth time when, after his latest robbery, he drove his getaway car into two parked vans. During this man's appearance at York Crown Court in 1971, the judge gave a rare display of careers advice from the bench.

Giving our man a conditional discharge, Mr Rodney Percy, the Recorder, said: "I think you should give burglary up. You have a withered hand, an artificial leg and only one eye. You have been caught in Otley, Leeds, Harrogate, Norwich, Beverley, Hull and York. How can you hope to succeed?"

You are a rotten burglar. You are always being caught."

Stephen Pyle, *Heroic Failures*, in *The Oxford Book of Villains*

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