

A Slip of the Tongue

THE SPIDER'S WEB



The mandatory prison sentence furore might lead those with idle brains to wonder whether the next step could be a reintroduction of hanging – if only so we could resurrect the colourful language that surrounded that particular activity, at least in the parlance of thieves in the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

The Lexicon of Thieves' Cant by Shaun Hateley provides some rather picturesque expressions associated with a trip to the *Gregorian tree*, the *new drop* or *Newmans's lift* (gallows) where a felon might enjoy a *hearty choke*, be *noozed* or *frummagemmed* or *go with the fall of the leaf* and subsequently die of *hempen fever* at the hands of a *Jack Ketch* (hangman), leaving behind a grieving *hempen widow*.

One assumes that in order to attract such a sentence in modern times, a fairly serious crime would have had to be committed and one who was merely a *lully prigger* (a knocker-off of wet washing from a clothes line) or a *fagger* or *little snakesman* (small boy passed through a window in order to open the door to a house or *ken*) wouldn't expect to find themselves at the *morning drop* (gallows). This, of course, would be in the hands of the *fortune teller* (judge) who could be found at the *nubbing ken* (courthouse).

All sounds a bit like *flash lingo* used by *fidlam ben* (thieves).

Thanks to Jonathon Nolan of David Francis & Associates who unearthed the lexicon.

Why Is It So?

Some interesting statistics which appeared in the *Malaysian Bar's Infoline* (May 1997).

Country & population	No. of lawyers
Australia (18 million)	33,000
India (1 billion)	600,000
Japan (120 million)	16,000
Korea (40 million)	3,400
Malaysia (20 million)	7,000
Philippines (72 million)	40,000
Singapore (4 million)	3,000
Sri Lanka (16 million)	6,500
Taiwan (21 million)	3,300
Thailand (60 million)	30,000

Corporate Gamesmanship

One wouldn't wish to be seen to be Cridland's bashing (Cridland's might prefer to view it as another case of the tall poppy syndrome), but submissions of printable gossip are a bit thin on the ground. This tidbit comes from an impeccable source who'd better remain nameless.

Apparently the middle of July saw an action-packed evening at a Corporate Indoor Games Night, boasting closely-fought corporate battles in soccer, cricket and netball. The legal profession was well represented and at the end of the night, the now legendary De Silva Hebron team (*Scummy Doggy* again, one hopes) were to be seen toasting themselves with winners' champagne.

And the wooden spoon? Well, yes, it went to Cridlands.

(This page remains open for any retaliation Cridland's may wish to take in the form of embarrassing gossip.)

Tells It Like It Is?

Phil McKeiver of the AGS provided the following snippet.

True story. Correct spelling of the word *euonym* won a spelling bee for an American child, reports *The Bulletin*, (June 17 1997).

Great that someone can spell it, but what does it mean? Doesn't appear in many dictionaries in its noun form but would seem to be a word best defined by example. One given by *The Bulletin* is the Saigon law firm of Su, Su and Fuk Yew.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

"I'll be in hell before you've finished breakfast, boys ... Let her rip!"

"Black Jack" Ketchum, murderer, before being hanged.

"Why yes – a bullet proof vest."

James Rodgers, murderer, before the firing squad, when asked if he had a final request.

"You sons of bitches. Give my love to my mother."

"Two Gun" Crowley, sitting on the electric chair

The Childrens Charity
Barnardos Australia 

HOPE FOR KIDS

**A Legacy in Your Will
Leaves an Enduring Memory**

Consult your Solicitor or: Barnardos Australia
Locked Bag 1 Million, Broadway NSW 2007

(02) 9281 7933

Registered Charity No. CFN13840. A Co. Ltd by Guarantee - ACN 068 557 906

FAW9697