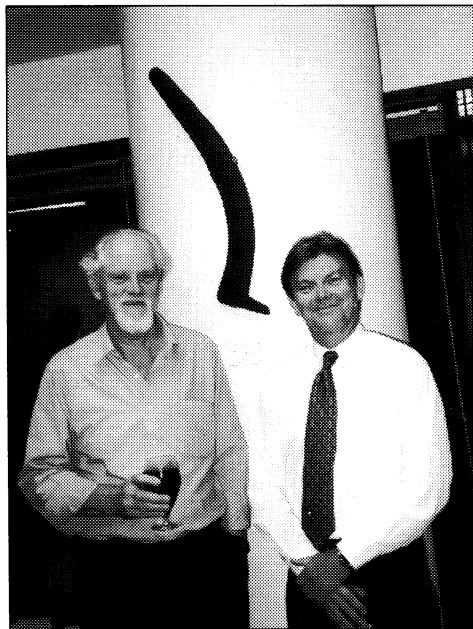


FERAE NATURAE

That was the Law Week that was ... once again the profession has managed to successfully project a positive image to the public. From its launch at Casuarina Square to well attended lunches, the week highlighted the national theme of "Safer Communities". The NT Law Week has not only attracted local interest — we've been getting congratulatory messages about our program from interstate societies. Not bad for the smallest jurisdiction in the country.

Especially pleasing was the endorsement from the Attorney General of the integral role the profession plays in the promotion of a safer community for the people of the Northern Territory, and we would like to thank the broad range of legal, government and community groups who participated in the launch and community workshops. Once again, also, the Crime Tour was a popular event, and it is hoped that next year we can get someone in Alice Springs to put their hand up to organise a similar event in the Centre.



NT News court reporter Bob Watt with Law Society President Mr Jon Tippett. Featured in the background is the hook boomerang donated to the Law Society by Mr Watt. The boomerang is now displayed in the Council Room at the Law Society office in NT House.

Our guest speaker, Rick Farley, provided a thought provoking assessment of the profession. Are we "really a profession, with the ethical standards that accompany such a definition, or merely a collection of legal mechanics available for hire to the highest bidder?" Given the increasing levels to which the public engages with legal issues in their day-to-day as well as working lives — and hence their engagement with our membership - it is an important issue for us to debate. Indeed it is currently being debated nationally. Such a discussion has fundamental links with issues raised in *Balance* previously, from pro bono work through to our relationship with the executive and legislature.

At this point I would like to note, and extend my congratulations to Max Horton from Martin and Partners in Alice Springs. As the inaugural Contribution to the Community award recipient it was his pro bono work for the Anglican diocese of the Northern Territory that was honoured. Max's award embodies the sense of duty that transcends any description of legal practitioners as merely "legal mechanics".

My thanks, also, to a man well know to many in the profession, NT News court reporter Bob Watt. During Law Week he donated to the Society a family heirloom — a very old hook boomerang, the kind which forms our logo. I first met Bob in my previous life as a journalist. He was always generous to his colleagues, as well as being a stickler for accuracy in his reporting of affairs that impinge directly on the work of lawyers. Over the years he has developed a close relationship with many of our members. His gift to the Society was extraordinarily generous, and greatly appreciated.

The recent announcement of a Royal Commission into the HIH Insurance collapse will be of more than passing interest to our membership. Like many other



Maria Ceresa, Executive Officer

professionals around the country, we have an exposure to what has been touted as the largest corporate collapse in the nation's history. Fortunately that exposure was limited — 50 per cent over a period of six months. Current indications are that liabilities in the NT have been limited, with relatively few potential claims. Obviously this should not be seen as a cause for complacency. There is no doubt that premiums will rise dramatically — not just for the profession but throughout business and domestic. It will be yet another challenge for our membership.

HAVE YOU VISITED THE LAW SOCIETY WEBSITE LATELY?

The Law Society continues to regularly update the Law Society website in an effort to ensure the site is current, user-friendly and relevant to all practitioners.

www.lawsocnt.asn.au

A calendar of events, practising certificate forms and insurance forms as well as member information are all available for download.