

More about Dick Ward

Solicitor-General Tom Pauling QC fondly remembers a legendary Territorian

Richard Keller's reminiscences (*Balance*, April 2003) about the late Dick Ward prompted a small flood of memories. Dick was a keen thespian in his early days, loved reading, was politically very much to the left and a superb lawyer.

His reputation was so formidable that the Editor of the Federal Law Reports in the first of my cases to be reported refused to believe that Dick was on the losing side and so put him down as counsel for the winning shipowner much to my chagrin. (*Burns Philip & Co Ltd v The Ship M.V. "Golden Swan"* 17 FLR 5).

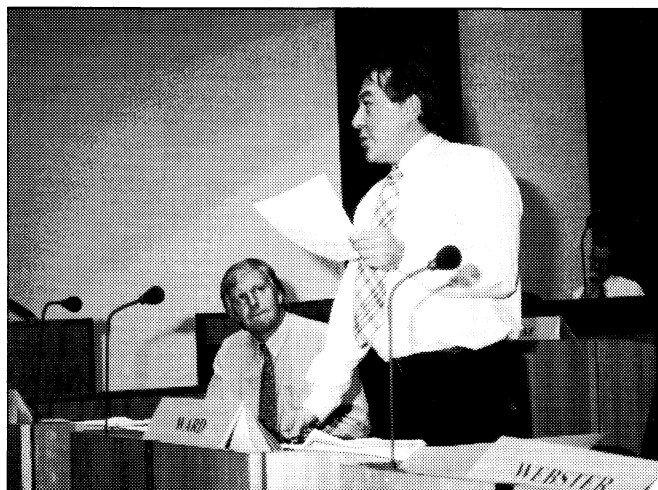
After his surprise electoral defeat Dick returned to the law and managed to write accurate and pithy advices while giving the odd hour or two to Ward Keller.

The Legislative Council took a great deal of his time and many an after work discussion was held with Dick over expensive scotch at tax free prices in the Legco Members bar. He introduced me to a deal of leftist writings.

The one that sticks in my mind is Alan Ashbolt's *An American Experience* which was a stark critique of capitalism. We discussed Shakespeare, Kenneth Slessor, Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson.

His judicial appointment preceded the independent bar which Maurice and I commenced on 1 October 1974 but a condition of his appointment as silk (as with Ian Barker) was that he practice independently of any firm. He was in fact appointed to the bench on 27 September 1974. He died on 24 November 1977. A special sitting to mark his passing was held on 28 November and is reported in 16 ALR.

In 1972 during a "session" in the Legco bar Dick persuaded me that it would be undemocratic for Joe Fisher to be re-elected unopposed in the seat of Fannie Bay.



Above: Tom Pauling QC "plays" Dick Ward at the 30th anniversary of the NT Legislative Assembly.

He produced a nomination form which he had me fill in.

The names of the nominees for my brief tilt at politics was like a roll call of that bar. Dick, Tiger Brennan, Ron Withnall, "Jingle" Bell etc. But that's another story. He was persuasive Dick I assure you.

It was with special pleasure that I was asked to take on his persona to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the first sitting of a fully elected Council and I was given a particularly fiery speech to deliver giving it to the Mandarins in Canberra.

RCW (as Richard Keller describes him) was a great Territorian.①

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