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*** TEWLS outreach services**
*** Congratulations Cecil Black -**
40 years in legal practise

Final farewell

As this is my last column as Law Society President I thought I might reflect on some of the issues and changes that have occurred during the two years that I have been President.

Reflections

Over the last two years there has been a raft of legislative changes both at the local and national levels. The Law Society sub-committees have been very busy dealing with these developments, including:

- * significant and ongoing changes in family law
- * the proposed overhaul of the Northern Territory's Criminal Code
- * tort law "reforms"
- * a new Youth Justice Act
- * other developments have included continuing debate over Aboriginal customary law, the private tender of ATSILS and an increased focus on pro bono issues.

During my presidency there have been significant changes to the practice of law:

- Tort Law Reforms changing the nature and quantity of personal injuries work, including the implementation of the costs and advertising legislation which put new restrictions on the way law firms could promote their services
- Development of professional services legislation
- Proposed changes to conveyancing and questions over professional privilege with new anti-terrorism legislation and proposed anti-money laundering legislation
- Move towards mandatory continuing professional development

These changes will continue to produce challenges for the Law Society and the legal profession as we move towards a national profession with the implementation of the model laws project. This project will change the rules, structure and practices governing the legal profession in each jurisdiction, bringing them under a consistent system. The LSNT has been busy working through the proposed

legislation, the implications for members and the areas of particular difficulty in the NT.

Thank you

During my term I have been fortunate to have had the assistance of the Secretariat including –

Julie Davis our Finance and Administration Manager who has been with the Law Society some 12 years and who looks after the finances;

Josephine Stone our Investigation Officer who, along with the changes we have made this year to the complaints and disciplinary process, has streamlined and improved the complaints procedure;

Zoe Malone who as Public Relations Officer has done an exceptional job in lifting the profile of the Law Society and ensuring that members are kept well informed about legislative changes and/or member services.

They are all ably assisted by the Administration staff.

I cannot leave without a special mention of Barbara Bradshaw. I consider Barbara's input to the Law Society, the Council, the members and the President has been exceptional. Barbara's contribution and hard work is difficult to quantify, however, I can say with confidence that information conveyed to members in a comprehensive and timely manner is due to Barbara's very "hands on" approach and the many long hours she puts into her role as the CEO. Barbara understands how government works and her contribution as to the process the government follows in proposing and enacting legislation, and her assessment of proposed legislation and submissions on various topics, as required, is outstanding. Ultimately, the President's role would be far more difficult without her. I take this opportunity of publicly thanking Barbara for her counsel, guidance and support to me during my term.



Merran Short, President

I thank all councillors, in particular Allison Robertson who has done a great job and worked hard after agreeing to step into the role of Vice-President at fairly short notice following Duncan MacLean's departure and upon whose counsel I have also relied.

Thank you to the members of the profession who have supported and assisted me over the last two years, it has, for the most part, been great fun!

Finally, I would also like to thank my colleagues at De Silva Hebron and in particular my partners David De Silva and Sue Porter who agreed to me taking on the role as President for two years knowing the commitment involved.

The role of President of the Law Society is a substantial commitment, however, in my opinion, the rewards far outweigh the work. I encourage anyone with an interest to get involved with the Law Society whether it is as an executive member, on Council or simply to join one of the committees. Our Law Society can only be as strong as its members.

I wish the new President and Council the very best for the future. It will be a busy year with the implementation of model rules and the move towards mandatory continuing professional development. I will be watching your achievements with great interest. ①

