

Opening of the legal year 2016

The opening of the legal year is a bit of a misnomer in the Northern Territory, as there is no traditional end of year recess and the administration of justice doesn't ever really stop.

Tass Liveris

President

Law Society Northern Territory

The courts sit right through the Christmas holidays and many practices also remain open. However, the opening of the legal year has a very important place in the legal calendar, as it brings people together to reflect on the past year and to look forward to the year ahead.

This year, the opening of the legal year was notable for three additional reasons: the Chief Justice's announcement earlier in the week that he would retire on 4 July 2016, the launch of the Chief Justice's *The little red book of advocacy, second edition* and the return of Nerolie Withnall to the Territory.

In 1977, Mrs Withnall made legal history when she was elected as president of the Law Society Northern Territory, becoming the first female in the world to be elected to such a position. It is rare and exciting to have someone with the Territory "in [their] blood forever" as the keynote speaker, let alone someone who was able to take the sell-out crowds in Darwin and Alice Springs into the pioneer days of the legal profession in the Northern Territory, including the early developmental days of the Society.

Mrs Withnall's addresses were littered with witty and humorous tales about her time spent in practice in Darwin and had something for everyone, from her friends and colleagues from days gone by, right through to the newest generation of legal practitioners. The best expression of the crowds' appreciation was the extended and lasting ovations that Mrs Withnall's words inspired and we thank you Mrs Withnall, for making the opening of the legal year in 2016 a most memorable occasion.





Nerolie Withnall