



**The Dr David Williams Lecture, King's College**  
**Tuesday 19 August 2003, 6:30pm**  
Introduction of guest speaker Mr Ian Dearden

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**Chief Justice Paul de Jersey AC**

We are privileged to have Mr Ian Dearden as our guest speaker this evening, and I am honoured to introduce him.

I know Ian would regard it as a privilege to deliver an address bearing the name of the remarkable, the late Dr Williams: "Old Collegian", World War II POW camp survivor, UQ graduate in Arts, with honours – despite having lost his sight in the war, Gowrie Scholarship recipient, Doctor of Philosophy from the University of London (School of Economics), for over 20 years the President of the King's Old Collegians Association, and active King's College Council and Board of Fellows member.

Ian is himself a lawyer of considerable public note. We lawyers frequently aver, and rightly, that our predominant duty is to the law, and to the administration of justice according to law. Judges especially, disavow any suggestion that in their adjudication of disputes in the courts, they be permitted to apply subjective or idiosyncratic notions of what the law should be: Judges are bound to apply the law as it is, and that is central to the rule of law on which civilized society depends. Likewise lawyers are bound to present their clients' cases consistently with the existing state of the law.



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But that this is not to gainsay a conscientious and thinking lawyer the capacity, out of court, to query the appropriateness of particular laws, or the adequacy of existing legal frameworks to protect and advance the individual interests of citizens. Judges have a rather limited capacity to do this, for they are rightly excluded from involvement in matters of political controversy. But a practising lawyer has somewhat greater latitude.

Our guest speaker has, if I may say, deftly exploited that latitude, in what he has perceived to be the public interest, and for his courage and discretion in doing that, he is to be commended. We look forward with great interest to hearing his own perception of the extent to which he has been effective.

With their particular aptitude for precise analysis, and their qualifications underpinned by mental acuity and moral perception, lawyers should participate actively, while with discretion, in broad community affairs. Ian is plainly of that view. He is certainly qualified to bring particular expertise to public debate in areas where people's rights are in issue.

He is a criminal defence and anti-discrimination lawyer who has practised almost exclusively in those areas in Brisbane since December 1984. Since 1<sup>st</sup> July 1997, he has been the principal of Dearden Lawyers. That firm practices in the areas of criminal law, anti-discrimination law, administrative law and professional misconduct. He holds the degrees of Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws with honours from the University of Queensland, as well as a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and a Master of Legal Practice from the Queensland University of Technology. He is the author, co-author and/or contributor to a number of texts, including "Advocacy Basics for Solicitors", "Criminal law



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Checklists", "An Annotated Guide to the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act", "The Lawyers Practice Manual (Queensland)" and the "Queensland law Handbook".

As to active community endeavour, he has been President of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties since March 1994, and an executive member of that Council since 1985. Indeed, in 2003, he was awarded a Centenary Medal for "distinguished services to law and civil liberties". He has also lectured and spoken extensively at schools, universities, seminars and community groups on criminal law, anti-discrimination law and advocacy.

Ian follows a series of well-known identities in the role of President of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties: Terry O'Gorman, Stephen Keim, Matt Foley, Derek Fielding. The current Queensland Governor Ms Quentin Bryce was Vice-President of the Council from 1979 to 1980.

Now a narrow absorption with the law will never endear any lawyer to the broader community, and I cannot help but recall in this regard the advice of the Scots lawyer Counsellor Pleydell in Sir Walter Scott's "Guy Mannering". Taking Guy Mannering into his library, he offers the advice: "a lawyer without history or literature is a mechanic, a mere working mason: if he possesses some knowledge of these, he may venture to call himself an architect."

I expect Ian is deeply absorbed in matters of literature, history and social development. I should add that his aura drips the extra glamour of his being a singer, guitarist, songwriter and former folk music concert promoter, and he has performed as a folk musician since 1974. Music remains, he tells us, his deepest and most enduring passion.



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What I have said confirms for you, I trust, that we may expect a fascinating disquisition!

Ladies and gentlemen, to deliver the Dr David Williams Lecture 2003, it is my pleasure to introduce Mr Ian Dearden.