



RECEPTION FOR SIR EDWARD WILLIAMS/BAR CENTENARY PHOTOGRAPHS Wednesday 19 November 2003, 5:30pm

Lady Williams and members of the Williams families, your Honours, members of the Bar Council, Ladies and Gentlemen...

It is inherently risky to seek to divine, let alone express, the views of others, especially those basking in Paradise, but I am confident Sir Edward Williams would see great joy in this evening, and particularly in its being linked with the Bar Centenary.

A latter stage of his life lent a poignancy to my own association. Following his collapse in Melbourne, at the commencement of the racing carnival in late October 1998, I found myself there for a meeting of the Council of Chief Justices and – I expect to his considerable surprise – visited him in hospital, in fact unannounced, which I appreciate, with the maturity of another five years, may have been a potentially rather risky thing to do. But Sir Edward survived my impertinence, though for regrettably not long enough.

He was a Judge of this court from 14 May 1971 to 17 February 1984. He was in many respects larger than life, perhaps larger than judicial life. Indeed, some may feel it was that grandeur which foreshortened his time here. Then, as we know, judicial retirement led to further expression of that grand personality, especially notably through Expo 88.



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The 'Dargie' portrait, painted in 1984, captures the essence of the man: achievement, style, eminence, while not forgetting compassion.

Despite my entreaties, Lady Williams would not part with the original! But she has generously provided this framed copy – and a special copy it is: when the first which was proffered did not meet her requirements, she rejected it.

Sir Edward was a great Judge. His having been a member of this court lends it prominence. He was a first-rate citizen of the State, a first-rate citizen of the Commonwealth. And that is the attitude we discern from the portrait, an attitude which undoubtedly Sir William Dargie meant to convey.

I thank the Library for mounting this complementary historical display – fascinating, and the Williams family, and Mr Jim Fitzgerald, for providing this wonderful material.

We Judges are delighted that all of you have joined us this evening, including representatives of the Queensland Turf Club, a large part of his passion.

As was the Bar Association, of which he was President from 1970 to 1971. Ned would be delighted to have this event associated with recognition of the interesting collage provided by the Bar Council of the ceremonial centenary sittings in June. To Glenn Martin, I again express the gratitude of the court for that important addition to its collection, and I invite Mr Martin to offer some comment ...

I had hoped we might hear briefly from Lady Williams, but again my entreaties have proved fruitless: the presence of Lady Williams of itself graces the occasion. But maybe we will hear briefly, and perhaps anecdotally, from one of Sir Edward's former Associates ...