



“Joel’s little mistake – a journey through the legal system”

Launch

**Monday 29 March 2004, 5pm
Rare Books precinct**

Chief Justice Paul de Jersey AC

Welcome ladies and gentlemen to our courts’ appropriately restrained venture into show business.

I particularly welcome Mr Brian Kilmartin and members of the Grants Committee who assured the funding – up to approximately \$64,000, the producer/director Mr Malcolm Burt, the actors including leading man Steven Archie who sometimes goes under the alias “Joel”, and the production team from (MM)Media, representatives of Rotary and Lions reflecting some of our range of intended beneficiaries, and appropriately in Youth Week, students – our immediate target audience, and their teachers. We have with us students and teachers from Brisbane State High, Park Ridge High, Mansfield High, Anglican Church Grammar, Brisbane Boys’ College, Ipswich Grammar, Somerville House and St Joseph’s College Gregory Terrace.

Many other valued guests are present here this evening, including members of the legal profession, noting particularly Mr David Boddice SC who actively participated in the cause (though not in the thespian sense), Mr Tom Byrne from the Queensland Law Society who has been most helpful, Mr Ken Smith, Director-General of Education, representatives of the Department of Employment and Training, Justice Department staff (including the Director-General Ms Rachel Hunter), court staff, and Justice Philip McMurdo and Judge Debbie Richards, the Judges directly and substantially involved in the production. I toyed with how the awards for best actress and best supporting actress should be distributed as between Joel’s mother, the endearing rose growing householder, and her Honour: I imagine that in the best of judicial tradition, Judge Richards will defer.



**"Joel's little mistake – a journey through the legal system"
Launch
Monday 29 March 2004, 5pm
Rare Books precinct**

We welcome you all!

The genesis of the project emerges from a letter to the President of the Queensland Law Society on 3 September 2002 where I said: "At a time when the joint nature of our public mission needs a degree of reinforcement, I raise the possibility of the courts, the Bar Association and the Law Society joining together to commission the production of a video to explain to interested members of the public the operation of the legal system, not confined to the courts but extending to the work of the profession generally as well...what I have in mind is a highly professional production which could be disseminated through service clubs, schools, etc. That is what we do to an extent with our jurors video, as well of course as showing it daily to prospective jurors."

The funding was approved on 24 October 2002, and production proceeded apace. The film aims particularly to interest and inform a young audience about our fundamental legal institutions. It will be distributed on DVD, VHS and CD-ROM, and the CD-ROM has interactive PDF to allow the viewer to cross from the film to more detailed material on subjects such as the jury system or what is involved in the sentencing of offenders. While the film will be especially useful for schools and for the thousands who visit Queensland courts every year to observe and learn about our justice system, it is I believe for any viewer a very watchable product of our local film industry

Ladies and gentlemen, you now have the opportunity to make your own assessment: have we fulfilled our goal? While I would not wish to forestall the jury's independent assessment, you will, I imagine forgive my expressing a resounding: "Yes we have!"



**"Joel's little mistake – a journey through the legal system"
Launch
Monday 29 March 2004, 5pm
Rare Books precinct**

Contemporary courts communicate with their constituents, and I am proud to launch this video/DVD as your courts' latest contribution, and at once present a copy to Mrs Heather Short of Lions and Mr Ron Dixon, President of the Rotary Club of Queensland...

Now I suspect Sam Goldwyn would have said, "I don't care if 'Joel's little mistake' doesn't make a cent – just so long as every man woman and child in the State of Queensland sees it!" And so far as I do myself make a cameo appearance, let me at once admonish you with another Goldwyn line: "Our comedies are not to be laughed at."

Projectionist, over to you...

(DVD played)

I use the opportunity to launch a second, somewhat drier, but very important initiative: the Supreme and District Courts' benchbook. This has been an in-house production – no actors here, a project largely co-ordinated by the following Judges who spent a lot of time on the project: Mr Justice McPherson, former Justice Thomas, Justices Jerrard, Mackenzie, Byrne, Holmes and Philippides, and District Court Judges Robertson, Michael Shanahan and Dick. I express gratitude to all who have contributed to the work. This invaluable collection of sample directions for use in the criminal court provides a good illustration of the transparency of our public process: the benchbook is on the webpage for all to see, including Counsel and self-represented accused, all of whom are known to scrutinize the accuracy of our summings up with dedication and sometimes creativity. Hardcopies are here



"Joel's little mistake – a journey through the legal system"
Launch
Monday 29 March 2004, 5pm
Rare Books precinct

tonight for delivery to the Director of Public Prosecutions Mrs Clare, the Public Defender Mr Devereaux, and the Presidents of the Bar and the Law Society, Mr Martin and Mr Ferguson, all of whose attendance I note with pleasure. It is with great satisfaction that I launch this progressive initiative.

Now reverting to a perhaps more immediately entertaining aspect, may I invite our director, Mr Malcolm Burt, to the lectern?