



**Queensland Justices Association Annual State Conference  
Saturday 2 October 2004, 9.30 am  
Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club, Coorparoo  
Official Opening**

**Chief Justice Paul de Jersey AC**

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to open this 2004 State conference, and especially in my role as the Association's patron, indeed as I understand things, your first patron in the Association's 86 year history: I am greatly honoured and hope to be able to encourage and assist you in your important endeavours.

This year has signalled great advances in the work of the Association: beginning with the change of name adopted by the members in February, with reversion to the name originally adopted upon the formation of the Association in 1918; then progressively the modernisation of the Constitution, with the Council transformed into a "board of directors", and the injection of a clarity of expression which I gather the members have found appealing; also, the active fostering of good working relationships between the Association and the Minister, the Department and the judiciary; very importantly the establishing of new branches around the State, through which the large membership of the Association may develop and express its views; and then there is the supervening vibrancy of the QJA Journal, which leaves one most sanguine as to the vibrancy of its eponymous parent.

The website of the Department of Justice lists more than 6,000 Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations throughout Queensland. Many are members of the Association. They constitute a most valuable human resource available to be deployed in the service of the public, and the Association plays an important role in facilitating that deployment.



**Queensland Justices Association Annual State Conference  
Saturday 2 October 2004, 9.30 am  
Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club, Coorparoo  
Official Opening**

One of the most interesting recent ventures has been the opening, and maintenance, of new signing centres at shopping centres. The most recent opening occurred in March this year, by the Attorney-General, at Chermside. These initiatives are greatly welcomed by members of the public. Many people have mentioned to me how helpful they find these operations. They are seen not only as helpful but as exemplifying the commitment to public service which traditionally characterized, indeed defined, the role of Justice of the Peace. It is refreshing to note that tradition persists.

The goals of the Association bear repetition on an occasion like this. They are:

- to encourage high ethical standards of conduct of members in performing their office;
- to promote and maintain the status of the office of Justice of the Peace and Commissioner for Declarations;
- to provide members with advice on the duties, rights and obligations of the office;
- to represent the interests of members specifically and the office generally to the Government and to the general community;
- to provide education and training to advance the interests of members and potential members;
- to monitor relevant changes in legislation, and assess the impact of these and advise members accordingly;
- to provide members with a forum for the exchange of views and ideas;
- to promote fellowship and goodwill among members; and
- to promote fellowship and goodwill among members and office-holders who are not members as well as Justices of the Peace from other jurisdictions.



**Queensland Justices Association Annual State Conference  
Saturday 2 October 2004, 9.30 am  
Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club, Coorparoo  
Official Opening**

These are plainly worthy goals. Their adoption confirming the potential for the Association to act cohesively in binding the Justices and Commissioners of this State to the mission of public service which must distinguish them.

That the Association has convened this conference, at which a range of interesting and relevant topics will be addressed by appropriately qualified speakers; that the Association has shown commitment to the efficient and inspiring representation of its members in the contemporary context; that the Association is demonstrating determination to assist the people to whose interests its members are bound: all of these features provide palpable and commendable assurance of the commitment of the Association to the goals just outlined.

The tenured judiciary found its origins in the English system which depended, and still substantially depends, on the voluntary contribution of Justices of the Peace. As Chief Justice, I am pleased to acknowledge today that historical link between my court and your office, and to acknowledge the valuable role Justices have over many years played in the administration of justice in this vast State, especially of course in the West.

As I said at the outset, I am very honoured to have the opportunity to be with you today, especially in my role as your patron. As I wish you well for a stimulating and worthwhile annual conference, I have great pleasure now in formally opening ... the Queensland Justices Association Annual State Conference for the year 2004.