



**Nicholsons cocktail party to mark the
retirement of Mr Michael Hayne
Queensland Club
Friday, 6 July 2007, 6pm**

**The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice of Queensland**

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to express my respectful commendation this evening of Michael Hayne.

Michael has practised as a solicitor for more than 33 years. He has what I would think an extremely rare if not unique distinction. That rests in his having served as many as 31 of those years as not only a partner of a law firm, but as partner of the same law firm. Michael has been a partner of this firm for more than a quarter of its 113 year history. That suggests something surpassing stability: it reflects devotion to a firm he treasures; and that of course substantially embraces dedication to service of the firm's clients.

Some present may not know that the firm was founded in Queensland as long ago as in 1894. It was then named Sydney Robertson and Nicholson. One of the founding partners, Sydney Robertson, died in the Second World War. Dr Michael White QC, incidentally, was his nephew. The surviving partner, the late Mr Frederick Morisset Nicholson, admitted Ian Marr and Michael Hayne to the partnership in July 1976. Originally at Rothwell Chambers in Edward Street, the practice moved in 1977 to the Westpac Bank at the corner of Queen and George Streets, then to the Prudential Building in 1982, and finally in 1988 to the City's business heart at 82 Eagle Street. At that stage the firm formed a strong alliance with the Michell Sillar group in Sydney, Russell Kennedy in Melbourne and Lynch Meyer in Adelaide, producing the name Michell Sillar Nicholsons. It was that association which fostered growth of the firm's corporate base, attracting Government departments, semi-Government organizations and public companies as clients.



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Nicholsons nevertheless remains one of a number of Queensland firms notable for having substantially resisted the temptation to expand. The firm comprises six partners, 10 other lawyers and 20 support staff. Accordingly, it remains well positioned to deliver particularly personalized service to its clients, which I am sure they greatly appreciate. The firm has over the years also shown a commendable commitment to pro bono work.

Michael has for three decades been instrumental at Nicholsons in assuring the delivery of excellent service to clients, particularly in the areas of his speciality – commercial litigation and corporate law.

Michael, as you leave the firm, you move on with the confidence your work has, for its excellence and professionalism, been greatly appreciated, as has your contribution in other areas of public responsibility.

You are a comparatively young retiree, may I observe, and my best wishes anticipate your now opening what will undoubtedly be another new and substantial chapter of your life. You will no longer be a partner of Nicholsons, but you will remain an accomplished lawyer, a distinguished Queenslander, and even more importantly, a very nice person.