



Brisbane launch of Herbert Geer

Foyer, CUA House, 175 Eagle Street, Brisbane
Thursday, 7 August 2008, 6pm

The Hon P de Jersey AC
Chief Justice

Bill Fazio, Managing Partner, Greg Meek, former CEO of Nicol Robinson Halletts, partners of Herbert Geer, ladies and gentlemen.

I am very pleased to be here tonight to acknowledge an important new provider of legal services in this State, Herbert Geer. The “newness” of course concerns the amalgamation which was effected on 1 July. Significantly, however, we join to celebrate the amalgamation of two firms of long standing, with the accumulated experience and expertise that assures.

There is in this State at the moment quite a lot of interest in amalgamations, and in the acronyms they spawn. Our hosts: may I say that I think “Herbert Geer” is much more reassuring and inspirational, dare I say meaningful, than NRH or HG – the latter of course raising that niggling sporting connotation.

The partner firms to this amalgamation boast impressive lineage.

Nicol Robinson Halletts date back to 1890, important in Queensland history because the following year raised the Great Shearers’ Strike, which led the Central Judge in Rockhampton, of my court, to imprison 13 of the union leaders for three years on St Helena Island. Nicol Robinson Halletts was, accordingly, born in turbulent times, which may have generated the endurance which has ensured its success over the following 120 years. It even survived the adventures of briefing me when I was a practising barrister in the 1970’s.

The other distinguished partner, Herbert Geer and Rundle, this year celebrated a “mere” 69th anniversary, and over that span of years, it developed to the point where these firms



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exhibited an apparently irresistible attraction, with the amalgamation consummated on 1 July.

The result, as "The Australian" newspaper informs us with undoubtedly scrupulous accuracy, is the second fastest growing law firm in Australia, with the expectation of a 60% increase over the next 12 months.

Now growth and size are not definitive of quality, as we know, but they are a reliable indicator of client satisfaction, and client satisfaction comes from good, reliable, informed, expert service.

Queenslanders are well-served by a profession of considerable competence, expertise and ethical commitment.

It is reassuring for me, as Chief Justice, to witness the progression of firms on to new planes of high level client delivery. Change for change's sake is obviously unwarranted, but carefully planned change of this character, directed towards a more comprehensively expert dedication to the increasingly sophisticated needs of a broad range of clients, is very much in the interests of the people of Queensland.

I am very pleased, in these circumstances, to acknowledge the amalgamation of Nicol Robinson Halletts with Herbert Geer and Rundle, and to welcome this amalgamated firm as it assumes a significant role in the delivery of legal services in this State under the shingle: "Herbert Geer".