

**Official Launch of “Guardian of Your Rights: A History of the
Queensland Council for Civil Liberties”**

Tuesday – 3 March 2009

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Peter Applegarth. I am a Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland, and welcome you to the Banco Court. I acknowledge the presence of the Chief Justice of Queensland, the Honourable Paul de Jersey, other justices of this Court and other members of the judiciary. This evening the Honourable Kerry Shine MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland will launch “Guardian of Your Rights: A History of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties”. I acknowledge the presence in the audience of many distinguished guests including past presidents of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties which recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Their work and the work of others provided the raw material for the book. However, this book required an author, an editor and a publisher.

The author of the work, Mr Eddie Clark is a former teacher who undertook thousands of hours of research on archival material and interviews. His industry over the years has been amazing, especially during periods of poor health.

The product of his labours was edited by Ms Eleanor O’Gorman, a young lawyer who works during the day as a litigator at the big end of town. I recall

a meeting when I was a member of the Council about who might edit the draft of Eddie's work. Our dear friend and colleague, Mr Aladin Rahemtula suggested Ms O'Gorman. His advice was inspired. Perhaps one day they will make a film called "When Eddie met Ellie". They proved to be a creative combination.

The third essential element was a committed and professional publisher. The Supreme Court of Queensland Library describes itself as being both a bridge to the past and a gateway to the future. This work is one in a series published by it which documents Queensland's legal heritage and issues that are central to the rule of law. The Library Committee, the library staff and especially the Supreme Court Librarian, Mr Rahemtula, deserve praise for their contribution in publishing this work. The Library has, throughout its own history developed a strong tradition of supporting the work of the Court and other legal institutions in our State. In recent years, the Library has initiated a number of legal heritage projects. They preserve and record our history. They also enhance awareness of justice issues. The Library's independent work in promoting Queensland stories and engaging our community in its legal history and its legal future is to be commended.

Today, we celebrate the Library's twelfth publication on an aspect of Queensland's legal history. This work on the history of civil liberties in Queensland is testimony to the value of small publishing houses in telling Queensland stories. The Library is a leader in publishing such titles in this State: something that makes us both grateful and proud.

We congratulate Mr Rahemtula, and his staff who have worked tirelessly to bring this project and other projects to fruition.

Our first speaker this evening is Mr Michael Cope, who follows in a long line of hardworking presidents of the Council for Civil Liberties who have sacrificed their professional and personal lives to meet the demands that are placed upon holders of that voluntary office. I am no longer a member of the Council but a few years ago, when I was one of its vice-presidents I suggested to Michael that he should delegate some of the work of researching and writing submissions to some of the enthusiastic young students and recent graduates who were interested in helping. Michael said he actually liked spending his weekends writing submissions to Parliamentary Committees and Law Reform Commissions which, I think, qualifies him as a member of a very small minority group. I invite Michael Cope to say a few words.

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Thank you Michael. Our next speaker is Mr Terry O’Gorman, the President of the Australian Council for Civil Liberties, a former president of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties and one of its current vice-presidents. When I first met Terry in the late 1970s we both sported large volumes of curly hair. His was orange and nicely complimented the lime green safari suits that he wore at the time. Terry’s contribution to public life, and his defence of unpopular causes has been enormous over more than 30 years. His contribution is now documented in Mr Clark’s work. I invite Terry O’Gorman to say a few words.

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Thank you Terry. This brings us to the official launch of the book by the Attorney-General. When Eddie Clark was working away in the Fryer Library, going through the archive boxes of correspondence, press releases and minutes that the Council had accumulated over 40 years, I wonder whether he envisaged that his work would be launched by the State's First Law Officer in this beautiful Banco Court. We all appreciate that the Attorney-General has many demands upon his valuable time. All concerned greatly appreciate that you are able to launch this work. I now invite the Honourable Kerry Shine to officially launch the book.

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Thank you Mr Attorney.

[Presentation of books to past Presidents]

That brings to an end the formal proceedings. The Library has curated a small exhibition in the foyer outside, commemorating the achievements of the Council and the individuals involved in its significant successes. I invite you to peruse the displays at your leisure this evening or, indeed, anytime over the coming months. The Library also has copies of the book for sale tonight at a special discounted price of \$20 – it can also be purchased from the Library after this evening, while stocks last. You are invited to join in light refreshments outside, which, in accordance with the terms of the grant, does not include alcohol. A good thing too since we don't want anyone taking liberties. Those who need a drink or who simply wish to continue the celebrations are able to do so at a function that the Council for Civil Liberties

has organised to follow at 325 On George. Thank you for your attendance
and good evening.