



QUEENSLAND LAW SOCIETY
Legal Profession Dinner 2012
22 February 2012

“Toast to Legal Profession”

Justice Margaret Wilson

1. I congratulate John de Groot on his election as President of the Queensland Law Society Inc. John – we all wish you well in the year ahead.
2. And I acknowledge the dedication and effectiveness with which Bruce Doyle led the Society last year.
3. The QLS is fortunate to have people of the high calibre of Bruce and John at the helm in these challenging times.
4. The legal profession is one of the core institutions of Australian democracy.
5. The cornerstone of the profession is service – service to the law and service to the community.
6. Sir Owen Dixon once described the courts and the system of law they administer as the foundation and steel framework of the community they serve. His Honour described the business of lawyers as being to keep the foundations and the framework steady.
7. This is not to be confused with rigidity and unswerving, unthought-out opposition to innovation and change. The rule of law which underpins our democracy is flexible and resilient. The legal profession must keep pace with legal, economic and social change, and it must do so in the context of its pervading commitment to the maintenance of the rule of law. To fail to do so would be to fall down in its service to the law and to the community.



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8. The legal profession plays an often unrecognised role in keeping the foundations and framework of our civil society steady. Whether you act for ordinary citizens or for the disadvantaged, for business or for the Government, the work you do in the criminal justice system, in negotiating and drafting contracts and seeing to their implementation, in administrative law matters which involve interaction between the community and various arms of government, in dispute resolution (whether through litigation or ADR), and in the administration of estates involves an enormous contribution to social stability. That stability provides the environment in which business can prosper, individuals can enjoy the freedom to pursue their personal goals, and the arts can flourish.
9. And let me assure you the courts are very conscious of the extent to which they depend on your assistance for the orderly and efficient disposition of their work.
10. This is an occasion to celebrate the very high standards of integrity, skill and diligence which you bring to all your endeavours.
11. Ladies and gentlemen, Queensland’s legal profession has a proud history. It continues to serve the law and the community, and I am confident it will go on doing so.
12. It gives me enormous pleasure to propose this toast to our profession. Would you rise and charge your glasses.
13. To the legal profession.