

BUSINESS LIASION'S ASSOCIATION CAIRNS
BREAKFAST WITH THE LAW
Opening Speech 18 October 2013
By The Honourable Justice Henry

Those who fail to learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them. So wrote the Spanish philosopher George Santyana.

This often repeated saying resonates in the legal profession as no other.

The law is a product of the lessons of history. It differs from professions such as medicine and engineering which are built on a pool of progressive discovery of new information about the universe. The law in contrast is built on a foundation of old information, which must not be forgotten, of lessons from centuries of learning about what not to do.

The law also differs from those other professions in that it is concerned with the structures and principles which underpin the running and preservation of a democratic society. Like no other profession it should be front and centre in educating the community about why laws are as they are and about the need to hasten slowly before tinkering with them.

It thus falls to those students aspiring to become lawyers to learn how the lessons of history have shaped the law and to in turn stand ready to educate others in the hope that those who seek to change the law do not repeat the mistakes of their forebears in doing so.

By any measure the legal education of our youth is vital to the preservation of our stable democratic society.

Ladies and Gentleman I congratulate and commend the Business Liaison Association on hosting today's function. As this morning's excellent program unfolds I trust my brief remarks will provide some persuasive context to your appreciation and affirmation of the importance of promoting legal education and affording opportunities to young people to pursue a career in the legal profession.

It is my pleasure to now declare open this morning's breakfast with the law.