

**Speech by the Honourable Justice J D Henry, Far Northern Judge, Cairns Courthouse Opening of 2022/2023 Law Year, Monday, 18 July 2022**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

I acknowledge the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people, the traditional owners of this land, their elders past, present and emerging, their ancient customs and lore, as I do those of the traditional owners of all lands and waters within the Far North Queensland jurisdiction over which officers of this courthouse exercise their authority. I hope some are watching this ceremony on livestream.

The mace emerged as a weapon, in the mists of ancient history as homo sapiens reinforced their clubs with a heavy head to use for more effective striking. Over the millenia it also came to symbolise power; leaders and institutions would hold ceremonial maces as representing their authority. Such maces had less substantial heads – as this one does – and were often decorated with symbols of the power of the institution and of the societies they served.

Ceremonial maces continue to symbolise the authority of various institutions, including Parliament, the Courts, the military and universities. It was Professor Henrietta Marrie, inspired by her familiarity with the creative design of a university mace, who proposed the idea, clearly embraced, of a Cairns Courthouse mace, styled with the symbols of the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people and their traditional lands.

So it was that this mace was commissioned, styled so that the Court's ceremonial use of it will be representative not only of

the Court's authority but of its ongoing acknowledgement of the traditional owners of the lands and waters over which it presides.

I am honoured to receive the mace on behalf of the judicial officers of this Courthouse. When its stand is completed it will then be placed on continuing display at the judge's bench in courtroom 1 on level 4 – the Supreme Court courtroom and ceremonial court of this building – save for those occasions when it is required elsewhere for other ceremonial events or displays of the Magistrates Court, District Court or Supreme Court in Far North Queensland.

I thank the following local barristers chambers and solicitors firms for pledging funds to cover the cost of the mace's commission:

Endeavour Chambers, Equity Chambers, Maritime Chambers, Trinity Chambers, Cuthbertson & Co Lawyers, E & H Law, Gayler Cleland Solicitors, Hartley Whitla Lawyers, Holding Redlich, Mansia Bovey & Company, Mellick Smith & Associates, Miller Harris Lawyers, Murray & Lyons Solicitors, O'Connor Law, O'Reilly Stevens Lawyers, Osborne Butler Lawyers, The Will and All, and WGC Lawyers.

The fact of their support and the detail of the mace's presentation will be recorded for posterity on plaques which will be displayed on the stands upon which the mace will sit.

It is a beautiful piece. I encourage you all to look more closely at it when this ceremony ends.

I congratulate and thank its imaginative and skilled creator, Carl Mahrn Fourmile. I thank you, Uncle Roy, for the honour you do us in presenting the mace to us. More generally, I thank

the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people for the generosity of spirit with which they have again embraced this annual ceremony of acknowledgement and reflection.

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