

Blackburn to be guest for Law Week

Former New South Wales detective superintendent Harry Blackburn will be the Society's guest during Law Week. The theme for Law Week is *The Media and The Law*.

Mr Blackburn will address a joint Press Club/Law Society lunch to launch the week on Monday April 29 (see back page for full Law Week details).

He will address a similar lunch in Alice Springs on Friday May 3.

Mrs Lyn Blackburn will address a lunch of female practitioners, female media personnel and female police on Wednesday May 1.

Mr Blackburn, who was at the centre of one of Australia's greatest legal debacles, was arrested for serial sexual assault and kidnapping at the culmination of *Operation Pluto*.

The New South Wales Director of Public Prosecutions dropped the Blackburn case because of lack of evidence.

A subsequent Royal Commission and Police Tribunal exonerated Mr Blackburn and severely criticised police handling of the case.

The Police Commissioner, Mick Palmer, and Darwin television journalist Andy Bruyn will discuss *The Media and the Law* on Radio 8DN Talkback on Tuesday April 30.

Young Lawyers to meet in May

Australian Young Lawyers will hold a Young Lawyers Forum in Brisbane over the weekend of May 18-19.

The Section has invited participation from all states.

Among the items set down for discussion are the future direction of young lawyers in Australia, closer interstate relations, and a proposal for a National Trainee Advocacy Scheme.

Any other items for discussion are welcome.

Anyone wishing to attend the forum should contact the Society for details.

Chinese 'justice' causes concern

As the second anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre looms, the Law Council has expressed concern about the apparent failure by courts in China to conduct trials of pro-democracy demonstrators and others in accordance with its own Constitution and internationally accepted standards of fairness. The Council also views with concern reports that the defendants in those trials were denied legal representation of their choice, that the trials were not open to observers and that upon conviction, the defendants were sentenced to harsh penalties.

In many cases, the defendants were publicly condemned through the Chinese media before they were tried.

The Law Council also views with great concern the reportedly increasing use of the death penalty in China.

Amnesty International recorded 960 death sentences in 1990 and at least 750 executions.

Amnesty said more than 60 people were reported in official media to have been executed in January this year, and that hundreds of death sentences were announced during mass sentencing rallies. The Council has asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Gareth Evans, to take up the Council's concerns during his forthcoming visit to China.

The Council has also expressed its concerns to the Chinese Ambassador in Australia for the second time this year.

Notes in brief...

Building branch call for submissions

The Building Branch of the Department of Lands and Housing has been restructured in order to provide an improved service.

The Director, Richard Wallis, wants to set up a series of industry meetings to discuss the level of the new service and any issues solicitors may wish to discuss. A number of changes have been made, and others will be implemented soon. One of the changes affecting solicitors is file restrictions, meaning files will no longer be readily available for perusal, although folios from files can be copied. Further information is available by contacting Mike Balch on 896481.

Anyone interested in meeting with the Building Branch should register their name with the Society by the end of the month.

Library changes

The Supreme Court Library temporarily has a change of staff.

Mary-Anne Meginess has returned from the Berrimah Farm to fill in for Frieda Evans.

Contact numbers are: Librarian 896585, general enquiries and inter-library loans: 896580, general enquiries, looseleaf and legislation: 896583.

The Society asks you to check through the list of missing or overdue books circulated by the Library.

OBA review

The Office of Business Affairs has commenced a review of the Associations Incorporation Act.

The Registrar, Barbara Bradshaw, is seeking comments and, particularly, suggestions for changes.

Contributions to GPO Box 3021 Darwin.