

# BALANCE

FEB 1996

The Official Publication of the Law Society of the Northern Territory

## Blast of a Start for 1996

The Legal Year was officially opened in Darwin on Thursday 1 February and in Alice Springs on Monday 5 February with the Law Society organising activities in both centres.

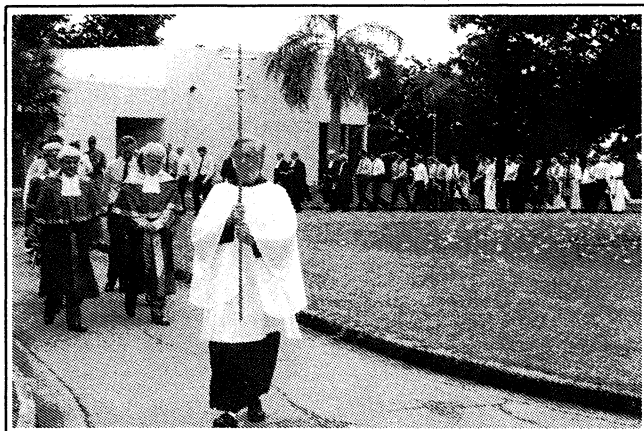
The Darwin festivities began with a church service at Christ Church Cathedral attended by distinguished guests including the Administrator of the Northern Territory, the Hon. Austin Asche AC QC, the Attorney-General, Mr Steve Hatton, the Chief Justice the Hon. Justice Brian Martin, AO MBE, and the Lord Mayor, Mr George Brown as well as over 100 members of the profession and the public.

Following bible readings by the Administrator and the Chief Justice, the Bishop of the Northern Territory delivered a homily described in the *Northern Territory News* of 2.2.96 as opening the legal year with a "blast".

Bishop Appleby firstly expressed his concern over attempts by politicians to remove mercy from justice by limiting the Court's discretion in sentencing.

He then referred to a current trend of enlightened individualism as being responsible for "an erosion of the common good", citing the recent euthanasia legislation as an example.

The opening words of his sermon commended the appropriateness of opening the legal year with an ecumenical



*The Opening of the Legal Procession... Darwin*

service in a Christian cathedral, stating that the Law has a Judaeo-Christian base which places "emphasis on the individual and on freedom with an equally high value placed on the common good and the law"

After the service Mr Mark Woods, President of the Law Institute of Victoria addressed members and guests at a well attended lunch at Peppi's.

After initially remarking that the "profession's place in the modern Australian community has taken on all the trappings of farce, if not black comedy", Mr Woods went on to identify two bases of criticism of the profession. He suggested that ignorance of the profession and its services and responsibilities had led to some distrust in the community.

Of more serious concern was the desire to remove the independence of the legal profession by those who wield executive power.

He noted that the profession had a good record of self-regulation, given its diversity and suggested that any government would be hard-pressed to perform this task with similar results.

He went on to express the opinion that as the process of investigation of complaints was designed by the government for the benefit of the public, then tax-payer funding might be

(continued page 2)



*The 1996 Opening of the Legal Year begins ... Alice Springs*

## 1996 to provide challenges for Profession

(from page 1)

appropriate.

Mr Woods again addressed legal professionals at the lunch held at Ristorante Puccini in Alice Springs following a service at Flynn Uniting Church led by the Reverend Murray Lund.

Bible readings were delivered by the Hon. Justice Sir William Kearney, Mr Mark Woods and Mrs Diana Elliott, Vice-President of the Law Society of the NT.

The Law Society noted with pleasure the increasing interest in opening of the legal year activities.

The Society received in excess of 80 applications for seats at the lunch in Darwin but unfortunately the restaurant was only able to accommodate 64.

This problem will be addressed when arranging the 1997 opening.

## New Kid on the Society's Block



Janet Neville ... new MSO

Janet Neville, a recent arrival in the Territory from the ACT, has joined the staff of the Law Society as Member Services Officer.

As MSO Janet will be responsible for coordinating material for *Balance* and will be looking for contributions and suggestions in order to ensure that *Balance* provides the services required by its readers.

Ideally *Balance* should be composed of material that stimulates, informs and amuses members of the profession and readers themselves are often the best source of such material. *Balance* welcomes letters, articles, comments, reviews of books, software, films, plays and any suggestions readers might have. To stimulate the creative juices, Members are reminded that a monthly prize is awarded for the best contribution.

## It is Official

During the Opening of the Legal Year festivities the Attorney-General, the Hon. Steve Hatton, MLA, announced that Mr Rex Wild QC had been appointed as the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr Wild QC has been the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions since Mr Flanagan retired in October 1995 and will hold the position for a period of five years.

## Philip & Mitaros – On the Up and Up

Philip & Mitaros wish to inform the profession that the firm will change its name on 1 March 1996 to Clayton Utz, Solicitors and Attorneys (formerly Philip & Mitaros).

This comes following Philip & Mitaros joining the national partnership of Clayton Utz.

CENTRE FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN LAW



## Master of Laws in Comparative Law Study for a Master of Laws ...at your own pace ...at home!

**Do you have a law degree, or a degree with a substantial law component, and are you looking for a quality Master of Laws in Comparative Law?** Australia's Northern Territory University is proud to announce the new external Master of Laws in Comparative Law program with a Southeast Asian focus.

**Heavy work or other commitments?** As a student, you will be provided with comprehensive course materials prepared by eminent scholars. You will determine your own study program. You may enrol at any time of the year and take up to two years to complete each subject.

**Interested in a particular subject?** You may enrol in individual subjects, and you may convert to the Masters program at a later date if you wish.

**What subjects are available?** Major Legal Systems, Indonesian Legal System, Malaysian and Singapore Legal Systems, Australian Legal Systems, Comparative Administrative Law, Comparative Family Law, Comparative Constitutional Law, Comparative Intellectual Property Law, International Trade Law, International Environmental Law, Islamic Law in South East Asia, Indonesian Law, Malaysian Business Law and Research Paper.

**Do you wish to interact with eminent, internationally renowned scholars and with students from diverse backgrounds?** Each year, you will have the option of attending a summer school with seminars conducted by specialists.

**Like more information about this exciting new program?**

**For a prospectus and application form contact:**

**Centre for Southeast Asian Law, Faculty of Law,  
Northern Territory University, Darwin NT 0909**

**Phone: (089) 466943 Facsimile: (089) 466933**

**E-mail: cseal@law.ntu.edu.au**

