

Robing for QCs in New Zealand

The decision of the Chief Justice of New Zealand, Sir Thomas Eichelbaum on court dress for Queen's Counsel is reported in *Law Letter*, journal of the New Zealand Law Society 460, (22 July 1996).

The Chief Justice prefaced his remarks by stating that "it has not been thought necessary that Judges should lay down any special guidelines regarding robing by Queen's Counsel".

He goes on to encapsulate the results of the survey of Queen's Counsel on this issue by stating that: "The survey shows that there is a good deal of support for the continuation of the wearing of a silk's gown, but otherwise there is a variety of opinion."

His suggestion is that QC's should "continue to wear the distinctive gown, without, of course, wigs and bands; but as to the rest, counsel should be free to make their own choice, consistent with the minimum requirement of neat clothing, predominantly of a dark colour."

Inaugural APLA Conference

The Australian Plaintiff Lawyers' Association announce their inaugural national conference to be held at Noosa Heads between 17 and 20 October 1996.

This will be a conference for lawyers who act on behalf of plaintiffs in personal injury and consumer litigation. It will offer a leading edge program of speakers from Australia and overseas, including the President of the 65,000 member Association of Trial Lawyers of America.

Details can be obtained from the conference organisers Yarran & Baxter on tel. 02 99048200.

Law on the Isle of Man

Balance has been seeking to exchange journals with other law societies throughout the English-speaking world and in response to its letter, received the following information from the Secretary of the Isle of Man Law Society.

"The Isle is a separate legal jurisdiction situated within the British Islands.

Queen Elizabeth II of England is the Queen of the Isle of Man and is known by the historic name as Lord of Mann.

The Island has its own parliament known as Tynwald which has two chambers, the House of Keys and the Legislative Council.

Tynwald introduces legislation for the Isle of Man particularly with its own domestic governance.

The United Kingdom maintains an overview of the Island and the legislation that it introduces.

Manx Legal Profession

The Isle of Man Law Society is a statutory body whose function is, inter alia, to administer the affairs of the members.

Members of the Society are those who have taken the necessary examinations and have been admitted to the Manx Bar.

At the time of writing to you, there are 85 members which is likely to grow to 100 in the near future.

Domestic legislation also allows for other types of legal practitioners to operate in specific fields within the Isle of Man. They are known as Registered Legal Practitioners and are not Manx Advocates nor are they, at this time, members of the Isle of Man Law Society.

The profession of Advocate is one of the longest durations in the Isle of Man and in the Island's Appeal Court.

The profession is a fused profession, that is, an Advocate provides the role as Solicitor but also Barrister in the High Court of Justice in the Isle of Man and in the Island's Appeal Courts."....

Mrs JM Ashworth
Secretary

In addition, the accompanying brochure contained further information about the Society itself, including some

historical facts.

The Society was formed in 1859 and had a long list of illustrious Presidents, the longest serving of whom was Sir James Gell, who served as President for 41 years.

The Society was originally established to provide access to the Law Library which holds Legal Case Histories and the Profession's Reference Books and is the oldest Manx Professional Body.



It's the Same the Whole World Over ...

It is interesting to note that law societies throughout the world appear to be dealing with the same issues despite the often great differences in political and legal systems.

Bencher's Digest, the journal of the Law Society of Saskatchewan reports on the findings of its Ethics Committee on the issue of ethical requirement to pay articling students a wage.

The Committee had debated this issue, accepting that the present economic climate was not conducive to the hiring of articled clerks. Their decision was that there was not anything intrinsically unethical in not paying a wage, provided that lawyers did not seek to use an unpaid student as a tool to increase income, a practice described as "shoddy and unprofessional."

The Writ, journal of the Law Society of Northern Ireland mentions a minimum wage of (initially) £40 per week for their equivalent of articled Clerks - apprentices - reminding masters that it is only a minimum.