

Tales Out of Court

The Victorian Bar News Summer 1996 issue provides the following moments from court:

Federal Court Directions Hearing

Mid-October 1996

Coram: Merkel J

Elsbeth Strong appearing

After his Honour unsuccessfully urged many prior matters on the list into mediation, Strong's matter came on for hearing.

Merkel J: What about mediation?

Strong: Your Honour, I am interested in mediation and my client is interested in mediation.

Merkel J: So you're consenting to mediation then?

Strong: (stepping back from the lectern, hand on hip, as if to make a statement) Your Honour, that's a typically male response – I say I'm interested and you infer consent!

Supreme Court of Victoria

Coram: Gray J

16 August 1996

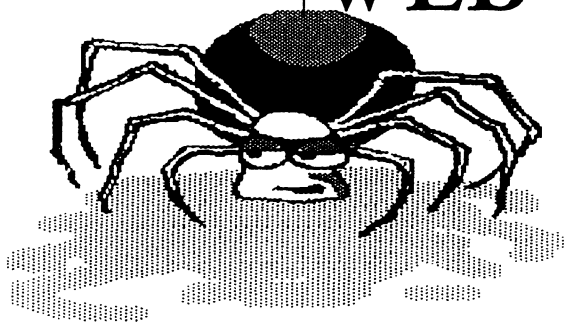
At the commencement of the trial, application was made by the witnesses to set aside the subpoenas on the ground of relevance and that the conduct money of \$40 given to each witness was inadequate.

The subpoenas were served on the witnesses in Natimuk and Glen Isla in Western Victoria. Meldrum QC (whose client had served the subpoenas) in reply noted that the bus fare from Natimuk to Melbourne was \$36.

His Honour: Mr Meldrum, if the bus fare is \$36 that leaves \$4 for lunch. \$4 is not enough to pay for lunch. I suggest it would not pay for your lunch, Mr Meldrum.

Meldrum QC: Your Honour, it would not even pay the corkage!

THE SPIDER'S WEB



With the Law Society on Our Side

They take their football seriously in Canberra which is hardly surprising, given that there doesn't seem to be a lot else going on there at the moment.

Interesting to note that the Raiders new look Board of Directors under the headship of Dept of Defence Secretary, Tony Ayres, also boasts the services of former ambassador to China, Mike Lightowler, former News Ltd Canberra general Manager, John Peard and ACT Law Society President, Anne Trimmer.

It's Come To This

Rear Window in the *Financial Review* on 3 January 1997 scooped a great story (and in fact offered an "extremely attractive present" to the first reader who is able to provide documentary evidence of this hopefully urban myth).

It seems a client, turning up for an appointment at a Melbourne firm was asked by the receptionist if he wanted a cappuccino. He accepted gratefully, only to discover on receiving his account at the end of the month that he had been charged for this "largesse"!

Silly Season List

Thanks again to the very well-read Gist in the *LIV's Journal*, who spotted a list in *The Times* by English QC David Panick of interesting moments during the last legal year. Here are some:

- Lytham St Anne's Magistrates' Court was told when police officers stopped a barrister for drunken driving, he told them: "I am a High Court judge. Take me home."

- Lawyer Robert Litchfield, a candidate for election as a Superior Court judge in Nevada County, California, offered to wash the feet of every lawyer in the county as a "gesture of his desire to serve."

- The legal headline of the year related to the case of a former police officer accused of growing cannabis who spent his trial on a bed in the courtroom because of his bad back: The South London Press reported: "Ex-copper lies in court". He was acquitted.

What Do You Get if You Cross a.....

An interview in WA's journal *Brief* with her Honour, Justice Carolyn Martin, recently appointed Family Court judge, revealed that she had in the past, served four years on the Zoo Board.

Needless to say, her Honour thought that the original approach to her to serve on this board was a joke. She was called by someone in the Lands Department who said they were looking for someone who was a woman **and** a judge to go on the Board. (Her Honour, at that time a deputy registrar in the Family Court, was the closest thing they could find.)

Encouraging to note that political correctness reaches into every little nook and cranny.