

Insurance Body Backs Graduate Diploma

The Australian Insurance Law Association, as part of its commitment to promoting insurance law education, is sponsoring a Graduate Diploma in Insurance Law at the University of Melbourne.

AILA, a national organisation whose members include insurance company staff, loss adjusters and assessors, and accountants and lawyers working in the insurance industry, is providing funding of \$15,000 over five years, plus marketing support.

Chris Rodd, a solicitor and national claims manager for Insurer Commercial Union, is AILA's representative on the university's course advisory board. Geoff Masel, a life member of the AILA, and a consultant with Phillips Fox, is

also a board member and a lecturer for the course. Mr Rodd said the graduate Diploma in Insurance Law, launched in 1996, was of great value to senior members of the insurance industry.

Kaye Nankervis, University of Melbourne Law Faculty, said the Graduate Diploma offered advanced legal study blending theory and practice. The diploma can be completed over one or two years. Candidates must complete four subjects selected from comparative tort law; the insurance contract; insurance intermediaries; insurance litigation; professional indemnity insurance; and reinsurance law.

For further information, contact Kaye Nankervis tel: 03 9344 6190 or Chris Rodd tel: 03 9601 8036.

Mock Trials Underway

The first scoring round of the 1997 Interschool Mock trials competition was completed on Wednesday 26 March, with four teams progressing to the next round in the knockout Darwin competition. Successful teams were Kormilda College 2, Katherine High School, Sanderson High School and Dripstone High School who emerged winners after debating a case on copyright.

In the Alice Springs region, St Phillips College teams won both their rounds against two teams from Centralian College. The competition in this region is played as a round robin, with the winner on points over the three scoring rounds to face the winner from the northern region in June for a Grand Final.

Denis Barritt - A Tribute

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As a magistrate, he had a great sense of fairness and compassion. Defendants always had a choice before Dinny Barritt. In his own words, "If you want justice, plead here today. If you want the law, go to Darwin." He enjoyed a special and somewhat different relationship with the Supreme Court. From time to time, when his judgments were appealed, the court would invariably comment: "This is another appeal from Mr Barritt." Interestingly, many of his judgments were left intact.

He was a colourful character with a great sense of humour. I recall he was in the forefront of introducing gowns for magistrates. That was considered quite a novelty at the time. I was in court in Alice Springs the day Dinny first wore his gown - indeed, it appeared to be more of a smock. He appeared resplendent in his gown, complete with walking socks and shoes. A hush fell over the court. He stared down at the bar table and said: "The first one who laughs is out."

- Chief Minister, the Hon Shane Stone,

Dinny was one of the last of the bush magistrates of which the Northern Ter-



Dennis (centre) with brothers Jim and Barney - all detectives

ritory has a wonderful tradition. Dinny's court hearings at Yuendumu were always lively. They were always based on what Yuendumu was all about. [...] He was not simply walking into a community full of strangers. He knew a good deal about the community and what was happening there. He used common-

sense and his knowledge of the environment. He talked to people directly and followed his nose on many occasions to obtain a better result.

- Mr Toyne, MLA, member for Stuart

Quite often there would be raised eyebrows at some of the decisions he made, but I do not think I have ever met a policeman who spoke critically of Dinny Barritt. In fact, the comments were always very supportive, along the lines that, at the end of the day, the police always knew that the decision that Dinny Barritt made was probably right for everyone concerned. That kind of result, after such a period of time as a magistrate, really points to his capability and his social understanding.

- The Hon Daryl Manzie, MLA

Balance thanks Mr Barritt's former secretary at the Alice Springs Magistrates' Court, Lina Totani and Alice Springs practitioner, Mary Ridsdale and Mrs Sheila Barritt for their assistance in providing material for this tribute to the late Denis Barritt.