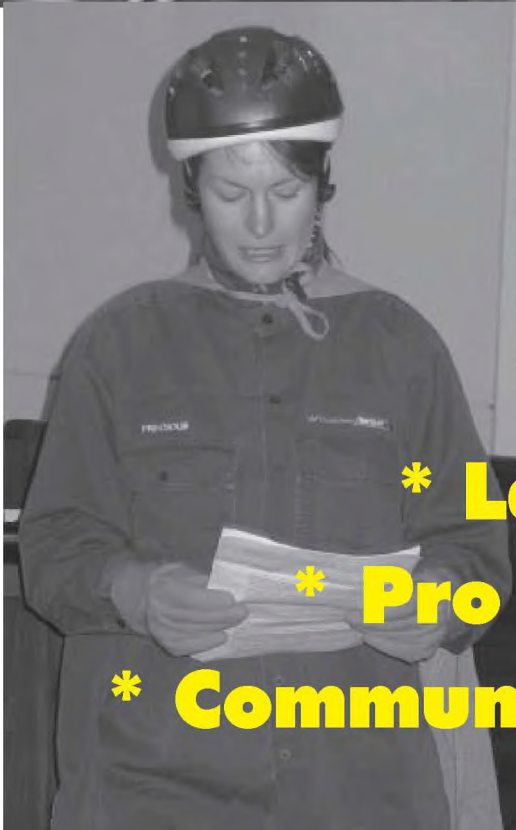# BALANCE

LAW SOCIETY NORTHERN TERRITORY

* **Law Week 2005**
* **Pro Bono Conference**
* **Community Court Pilot Project**

Law Week news

April and May have been another busy couple of months in the Territory both for the Law Society and the legal profession. The Dry season has definitely started and with it the social calendar of people in the Top End is filling up.

The Law Society's pro bono and legal aid committee and the Legal Aid Commission organised the Pro Bono and NT Legal Aid Service Providers conference which was held in Darwin in early May. The conference was funded by the Law Society Public Purposes Trust and included representatives from all over the Territory and major interstate law firms. (A full report is on page 26.)

Since my last report, the Society has been busy with Law Week 2005. Law Week ran from Sunday 22 May until Sunday 29 May and featured the traditional lunches in Darwin and Alice Springs, the Tug-of-War competition, the cricket challenge and a range of community activities. I was the prosecutor in the mock trial of the Three Little Pigs, which was held as part of the Supreme Court Open Day. I would especially like to thank Justice Southwood, Peter Barr QC, Duncan McConnel, Jo Tomlinson, Gavin Heatherington-Tait and Sara Smart who rose to the occasion on short notice.

I officially launched Law Week in the Mall on Monday 23 May with the Tug-of-War competition. Many were relieved to see the reign of Karczewski's Killers at the DPP end when they were defeated in the grand final by the School-based Constables from the NT police.

I travelled to Alice Springs for the Law Week lunch with guest speaker Stephen Mayne. The founder of the independent media e-zine crikey.com.au, Stephen entertained us with his encounters with defamation law. (A copy of the speech is on page 11).

The Darwin lunch returned to Parliament House this year and despite the bigger venue the lunch still sold out. Chief Justice Martin spoke about the reputation of the judiciary and the legal profession and the need for increased community education. (A copy of the speech is on page 4). After the lunch was officially concluded, many continued to party at the Kozy Café. A great time was had by all.

During the Law Week lunch, the winners of the Law Society Community Contribution Award were announced. Justice Sally Thomas, Daryl Manzie and myself made up the judging panel for this year's award. Congratulations to the winner Dylan Walters who was recognised for his 14 years of volunteer work with Darwin Community Legal Service. DCLS received a donation of $1000 from the award sponsors, Marsh Pty Ltd, for nominating the winner. This year

Merran Short, President

there were a number of strong nominees. Congratulations also to the other nominees: John Newman, Carl Black, Paul Ewens, Katherine Oldfield, Marguerite Bowen, Susan Porter and Rex Wild QC, for the fantastic pro bono work they do in the community.

Congratulations to my team, captained by Glen Dooley, who won this year's Marsh Law Week Cricket Challenge for the first time against the Chief Justice's XI. In a close match, we won by one run after Peter Tompkins hit a six (which landed on the roof of Justice Southwood's car) in the final over. It was an enjoyable afternoon out for players and spectators alike and a fantastic spread of food and drinks was provided by our Law Week sponsors, Marsh Pty Ltd.

Law Week 2005 was very successful - thanks to the Secretariat for all their hard work. I would also like to thank all those who volunteered their time and expertise to assist with the many community activities held during Law Week. Thanks also to our Law Week sponsors Marsh Pty Ltd and the Law Society Public Purposes Trust.

The next social event on the calendar is the Law Society's Annual Dinner, which is being held at Crustaceans on the Wharf on Saturday 16 July. As part of the Annual Dinner, the Law Society will mark the contribution of Justice Stephen Southwood to the Law Society over his years in the Darwin legal profession.①

The Law Society President's XI team at the Marsh Law Week Cricket Challenge.