

26th Australian Legal Convention

The 26th Australian Legal Convention in August this year will be one of the most exciting ever held in this country.

To be held at Darling Harbour, Sydney's newest and most exciting convention and recreation centre, this convention will be the largest ever held in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Darling Harbour setting will be magnificent. It sits close to the water on one of the world's best harbours and has facilities, shops and activities second to none.

A large contingent of overseas lawyers are expected to attend due to pre-conference publicity in the USA, Europe, New Zealand, Pacific and Asia, and advance bookings from the United States are already very strong.

The programme of speakers and social functions are all virtually in place. The papers are designed to touch most areas of legal practice and many of the emerging issues such as multi-disciplinary partnerships, contingency fees and class-actions to name a few.

A wide variety of social activity has been planned. As well as evening entertainment after each convention day, an extensive "accompanying partner" programme has been organised.

The theme for the convention is "Building Bridges". This not only relates to the venue of Sydney - using a stylised Sydney Harbour Bridge as the logo, but it also relates to bridging the many gaps that exist involving the Law.

The convention will attempt to build bridges between the Australian legal systems in each state, between Australia and legal systems throughout the world - particularly with our closer neighbours. It will attempt to build bridges between the legal profession and other professions such as doctors, architects, accountants and journalists. Finally it will build bridges between the legal fraternity and the "man (person) in the street".

Keynote speakers from throughout Australia and throughout the world have been invited - notable amongst the early acceptances are Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom; Sir Gordon Slynn, Judge of the Court of European Communities and Justice Anthony M. Kennedy - the newest appointee to the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

These keynote speakers will relate their experiences to Australia. For example Sir Gordon Slynn will discuss how the different countries of Europe are working towards a uniform legal system by 1992. He was recently involved in a case involving West German Breweries who were, he alleged, stopping free trade of beer throughout Europe via an ancient "anti-preservative law".

Lord Mackay will discuss his "deregulation" of the English system of Law. A great reformer of the law in England, the Lord Chancellor will add interesting arguments for many of the emerging issues in Australia.

Justice Kennedy will discuss law in the U.S.A. A fascinating figure, he was appointed to the Supreme Court after two earlier nominations by the Reagan Administration had been rejected.

The Law Society of NSW and the Bar Association of New South Wales, hosts of the 26th Australian Legal

Convention, will bring you updates on the Convention. Please remember that if you register before May 1, 1989 you receive a \$100.00 discount. Any enquiries should be directed to Robyn Johnson, Law Society of NSW (02) 220.0333. □

B.S.J. O'Keefe A.M., Q.C.

It was announced on Australia Day 1989 that our Senior Vice President, Barry O'Keefe Q.C., had been honoured by admission to the Order of Australia as a Member. This honour was granted him in recognition of his services to local government, for which he would be well known to all our members living anywhere in the vicinity of the near North Shore.

The more prominent of O'Keefe's roles in which he has served the cause of local government have been his record number of terms as Mayor of Mosman (9 terms since 1977) and as President of the Local Government Association of New South Wales (1986 to 1988). In the latter role he was in the forefront of the debate in favour of a Constitutional amendment to recognise local government nationally.

The base from which O'Keefe has been able to sally forth in his various battles on behalf of Mosman's foreshores and the like and local government's interests generally has been a very secure one: he has topped the poll for aldermen in Mosman since 1968, and has been a member of the L.G.A.'s executive since 1976.

Those junior counsel who have worked with Barry will be well aware of both the extent of his involvement in local government matters, and also the amazing way in which that involvement does not prevent him from devoting as many hours as are necessary to the preparation and presentation of his cases. Of course, this has been known to interfere with juniors' leisurely rising from bed - so much so that it is now suggested that the expression "O'Keefe A.M." designates a time which may vary, but is always before dawn. □



B.J.S. O'Keefe A.M., Q.C. Mayor of Mosman