

Gerard Mullins



I've known Gerry for many years and we've worked on many cases together, but when I looked at his *curriculum vitae*, I had to ask myself who this guy was and what does he do with his day?

Gerry has a masters degree in law. He lectures in law at the Queensland University of Technology. He is co-author of the Workers Compensation Law Manual of Queensland and is the editor of the Queensland Motor Vehicle Law Service.

He must fill these roles before morning tea, because Gerry is also a busy barrister who is deservedly in demand in personal injury and professional negligence matters.

That's not enough for Gerry though. He's a member of the Board of Governors of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America and at last glance was co-chair of its International Practice Section. With still not enough to do, Gerry co-founded the Civil Justice Foundation in Queensland and had enough spare time to come up with and run the highly successful trial school for young lawyers at this year's state APLA conference.

Oh, by the way, he's also the Queensland President of APLA.

The thing that finally got me, however, that made me shake my head, was

the first hand knowledge that when called upon to do so in highly unlikely circumstances, Gerry is an accomplished blues harmonica player. What's going on here?

Ordinarily, these Admirable Crichton types make me want to reach for a sharp stick, but Gerry's not like that. As anyone who knows him will attest, Gerry is also one of the good guys. He won't tell you of his many achievements, he'll just continue on his successful way.

And that's been the story of his year as Queensland President of APLA. What a year to have that role, with all the forces of reactionary big business, insurers, the doctors' union and pliant governments seeking to strip from our clients their very rights so that big business, doctors and insurers, will have more money. Few people in the community have understood or cared what was being threatened. Injuries always happen to somebody else. Even fewer people have been prepared to speak out - to say that taking away the rights of injury victims so that others may make increased profits may not be a good thing.

The smallest group, however, is

made up of people who have not only been prepared to speak up for the injured and bereaved, but have also been able to effectively do something positive. Gerry is one of those few.

Gerry has spoken at town meetings, held press conferences, prepared submissions and lobbied tirelessly at significant personal cost. He's done this not because his job depends on it - he could make a very tidy living indeed if he chose to become the darling of the insurers and the doctors' union - but because he genuinely cares for ordinary Australians and he will not stand idly by to see them sacrificed so that wealthy people may become wealthier.

And that's what's going on here. The battle's not over and it's certainly not won, but the outcome, I know, will be better for our clients because Gerry is on our side. **PL**