

Past presidents' annual dinner

By Tom Goudkamp

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Since 2005, the immediate past president of the ALA has hosted a past presidents' dinner in his or her home city.

This tradition follows that of our US sister organisation, the AAJ (formerly ATLA), where the event is the highlight of each annual conference. So far, our dinners have been held in Sydney (Tom Goudkamp), Canberra (Richard Faulks and Mark Blumer), Brisbane (Simon Morrison and Ian Brown), and Melbourne (Clara Davies).

On 16 September, it was Brian Hilliard's turn in Hobart, and what a great night it was for those past presidents who attended.

After pre-dinner drinks at 'Grape' at Salamanca, we repaired to Monty's restaurant where, in a private room with a roaring open fire, we embellished stories of our heroic struggles against the tide of tort law reform and lamented what has befallen many of the hapless negligently injured people in this country.

We also had a roll call of our absent past presidents, Peter Semmler QC, who started it all; Peter Cashman; the two-term Rob Davis; John Gordon; Simon Morrison; and the reclusive Ian Brown. We gave each a thunderous toast and a stiff roasting.

We look forward to next year's event, again in Hobart, the home city of our current president, Greg Barns. ■

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