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Ipsso Facto

GCDLA



Annual General Meeting – 18 June 2010



R-L: Chief Justice Paul de Jersey, Dr. John de Groot and GCDLA President Ross Lee

A full house enjoyed fine food and a full program at L'Esprit on the Water at our Annual General Meeting on Friday 18 June 2010.

We were delighted to welcome His Honour Chief Justice Paul de Jersey for the eighth consecutive keynote address.

Special guests included our sponsors Macquarie Bank Ltd and Worrells Solvency & Forensic Accountants, Bond University Law Faculty Dean Geraldine Mackenzie, Southern Cross Law School Dean Dr Jennifer Nielsen, Professor AJ Brown of Griffith University, President of the Gold Coast Bar Association Mick Eastwood and guest speaker and Chair of Queensland Community Foundation Dr John de Groot.

Apologies were received from Her Honour Chief Judge Patsy Wolf; His Honour Judge Clive Wall; His Honour Judge John Newton of the District Court of Queensland; Senior Magistrate Ron Kilner and

Magistrates Dermot Kehoe, Michael O'Driscoll, John Hutton and Michael Hogan.

President's Annual Report

President Ross Lee reported:

Membership

"Membership is up 30 per cent and I consider that is a key performance indicator. It's up to 203 financial members from 158 the previous financial year.

However, there is a lot of room for improvement given that we have almost 800 QLS members on our turf."

Social Functions

"Social functions we've held in the past twelve months I believe have gone exceptionally well. In April this year, we had drinks at the Judicial Cafe with well over 50 attending including Judge Wall, Magistrate Kehoe and Magistrate Ron Kilner. Late last year, we had a breakfast seminar function with the City Solicitor and Gold Coast Mayor and almost 100 attending. We have also held two other highly successful drinks function at the Surfers Rowers and Judicial Cafe last year."

Advocacy

"The other great thing that historically our DLA is known for is for advocacy. Hopefully you will have been reading and hearing about some great successes we have had in the last 12 months. For example, we have been making great success in regard to resourcing the Southport Courthouse.

Mary Atallah and I met with the Attorney-General of Queensland in April and I met him again at Community Cabinet last month and we've consistently been taking these issues up to the highest level possible."

Conclusion

“So in concluding, I do hope you enjoy the social events we put on but equally hope you also see the good work your committee members at the Gold Coast District Law Association have been doing for our local profession.”

Sponsors

“Special thanks go to our sponsors Worrells Solvency and Macquarie Bank. Jones Mitchell kindly provides the venue for our committee meetings each month and the universities Bond and Griffith both partner with us in everything the association does. I’m looking forward to working also with Southern Cross in the next 12 months too.”

“So thanks again for your support and I’ll continue to do my very best to carry out my role as president for the next year.”

Elections

Again, there was no competition for offices on the committee. The following are the persons elected unopposed to your committee:

President:	Ross Lee
Vice President:	Mark Treherne
Treasurer:	Mary Atallah
Secretary:	Matthew Harman

Committee members:	Paul Brake
	Brian Carey
	AJ Brown
	Pam Roberts
	Glenys Owen
	Ted Skuse
	Kathy Atkins

Distinguished Service Award

At the Annual General Meeting, our first Distinguished Service Award was presented to Kathy Atkins.

In presenting the award, committee member Paul Brake said:

“Kathy Atkins was admitted as a solicitor back in 1985 and commenced her many years of service to the Gold Coast District Law Association by joining the Committee in 1995, some 15 years ago.



For many years, Kathy played a pivotal role in the Association by acting as its secretary. While outsiders rightly think that the role of President or Chairperson is important, much of the nitty-gritty of getting the actual work done falls upon the low-profile secretary.

Kathy had the important role for many years of organising a large proportion of the social functions that promoted the community’s awareness and greater understanding of the law and the legal profession. Currently Kathy is the Association’s welfare officer, keeping in touch with lawyers who find themselves in challenging or distressing situations.

She has served with a number of presidents of the Association, including Paul Prindable, Annette Greenhow, Michael Small, Beau Hartnett, Tania Atwill, Dermot Kehoe, Murray Bucknall, Ted Skuse, Mark Treherne and Ross Lee. This very extensive list of names gives some idea of her longstanding role in the Gold Coast legal community.

Kathy’s professionalism, dedication, attention to detail and above all, her compassion to serve the legal community is outstanding.

It is with great pleasure that the Gold Coast District Law Association gives its Distinguished Service Award to Kathy Atkins.”

Keynote Address by the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC Chief Justice of Queensland

“I am very pleased to be with you again this year. This is the eighth consecutive luncheon AGM of the Association I have attended. I admire your persistence.”

Supreme Court’s sitting at Southport

“Over those eight years, the webpage reminds me, I have addressed you on a variety of subjects. One of them with practical ramification was the Supreme Court’s sitting at Southport, and I am disappointed the uptake has not justified that, but the court’s willingness remains and one day may be matched by demand.”

The Gold Coast Legal Profession

“A major reason why I have sought to attend this extremely pleasant annual event from year to year is my recognition of your corporate significance to the Queensland profession.

There is a numerical significance: with 794 solicitors and 27 barristers, you constitute far and away the largest regional branch of the profession; and you account for almost 9 per cent of the Queensland profession, which totals about 9,500 practitioners. The Queensland profession itself accounts for about 10 per cent of the overall Australian profession of 100,000.

But apart from the size of this regional segment of the State and national profession, you are responsible for delivering legal services in a uniquely challenging part of the State where, in a paradisaal setting, contrasts seem somewhat more evident than elsewhere: fortunes are made and lost with facility; the gullible are often with minimal persuasion inclined to part with their property; we hear of standover men and a rampant drug culture; and we hear of a State with record extent of homelessness. This particular challenge for the lawyer in that context is to recognise the public service which lies at the heart of every practitioner’s professionalism.

I particularly commend those practitioners who engage themselves in the provision of legal services on a pro bono basis.

I spoke of contrast, then specified negatives. Let us not overlook the positives: capacity for development in an apparently over-stressed south-east corner; populations and communities anxious to support small businesses; and lifestyles rather detached from metropolitan pressures and other detractions. And who hasn’t, flying Sydney/Brisbane over the coast, on a fine winter’s day, yearned for a flight 20 minutes the shorter? I think I am saying, ladies and gentlemen, that I rather envy you!”

The Law Association

“Lex Bell’s memory is that the Gold Coast District Law Association was established in about 1968, with his father as founding President. The first firm of solicitors to practise on this coast was Ken Price Solicitor: Kenneth Bennion Price hung out his shingle in 1928. That is the firm which became Price and Roobottom. By about 1968 when the Association was formed, there were about 20 firms practising on the coast, and 25 to 30 solicitors attended the inaugural meeting. At 42 years old, the Association approaches the 50 year seniority of the Central Queensland and North

Queensland Law Associations, though all rather trail the elder statesman, which is the Downs and South West Queensland Law Association, which at 73 years just falls behind the Queensland Law Society now in its 82nd year.”

“The Association plays an important role in securing cohesion within this important regional profession, including providing mentors and sounding boards for younger practitioners especially, as they encounter professional conundrums.

I commend the sponsors **Worrells Solvency & Forensic Accountants** and **Macquarie Bank Ltd** for their support.

I strongly commend the Association for its effective discharge of that important role, over so many years. In commending the Association, I am really commending its office bearers, especially its Presidents, but I am also commending you, ladies and gentlemen, for your preparedness to come together as a professional grouping in a self-supportive way.”

Keynote Address by Dr. John de Groot, Chair Queensland Community Foundation

Chair of Queensland Community Foundation (QCF), Dr John de Groot addressed the gathering regarding the efforts of Queensland Community Foundation in fostering philanthropic giving and the contribution of Gold Coast Community Foundation (GCCF) - a sub-fund of QCF - to the coastal region.

The Hon Paul de Jersey AC, Chief Justice of Queensland, endorsed QCF efforts advising he was ‘extremely supportive of the charitable fund and the benefit it provides to Queenslanders’.

Dr de Groot explained, ‘Since QCF was established in 1997 the fund has grown from \$300,000 with 12 charitable sub-funds under its umbrella, to having funds of almost \$30 million invested, over 150 charitable sub-funds, and approximately \$400,000 million in bequests’.

Dr de Groot advised, ‘The GCCFs contributions have benefitted the Gold Coast region in a number of ways. As a result of a charitable gift donated in perpetuity by a local resident, Queensland Surf Lifesaving and Guide Dogs for the Blind receive annual distributions of income. In recent years QCF also contributed funds to support instructors’ training for Youth Mental Health First Aid, and provided equipment including resuscitation mannequins and “safety at heights” kits

for Gold Coast branches of State Emergency Services’.

Dr de Groot flagged the prospect of further benefits when he said, ‘A number of estates currently under administration will result in benefits for the locality in areas of health, community services and animal welfare’.

‘The advantage of QCF is its ability to provide funding to a broad range of charities and community groups on a permanent basis with no administration costs levied against donations received by the Foundation. These costs are met through the committed corporate sponsorship of the Public Trustee of Queensland, QIC and Anglo American Metallurgical - this means people’s donations go on giving, forever’.

Dr de Groot said, ‘Gifted monies are invested in endowment funds and the income distributed to charities and community service organisations each year. To date, QCF has generated more than \$4 million for distribution to Queensland charities and community service organisations. Charities also benefit as QCF conducts an annual grants process whereby organisations can apply for funds to improve their capacity to deliver services,’ said Dr de Groot.

ENDS:

For more information contact: Anne Collett, Business Development Manager, Queensland Community Foundation Ph: 3020 7089 Mob: 0402 918 813 Email: a.collett@qcf.org.au

BREAKFAST SEMINAR!

The Gold Coast District Law Association will be hosting a Breakfast Seminar on **Wednesday 1 September 2010** at the **Sheraton Mirage, Southport**.

The two guest speakers, Peter Davison and Lance Imeson will be speaking on “The sale of law practices” and on “Maximising client telephone contact” respectively.

This is an event not-to-be-missed. Pencil this date in your diary! More details will follow in the coming weeks.