

Custodes



March 2012

Issue 1

2012—the year ahead



SCHEDULE D.			
Marriage solemnised in the District of Birriongong			
Place or Persons	Date	Witnesses	Place
Birriongong Aug 18 th 1974	Charles John Bowring Elaine Bowring	Bethelton Baptist Church Baptist Church Baptist Church	Married by Rev. Mr. John Bowring and Rev. Mr. John Bowring and Rev. Mr. John Bowring and Rev. Mr. John Bowring
Signed by the parties to the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage			
Signed by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage and by the Minister or other person solemnising the marriage			
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SCHEDULE D.			
in the Colony of Victoria.			
Place or Persons	Date	Witnesses	Place
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In this edition:

Australia Day Honours, Notice of 2012 AGM,
Update from B D & M, Bail justices call to action,
Branch news, Directors activity statements,
Q & A's plus much more.



The holiday season is now behind us and the Board and I are looking forward to the year ahead with renewed enthusiasm.

During the holiday break two directors were unfortunate to have suffered injuries as a result of accidents. Firstly I would like to wish them a speedy recovery but I would

also like to take this time to point out the insurance coverage that you as members you are entitled to.

Whilst the director's accidents were not related to their duties as JPs, they could easily have been. The Department of Justice (DoJ) has a policy that covers you while you are performing your duties but the Association's cover extends to official association business such as training and branch functions and the cover starts as soon as you step outside your front door.

At the last meeting of the year one of our directors, Harry Gibcus, retired from the Board and I would like to thank him for the time he has given and wish him well for the future.

Harry was of great assistance as State Roster Coordinator and remains active in his local area.

Each year RVAHJ directors participate in a workshop to determine priorities for the year. One thing we intend to focus on this year is training and how we might best deliver training that will give value to members and enhance the training that DoJ intends to conduct.

During the previous year the Association initiated discussion with Births Deaths and Marriages (BD&M), the end result being that training of JPs who sit on police station rosters has begun and this training will be progressively rolled out during the next six months.

'The Department of Justice (DoJ) has a policy that covers you while you are performing your duties but the Association's cover extends to official association business such as training and branch functions and the cover starts as soon as you step outside your front door.'

This training will enable recipients to witness documents for the purpose of BD&M applications. BD&M has kindly offered to be a contributor to *Custodes* to keep the members informed of progress. Check page 7 for more details.

DoJ has also been conducting the recruitment of honorary justices and the Association has been invited to participate in panel sessions for these prospective and newly appointed justices. It has been a wonderful opportunity to meet and chat to like minded citizens and we look forward to contributing with these sessions wherever possible.

Finally I would like to congratulate five of our members who were recipients of Australia Day honours in recognition of their service to the community and various important causes. The list of these members and the details are on page 4.

Linda Rainsford,
RVAHJ President

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS 2012

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Members for 2012 will be held on Thursday, 24 May 2012 at 7.30 p.m. at 53 Broadway, Elwood.

Business

- (1) To confirm the minutes of the 101st Annual General Meeting held on Thursday, 26 May 2011.
- (2) To consider and, if thought fit, adopt the Annual Report of the Board.
- (3) To consider and, if thought fit, adopt the Balance Sheet and Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ended December 31, 2011.
- (4) To appoint an Auditor for the ensuing year.

Proxies

Members may appoint a proxy to act on their behalf at the AGM to attend and to exercise all rights and to discharge all duties, which that Member might have. A proxy must be a member of the Association. Notification, in the approved form, must be received by the Secretary at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled commencement of the meeting. Proxy forms are available from the office.

Michael Tse JP, Company Secretary

Shane Wall, OAM

*For service to primary industry,
and to the community of the Wimmera region.*

The awarding of an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) to Donald's Shane Wall in the Australia Day honours will come as no surprise to his own community and to countless others outside the Buloke Shire.

The thoroughly-earned recognition comes seven years, to the day, after Shane was named as Donald's "Citizen of the Year" on January 26, 2005.

On that occasion he was shocked when, as M.C. of Donald's Australia Day celebrations at Goodwin Village, he found himself surrendering the microphone to Lions Club president Ken Morrison, who made the announcement, drawing spontaneous applause.

A newspaper report following that 2005 ceremony referred to Shane as being "renowned for his ability to conduct anything from a high-powered action to a meeting of community leaders."

Whilst he was born at Leongatha, almost all of Shane's childhood and working life has been spent in the area now known as the Buloke Shire.

Following schooling at Wycheproof and Charlton, business interests saw him settling in Donald, where he has become one of the district's most valued leaders.

Eventful Career

Much has been spoken and written about Shane Wall's ongoing contribution to his community and to the development of value-added industry within the Buloke Shire.

Among those who have committed their thoughts and observations to paper is Cr. Leo Tellefson, Buloke's immediate past Mayor, and current Deputy Mayor.

Cr. Tellefson writes of having known Shane for over 40 years "in his early days as a stock and station agent, real estate agent and now CEO of the local Peagrowers' Co-operative, a wonderful successful business and capacity building initiative among local growers to export pulses and grain from the Buloke Shire area".

The Deputy Mayor continues: "Containers of pulses for export have caused a need for employment, and a better rail service to the town, a huge benefit to a rural community, in a grain growing region.

"Shane has been a great asset to the community as a Board member of the local

hospital, where I had the benefit of his clear thinking and fair analysis of issues that at the time, some being changes in funding regimes, did not suit rural health provision, and placating and retaining health professionals whose needs were not always in line with the local board.

"He served at the Donald District Hospital from 1985 till 1998, serving three presidential terms, till it became a merged identity in the East Wimmera Health Service, when he left as part of the merging and following reduction of the board members.

"Shane was on the Donald and District Racing Committee for over 30 years and was president for 12 of those. He was made a life member of the club in 1995.

"He was again merged into Wimmera Racing in 1997 when his skills as a director soon took him to the chairman's position for the following 13 years.

"For 36 years he has been the race starter appointed for the region by Racing Victoria.

"He has served on the local St. Mary's parish committee for 8 years, and continues there as non professional financial adviser.

In 2005 he was made, deservedly, Citizen of the Year for the Donald community.

"Many years ago he and his wife Judy adopted two children from a Calcutta orphanage. Currently, Dean is a mining engineer; Claire is a VCE student.

"Shane has been involved in the local Pony Club as a supporting parent and volunteer. He has also invested in the district as a landholder, running both sheep and the occasional racehorse, with success, and operates a self-made farming business near Donald.

"He serves the community as auctioneer at fundraisers, is able to keep himself very fit through a dedication to bike riding at which, of course, he excels through his tactical mind, competitive spirit and dogged determination.

Australia Day honors

SHANE WALL, OAM STORY CONTINUED.



• *Shane Wall at his desk at PeaCo.*

"It is an honour for me to describe his great value to community, his generous spirit, along with his absolutely unshakeable ethics, wisdom, clear thinking, and considered opinions on anything he has interest in."

Endorsing these remarks, the "Times" joins in congratulating a most worthy recipient of this award, which will be officially presented to Shane later this year at Government House in Melbourne.

Article supplied by Ray Walker JP.

On Australia Day, the following members received recognition within the Order of Australia. We heartily congratulate each of them .

Andrew Charles Darbyshire AM JP, Malvern – for service to the community as a supporter of research into child-related brain conditions, through contributions to special needs children and their families and to the arts.

William Michael (Bill) Flynn OAM JP, Alfredton – for service to the community of Ballarat and to the Catholic Church in Australia through administrative roles.

Leigh Walter Hardinge OAM JP, Altona – for service to local government and to the community of Victoria through executive roles with a range of service organisations.

David George Martin OAM, Rutherford – for service to the community, particularly people with a disability, the aged and to veterans and their families.

Shane Patrick Wall OAM JP, Donald – for service to primary industry and to the community of the Wimmera region.

GEELONG BRANCH BY ALSTON PARK AM JP

2011 Annual Dinner and AGM

The Geelong Branch of the RVAHJ held its Annual Dinner and Annual General Meeting at the Lyndon Grove Receptions, Grovedale on Monday 5 December 2011 with 34 members and friends present.

Among the guests were president Linda Rainsford who presented members with Certificates of Appreciation issued by the Geelong Police for services at the Geelong and Corio police stations and also brought members up-to-date with current issues affecting the members. Director Rhonda Smith also attended and spoke on her role as director and support in the country regions.

Our guest speaker was Dr Stretch Kontelj OAM a Greater Geelong City Councillor and also

recently appointed as a Notary Public. Stretch spoke on the role and duties of a Notary Public and answered many questions raised by members on his role which proved to be very interesting to those present.



Left to right—Chairman, Bob Bailey JP, Special Guest, Dr Stretch Kontelj OAM, Branch secretary, Alston Park AM

DIAMOND VALLEY BRANCH BY CHERYL DUFF JP

Diamond Valley Branch held their Annual General Meeting on Monday 24 October 2011.

The election of the office bearers is as follows; Chairperson: Mr Steve Gore, Vice Chairperson: Ms Danielle Sinclair, Secretary/Treasurer: Mrs Cheryl Duff, Executive Member: Leo Schillaci.

The dates of our meetings for 2012 are as follows: Mondays 24 February, 23 April, 25 June, 27 August and 22 October will be our next AGM/Ordinary meeting.

SUNRAYSIA BRANCH BY HARVEY J TAYLOR JP

LOCAL JPs INCREASE VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY TO A NEW HIGH

The Sunraysia Branch of the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices (RVAHJ) has completed another year of high volume activity at the signing centre at the Mildura police station. During 2011 they met with 3947 clients and over 14,000 documents were witnessed – an increase in clients of 14.2% over 2010.

Started in January 2009 the signing centre, has over a period, become known to the broader community as a place where one can find a JP any afternoon of any business day. This is proved by the fact that since its inception in 2009 more than 10,000 persons have presented over 35,000 documents for witnessing.

Harvey Taylor, Media Officer of the Sunraysia branch said ‘it is quite amazing the number of people who now know that a JP can be located readily and no doubt due in fact to word of mouth in the local community.

‘We have 25 JPs who work on a voluntary basis to witness documents and their work is wide and varied with a broad spectrum of papers presented on a daily basis. To achieve the results we have seen in 2011 is an indication that the signing centre is operating extremely efficiently and being supported totally by the local Police force,’ Mr Taylor said.

Since January 2009 JPs have contributed over 2262 hours of service to the signing centre which in reality has freed up over 282 days, or over nine months of time to allow the Police to concentrate on more important issues.



Harvey J Taylor JP
Secretary Sunraysia Branch.

LOCAL JPs HOLD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Sunraysia Branch of the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices (RVAHJ) held their annual general meeting in Mildura in December. They advised that results were over and above their expectations – 2011 will see another record year of activity at the signing centre at the Mildura police station.

Amongst items discussed were future training for JPs, recruitment of more JPs to service the area, and continued research into the history of JPs in the Sunraysia area.

The current Executive were all re-elected to their positions held, namely Mr Ken Wright Chairman,

Mrs Penny Hodgetts Deputy Chairman, Mrs Jenny Bennett Secretary, Mrs Marian Tobin Assistant Secretary, Mr Trevor Aust Treasurer and Mr Harvey Taylor Media Officer.

One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of Centenary Certificates to both Mrs Shirley Penny and Mr Laurie Andriske. These Certificates acknowledge the outstanding contribution given by these two persons to the community through their activity as JPs.



With a growing population in the area the JPs are seeing a wider variety of forms and documents that need witnessing, and having a service at the Mildura police station each business day from 2-5 p.m. the general community can be assured of locating a JP to assist them with their paperwork.

MORNINGTON PENINSULA BRANCH BY IAN LYONS JP

Mornington Peninsula Branch reports that since the inaugural launch of signing centres on the Mornington Peninsula on the 27th of May 2005 that the Frankston police station (signing centre) has witnessed 150,334 documents to December 2011.

JP, Robert Bolch has witnessed 87,411 supported by colleagues Vishnu Prasad 9,364; John Beable 5,543; Suzanne Phillips 3,099; Patrick Marshall 5,079 & Robert Seiffert 6,837 with many others contributing to this grand tally.

Justices of the Peace or Bail Justices are needed at Rosebud, Mornington, Hastings and Carrum Downs signing centres for two to three hours once a month to assist in this very important community service.

Contact Robert Bolch, co-ordinator on 8790 0567 or on mob 0412155634.

Branch meetings are held every second month at Frankston police headquarters at 7.30pm with interesting guest speakers in attendance. Some of the speakers to date include: Keith Edwards: Windana Drug & Alcohol Recovery; Helen Constas: CEO Peninsula Community Legal

Centre; Cr Kris Bolam: Mayor City of Frankston; Don Smith: Radio 3RPP; Terry House: Teenagers Road Accident Group TRAG and Geoff Shaw: MLA for Frankston.

The next meeting is on April 4th and the guest speaker will be from the Department of Justice. This should prove to be an interesting evening. Other meetings will be held on June 6th and August 1st.

For further details contact the Branch Secretary, Fay Hunter on 59761258 or mob 0427267607.

Snr Sgt Rhonda Brown presenting a service certificate to Dawn Wallace JP, and with Cliff Fisher JP at arvo tea in East Melbourne.



Update on Births, Deaths and Marriages

Rollout of the JP training to certify documents for Births, Deaths and Marriages is underway and the Registry expects to complete training for JPs in police signing centres by the end of June 2012.

Thanks are extended to Outer Eastern Honorary Justice Group who participated in pilot testing the first session in December 2011 and provided valuable feedback.

Shepparton, Frankston, Hastings, Mornington, Rosebud, Carrum Downs and Cranbourne are the next groups to participate.

The Registry will be in contact with the Coordinators at other sites to negotiate the preferred times and locations for training.

Article supplied with thanks by Erin Keleher, B D & M

Wodonga training course

The first training for 2012 was conducted for the Upper Murray Branch at Wodonga, Victoria on the 25th February with a great turnout of 40 people present at the training session with JP's and BJ's travelling from Benalla, Beechworth, Corryong, Kyabram, Walwa and Wangaratta to attend.

Participation and interaction from the group was excellent and a number of great questions came up based on real life situations from justices at signing centres and other locations. We felt they would be of interest to other RVAHJ members. Therefore we have taken a selection of some the questions from this training and which from experience have come up regularly to provide help and clarification to all RVAHJ members in understanding how to handle and process requests from the General Public. They will be published in this and the next issue of *Custodes*.



Participants at the Wodonga training course, February 2012

Q

Question: If you don't have a stamp with you, is it okay to write the wording for CTC and what is the exact wording that should be written?

&

Answer: This can happen to any of us, even if you have a spare stamp. Yes writing the wording for a CTC is acceptable, after all that is what we did before stamps. Once you are satisfied that the copy is a true and complete copy of the original document, the justice then certifies the copy with words to the following effect:

'I certify this to be a true copy of the original document'

'which I have sighted this day (insert date).'

'Your signature – authorised person'

Print Your Full Name

Print Your Address

Your Registration Number

Your Title –Authority to Sign

i.e. Justice Of The Peace, Victoria'

A

Thank you to all those who participated in the training in Wodonga and for the great questions and we look forward to meeting more RVAHJ members over the course of 2012 as we continue to roll out our training programs over the year.

Paul Mracek JP, Training Director

BY JOHN WELLINGTON JP

Opportunities for bail justices to get together and review their service have been few and far between even though the office has been around for over 20 years. In this time the duties of bail justices have changed as have community expectations.

I think it is fair to say that the professional education program for new appointees is now quite different from the one we experienced in 1990. Does this reflect the Department of Justice and the community's different objectives for BJs? It's fair to say that it's not all that clear to all parties what the objectives for BJs now are.

Some of us will have noticed that the newspaper reports of out-of- session bail hearings now often do not mention that they have been held by a bail justice. This omission obscures our role under the Bail Act and causes confusion as to who actually is conducting the hearings.

Over time the public's perception of the role of a bail justice is likely to vanish which can only be a bad thing for us all, prisoners included. Also my experience in the Metropolitan area, Wimmera and South West is that venues, scheduling, and other practical features differ significantly between regions.

Q My name is Damian Noseda. I am a Justice of the Peace for the State of Victoria. Recently I have been requested by members of the Italian community to sign documents which I presume have been sent to them by the Italian Government to verify that they are still living so they can continue to receive a pension from the Italian Government. My question is can a JP in Victoria sign these documents and will they be accepted by your government if they are signed by a JP, or must they be signed by a Notary Public?

We all agree that our office is difficult and very demanding and we have not had much opportunity to formulate feedback to the Department of Justice based on our common experiences. Before that can happen however I think a workshop will make clear how we need to proceed.

As professional office holders it's appropriate for us to be ready and willing to participate in any future review of our duties. The Association is the only body which can do this

'As professional office holders it's appropriate for us to be ready and willing to participate in any future review of our duties.'

well, as last year's conference demonstrated. But a workshop needs interested people ready to contribute to be effective.

To start with, why not share your views with us all in these pages? I can't believe I'm the only one who wants to communicate within our association.

Don't let your experience go to waste in this regard. Please put your fingers on your laptop .

A Dear Mr Noseda.

Regarding your question I confirm that a Justice of the Peace can sign the declaration to verify that the pensioner is still alive (yellow form).

Regards

Maurizio Cardilli
Consular Officer
Consulate General of Italy in Melbourne

Directors activity statements

Name: Linda Rainsford

Position: President

Appointment to Board: May 2008

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Attended all executive and board meetings.
- Attended AGM's for Central Gippsland, Wyndham, Benalla, Geelong, Yarra Valley, South West, and Upper Murray Branches.
- Successfully negotiated with BD&M for JPs to witness documents in Police signing centres prior to other JP groups joining the discussions.
- Strengthened the relationship with DoJ.
- Represented RVAHJ at numerous DoJ information, inductions and training sessions.
- Attended RVAHJ training sessions.



Objectives for 2012:

Ensure that members and branches receive the benefits of membership and continue to improve the relationship with DoJ and stakeholders.

Name: Glenda Frost JP

Position: Vice President & Chief Financial Officer

Appointment to Board: November 2006

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Attended all board meetings with the exception of February and April.
- Attended all executive meetings.
- Attended AGM for Yarra Valley Branch and Diamond Valley Branch. Awarded two Certificates of Merit.
- Attended Christmas celebrations for the roster team at Dandenong and awarded two Certificates of Merit.
- As Financial Controller, organized and liaised with the Association's audit and arranged a budget for the Board.
- Attended training sessions .
- Attended and assisted with the Centenary Conference and the RVAHJ annual dinner.
- Assisted with the Dandenong and Knox volunteer signing centres.
- Attended the funeral of Heather Simmonds.



Objectives for 2012:

To get on a better road with Births Deaths and Marriages and after attending the new training course recently at Frankston, I see that happening, but a lot of our JPs are still not fully understanding the requirements of B D & M. I hope that we have a greater attendance at our training courses and I would encourage all members to attend and keep abreast of the changes to legislation and various Government Agencies in order to work together harmoniously.

Directors activity statements

Name: Michael Tse JP

Position: Director and Secretary

Appointment to Board: May 2008

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Served as director and secretary of the Association.
- Acted as a liaison between the Board and Glen Waverley branch.
- Attended the Centenary conference and other Association events.

Objectives for 2012:

To establish and maintain good working relationships between the Association and other stakeholders.



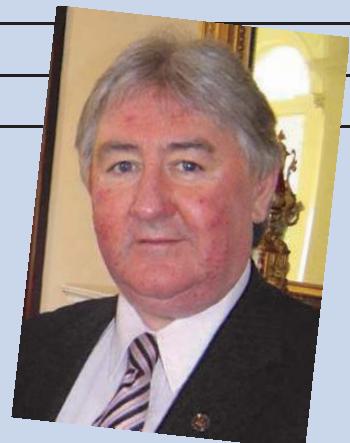
Name: Garry Runge JP

Position: Immediate Past President

Appointment to Board: October 2008

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Attended all board and executive meetings.
- Attended meetings at Central Gippsland and South Gippsland branches as Liaison Officer.
- Liaised with State Trustees re training.
- Attended JP reception at Baw Baw Shire.
- Attended RVAHJ conference as Master of Ceremonies.
- Attended training sessions.



Objectives for 2012:

Supporting the President as she undertakes her second year in office. I will also be supporting the two branches in the Gippsland region for which I am the liaison director encouraging them to build their membership base and promote training

Name: Geoffrey Legge JP CPA

Position: Board member

Appointment to Board: 2011

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Obtain a greater appreciation of the operations and functions of the Board.
- Contributed to the process of RVAHJ obtaining accreditation as a Registered Training Organisation.
- Reviewed and rationalised the RVAHJ investment portfolio and provided comments on the RVAHJ financial structure and other important board matters.
- Attended the Centenary conference.
- Generally endeavoured to promote the principals and virtues of the RVAHJ.



Objectives for 2012:

To ensure that the financial status of the RVAHJ remains well managed and that all governance issues are attended to in a timely manner.

Directors activity statements

Name: Bernhard (Ben) Loois JP

2011 Position: Board member

Appointment to Board: 2011

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Attended RVAHJ Board meetings (missing two meetings)
- Attended RVAHJ Training Day at Royal Melbourne Hospital, providing help for our JP 's and BJ 's in attendance.
- Transporting the paperwork and hardware, needed to facilitate the training day and then return said hardware back to our office at Elwood few days later.
- Attended our RVAHJ annual Dinner
- Attended our RVAHJ Century Conference, serving as our official photographer, providing photos for our December edition of Custodes
- Attended Mornington RVAHJ Branch Meetings and liaising with Frankston, Mornington, Hastings, Rosebud, Carrum Downs and Springvale Signing Centres
- Attended Dandenong RVAHJ Branch 10 year anniversary Dinner held at the Dandenong RSL. Congratulations!
- Attended Springvale Signing Centre 's Christmas Dinner held at the Noble Park RSL
- Served as a JP on duty once a week at 226 Flinders Lane, Melbourne East Signing Centre
- Served as a JP to my local community at Tyabb



Objectives for 2012:

I look forward to continuing serving our RVAHJ President Linda Rainsford and our board in 2012.

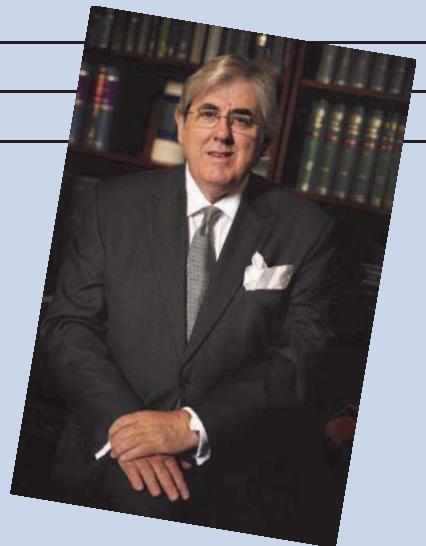
Name: Norman William Wittingslow

Position: Board member

Appointment to Board: 2007

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Chair of the Constitution Committee.
- Co-wrote a 16 page application to the DoJ for training of new JPs.
- Assisted City Northern branch with a grant application for \$1,200 which was successful.
- Delivered legal opinion on a number of issues.
- Attended City and Northern branch meetings as the contact and liaison to and on the RVAHJ board.
- Attended a number of functions to acknowledge the work of JPs and to celebrate the Centenary.



Objectives for 2012:

- Continue to be a director of RVAHJ and in doing so focus on achieving better outcomes for members by helping them to more easily perform their tasks and duties as JPs and BJs.
- To assist in the positive development, image and status of the Office and role of Justices for and on behalf of the RVAHJ membership.

Directors activity statements continued on pages 18 and 19

Sentencing survey results released

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he results of the state governments sentencing survey, in which 18,500 Victorians took part, were published in December 2011.

Attorney-General Robert Clark said the Sentencing Survey received a strong response, confirming the importance Victorians place on the just and effective operation of our criminal justice system and on the consequences that follow from criminal behaviour.

Respondents were asked to hand down a sentence in 17 hypothetical criminal scenarios. Respondents were then asked to indicate how a number of possible aggravating or mitigating factors would tend to increase or decrease the sentences they would impose.

The scenarios that attracted the highest average sentence levels were scenarios involving murder (life imprisonment), large-scale commercial drug trafficking (21-25 years imprisonment) and arson causing death (21-25 years imprisonment).

The scenarios that attracted the lowest average sentence levels were those involving sex with a 16 year old by an offender aged 18 (Community Correction Order), threats to kill (1-2 years imprisonment) and recklessly causing serious injury (1-2 years imprisonment).

The survey results showed that respondents were most likely to increase their sentences if the crime severely affected victims or if the crime was premeditated or involved a continuing attack against an incapacitated victim.

Respondents were most likely to reduce sentences if the offender did not have a criminal record, pleaded guilty straight away, helped police to arrest co-offenders, expressed genuine remorse or had completed a rehabilitation program.

Mr Clark thanked participants for the time and thought they had given to completing the survey, and said the results had

provided valuable feedback to the government and would help shape future government reforms.

"It was good to see there was a diverse range of people responding to the survey," Mr Clark said. "Most people who completed the survey (53.3 per cent) said they had not had any direct interaction with the justice system, 9.6 per cent identified themselves as jurors, 9.5 per cent as victims of crime, 5 per cent as members of the legal profession and 3.3 per cent as offenders.

"Of survey respondents, 54.2 per cent identified themselves as being male and 41.6 per cent as being female.

"The Government has already committed to and commenced the introductions of a range of sentencing reforms, including baseline sentences, statutory minimum sentences for gross violence offences and the abolition of suspended sentences.

"The results also highlight the community's concern about offences such as large scale commercial drug trafficking and culpable driving, which can have devastating consequences, particularly for the lives of young people and their families," Mr Clark said.

The full results of the MyViews Sentencing Survey can be accessed online at www.myviews.justice.vic.gov.au



The office will close for Easter on Thursday 5 April and re-open on Tuesday 17 April, 2012. If you need assistance with procedural matters contact one of the Directors listed on the back cover.

Did you know...?

The Law Handbook Online provides free legal information in plain English, for the purpose of assisting Victorians with no legal background who are faced with a legal issue.

"This online resource is a great way for people to obtain the information they need to help solve legal problems, while also reducing the burden on legal assistance services," Attorney-General Robert Clark said.

The Law Handbook Online is produced by the Fitzroy Legal Service.

The Online Handbook currently records 10,000 visits every week from Victorian individuals and families seeking free legal information.

The Law Handbook Online can be accessed at www.lawhandbook.org.au

Boost to police numbers across Victoria

Minister for Police and Emergency Services Peter Ryan has announced that 275 additional frontline police would be allocated to 21 divisions across four police regions by 30 June.

"North West Metro will get 74 additional police, Southern Metro will get 63, Western region will be allocated 55 and Eastern region will get an additional 47 police officers," Mr Ryan said.

The biggest boost will go to the division covering Frankston and Mornington Peninsula with an allocation of 29; Western region's Division 3 (Ballarat and Moorabool) will receive 22 and Southern Metro region's Division 3 (Cardinia, Casey and Greater Dandenong) will get 21.

Divisional Superintendents will have responsibility for determining which areas and stations within their division will receive the additional resources.

Mr Ryan said that this allocation would also include four Regional Inspectors as well as supervisors and specialist roles such as highway patrol members.

New funding for the prevention of violence against women and children

The Victorian Coalition Government will spend an extra \$7.2 million over the next three years on new grants aimed at reducing violence against women and children.

The new funding is part of the government's Community Crime Prevention Program and will target prevention and early intervention programs.

Applications for funding will be sought for programs to run across the three year period. Such programs may include:

- activities targeting workplaces, sporting clubs and other organisations to build environments that are safe, inclusive and respectful of women and girls ;
- early intervention activities targeting specific groups that are at high risk of using or experiencing violence in the future

A portion of the funding will be set aside for programs specifically developed by Indigenous communities.

Expressions of interest will be sought from communities across the state. The Regional Crime Prevention Reference Groups will play a vital role in providing local knowledge of projects that will work best for their region.

It's expected organisations will bid for funding in partnership with others at regional and sub-regional levels.

"The scourge of violence against women and children, particularly family violence, has been raised repeatedly at Regional Reference Group meetings across the state. These new grants recognise the importance of local communities developing crime prevention solutions that best suit their region," Crime Prevention Minister, Andrew McIntosh said.

Victorian government acts on affidavit problems

From the office of the Attorney General

Attorney-General Robert Clark today (28 February 2012) announced the Victorian Coalition Government will today introduce legislation to address problems in criminal trials due to affidavits not having been properly sworn or affirmed.

Several recent court cases have raised serious issues about the admissibility of evidence arising from affidavits that were not properly sworn or affirmed by members of Victoria Police. Recent advice received from Victoria Police and the Office of Public Prosecutions indicates that a large number of cases are potentially affected by deficiencies in the swearing or affirming of affidavits.

The legislation will ensure that failures to follow formalities associated with the swearing or affirming of affidavits do not result in the exclusion of evidence from legal proceedings. It will only apply to affidavits made before 12 November 2011. The legislation is not intended to excuse or endorse the failure of some Victoria Police members to follow proper requirements for the making of affidavits. Rather, the legislation is intended to prevent the possibility of trials being jeopardised solely because of possible procedural defects in the swearing or affirming of affidavits.

The legislation will be limited to rectifying problems that may arise because of affidavits not being correctly sworn or affirmed despite stating that they were made on oath or affirmation. It will not affect any other relevant rules relating to perjury or other evidentiary issues.

"The Victorian Coalition Government considers the potential consequences for the legal system of the issues arising from these affidavits remaining unremedied to be so grave that legislation is required," Mr Clark said.

Affidavits are used to provide evidence to a court in support of an application for a warrant, order, summons or other legal process. The Bill will ensure that failures to have followed formalities in the swearing or affirming of such affidavits do not result in the exclusion of evidence obtained under those warrants or other processes. The Bill will apply to all affidavits made before 12 November 2011 and to any subsequent processes issued or actions taken in reliance on those affidavits. However, it will not affect the rights of parties in cases where a court has already ruled on the validity of the affidavit or process or the admissibility of the evidence obtained.

The Bill makes no changes going forward to the requirement for affidavits to be sworn or affirmed in accordance with the law. The Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police has taken specific action to ensure that in future Victoria Police members follow the correct procedures for the swearing or affirming of affidavits. The Bill will also make it an offence in future for a person to make a false or misleading statement about the swearing or affirming of an affidavit, with a penalty of up to 10 penalty units (around \$1,220).

"The Victorian Coalition Government has decided to introduce this legislation after careful consideration of the serious potential consequences of not doing so," Mr Clark said. "If this legislation were not enacted, there would potentially be a heavy toll on victims of crime, community safety and our court system as a result of criminal proceedings being delayed, disrupted or unable to be determined on their merits solely because of procedural defects in the swearing or affirming of affidavits."

NEWS

A voice for the people

A CRAIGIEBURN man has been appointed a People of Australia ambassador.

Deepak Vinayak was appointed as one of 10 ambassadors from Victoria, joining 39 other Australians to champion inclusion and provide input to the Australian Multicultural Council and Federal Government.

The ambassadors are active in their community and able to attend local events in a volunteer capacity for a year.

Mr Vinayak said he felt people

appreciated the work he was doing.

"This is a big challenge, I need to work hard for people less fortunate than me," he said.

"In my spare time I visit aged-care homes and hospitals and sit with people and take some chocolate and fruits with me."

Mr Vinayak also raised funds for the Black Saturday bushfires and Victorian and Queensland floods.

"If we work for other people it gives us more satisfaction," he said.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard rec-

ognised the People of Australia ambassadors for their work in building local communities.

Australians were encouraged to nominate inspirational people who had helped to build bridges, promote inclusion and strengthen ties in their communities.

Mr Vinayak is also the founder of the South Asian Community Link Group, a member of the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices and a member of the Hume Council Craigieburn Festival Committee.



Deepak Vinayak has been appointed a People of Australia ambassador.



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Murray MacGregor JP receives Victoria Police Plaque of Appreciation

Well known Berwick, Endeavour Hills and Dandenong identity Murray MacGregor JP was presented with the Victoria Police Plaque of Appreciation by Inspector Charley Allen of the Dandenong Police District at a function hosted by senior police from Springvale and Dandenong.

JPs providing a signing service to the public at both stations enjoyed an afternoon tea at the Dandenong RSL on Tuesday December 6, 2011. Superintendent Allen advised the gathering that more than 170,000 documents which total more than 32 weeks have been handled by the justices releasing over five police constables during the past year to better service the community's needs in a pro active and reactive manner.

Murray who has been forced by age and health to retire from this role has devoted more than 20 years of volunteer service as a Justice of Peace, Bail Justice and until 2006 as an Independent Third Person (ITP) tasked with protecting the rights of children and 'other at risk' persons during the criminal justice process.

Volunteer JPs provide the signing service at both police stations Monday to Friday between 10 and 12 noon, 2 and 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

Justices interested in joining this dedicated group are welcome to make contact with the roster co-ordinators listed.



Murray MacGregor JP receiving his award from Inspector Charley Allen.



Murray proudly displaying his Victoria Police Plaque of Appreciation.

Roster co-ordinators

Murray has devoted over 20 years as a JP and BJ.

Springvale: Mr. Joe De Souza - jp6973@optusnet.com.au

Dandenong: Mrs. Margaret Tinschert - mtinschert@optusnet.com.au

Directors activity statements

Name: Michael Cheshire JP

Position: Director, honorary life member and past president

Appointment to Board: 1989

Activities and achievements in 2011

- Past president to the Australasian Council of Justices' Associations.
- Former chair of the Ethics Committee, treasurer, historian and local council liaison.
- Attended AGM of Ballarat and Bendigo Branches.
- Contributed to programs identifying potential honorary justices and advancing their development.
- Served as a Bail Justice and Justice of the Peace.
- Continued work done as chairman of the RVAHJ's centenary committee.
- Created programs to educate the public on the role of honorary justices through the media.
- Work done as chair of Communications Committee.



Objectives for 2012

- To develop a five year plan for the improvement of operation and benefits of honorary justices.
- To serve as a bail justice and justice of the peace.
- To continue the enthusiasm of the awareness campaign to attract media coverage.
- To work with my director colleagues to develop plans to better conditions and role of justices.
- Work with fellow councillors of the Australasian Council of Justices' Association to develop a plan to harmonise the roles and training of justices throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Name: Paul Mracek JP

Position: Board member

Appointment to Board: 2011

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Attended all board meetings taking minutes and distributing same.
- Nominated by the Board to manage RVAHJ training and re-establish the training committee
- Provided support to city and country members.
- Attended training sessions in Mildura for the Sunraysia Branch, Royal Melbourne Hospital for the Mornington Peninsula Branch.
- Reviewed training timetable for 2012.
- Attended the AGM and annual dinner.
- Presented an overview of the RVAHJ and the role of JP's and BJ's to a visiting delegation of judges from China.



Objectives for 2012:

- Re-establish the Training Committee and get this up and running to be an effective contributor for RVAHJ in providing revised as well as new training programs for all members.
- Provide support to the Board in establishing and implementing the RVAHJ strategy for 2012.
- Develop additional resources for all members to assist in conducting duties through the training committee.
- Visit as many of the regional branches as possible to get input on the key issues for members in the country.

Directors activity statements

Name: Rhonda Smith JP

Position: Board member

Appointment to Board: 2011

Activities and achievements in 2011:

- Attended RVAHJ Board Meetings – April, August, October and December.
- Attended RVAHJ Training Day at the Royal Melbourne Hospital - June 2011.
- Attended the RVAHJ South West Branch AGM at Terang in June.
(Leaving Rocklyn in the snow)
- Attended RVAHJ Annual Dinner – August 2011.
- Attended our RVAHJ Century conference held at the William Angliss Centre.
- Attended the Geelong RVAHJ Branch AGM with President Linda Rainsford.
- Attended the quarterly Ballarat branch meetings and also the Christmas dinner held at the Sebastopol Services Club Hotel in December 2011.
- Served as a J.P. on duty every second Friday at the Ballarat police station.
- Served as a J.P. to my local community as well as having persons call at our home.
- Attended a training day in Ballarat for the new J.P. 's .



Objectives for 2012

I look forward to working with the Board under the leadership of president, Linda Rainsford over the coming year and will do my best to attend meetings of the Geelong and South West branches, taking any concerns back to the Board on their behalf.

RVAHJ director, Terry McKay
is currently on leave from
board activities. His director's
statement was unavailable at
the time of print.

State Trustees would like to say Thanks with a 20% off special offer

State Trustees has been helping Victorians with their financial needs for over 70 years so they can make the most of their opportunities.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The official journal of the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices has appeared in various formats since 1910. As is common practice in publications, the current *Custodes* does not necessarily represent the views of the RVAJH since it encourages contributions from a wide cross-section of members and beyond. Articles and letters are most welcome, but are subject to the discretion of the editor.

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