



# ROYAL VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF HONORARY JUSTICES

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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 RVAHJ, 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.

## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Advertising in Custodes reaches a statewide audience of influential community leaders and business professionals. Attractive advertising rates are available. Contact the Editor, to discuss value for money advertising for your business.

## CUSTODES DEADLINES

Autumn - January 21 Winter - April 21 Spring - July 21 Summer - October 21

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# *Custodes*



THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF HONORARY JUSTICES

# Grant application successful

Issue 2 of 2009  
June



# Custodes

*The official journal of the  
Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices*

## Issue 2 of 2009

### Credits

Editor – Helen Ward  
Desktop Publisher – Cathy Owens JP  
Custodes Liaison – Chris Reside

### Contributors:

Carol Allen JP Kay Armstrong Wendy Booth JP  
Michael Cheshire JP Linda Rainsford Chris Reside  
Garry Runge JP Laurie Taig JP Bill Wang JP  
Helen Ward



### Words of Wisdom

*Life is too short to drink cheap wine*  
- Author Unknown



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### Diary Dates

#### **Saturday 11 July**

Training - Document witnessing (Traralgon)

#### **Thursday 20 August**

Board Meeting

#### **Friday 21 August**

Annual Dinner - Treacy Conference Centre,  
Parkville

#### **Saturday 3 October**

Training - Document witnessing (Wodonga)

#### **Thursday 15 October**

Board Meeting

#### **Thursday 17 December**

Board Meeting



## From the President's desk

By Garry Runge JP - President RVAHJ

My first 100 days as President are now behind me and what an interesting learning curve it has been. I have had the opportunity to visit a number of branches to either chair their Annual General Meeting or as guest speaker and this has provided me an opportunity to listen to members concerns first hand.

The overwhelming positive response to the recent fuel reimbursement for Honorary Justices has been quite amazing. However there are those who have expressed the view that given our role as a Justice of the Peace is an honorary one, we should not accept any form of payment. Numerous examples have been drawn to my attention regarding our rural colleagues and the hundreds of kilometres they can sometimes travel to perform their duty. They tell me that reimbursement of their fuel has encouraged them to continue doing what they do best - serve the community. Of course there is no compulsion to claim the reimbursement. It is a matter for each individual.

Another benefit of being a member of our Association is the free training that is available. Whilst it is the subject of an ongoing review by the Board, they recently agreed to continue with the current in-house training program. Four training sessions have been scheduled for 2009 details of which are available on the website. Please avail yourself of the training that is on offer even if you are an experienced member because it is a great way to meet other Honorary Justices and board members.



I would like to invite all Honorary Justices to this year's annual dinner on 21 August 2009 at the Treacy Centre, 126 The Avenue, Parkville. This will be my first opportunity to host the event and I would like to meet as many of you as possible. Former County Court Judge, now Director of the Office of Police Integrity, Mr Michael Strong has accepted my invitation to be our guest speaker. Mr Strong has spent a lifetime practicing law and now heads one of the leading anti corruption agencies in Australia. He promises to be entertaining and informative so please join me and your fellow Honorary Justices for an enjoyable evening.

The 2010 centenary celebration of our association is fast approaching. Any organisation which can boast 100 years service to the community can rightfully be proud of itself. To ensure a celebration fitting for such a momentous occasion the Board has recently appointed a dedicated sub-committee to plan for it. The sub-committee is chaired by Michael Cheshire, a long serving board member. Please think about how you can become involved in helping to plan the celebrations and contact the office or Michael with your ideas and suggestions.

Finally I welcome our new editor, Helen Ward to the team. Helen comes to us with a wealth of experience in writing and editing. I am confident in her ability to build on the solid foundations of *Custodes*, taking it forward whilst ensuring it continues to meet your needs and expectations. At this point I would also like to thank Chris Reside for the time and effort he contributed as the past editor.



## President's strategic initiative

By Helen Ward - Editor

The RVAHJ Board held a workshop in February 2009 to discuss ideas on how to make membership of the association more meaningful and beneficial. Feedback from the membership survey conducted in May 2008 formed the basis of discussions at the workshop and numerous strategic decisions resulted which will take the RVAHJ forward as it heads towards its centenary year.

In particular, the Board agreed to continue in-house training for members and to commence a revamp of the RVAHJ website designed to make it more appealing and informative to members. "The Board is keen to focus its resources on members whilst maintaining a strong relationship with the RVAHJ branches," said President Garry Runge. "We must continue to provide our members with quality training and a means for the exchange of information," he said.



## From the Editor's desk

By Helen Ward - Editor

As the recently appointed editor for *Custodes* please allow me to briefly introduce myself. I bring to the role as editor significant experience in both marketing and communications. Prior to biting the bullet and working for myself as a freelance writer, editor and desktop publisher in 2001, I worked for 20 years in the public and private sectors as a marketer and communications manager.

Since departing the corporate scene and working as a freelancer I have serviced a small but impressive list of clients. I look forward to proudly adding RVAHJ to that list.

My career took an interesting turn in 2002 when I was elected as a local councillor at Cardinia Shire. This is where I met and had the pleasure of working with the current RVAHJ President, Garry Runge.

I have held numerous volunteer positions in the past and currently volunteer as a mentor with the Small Business Mentoring Service, I also run a customer service operation for an importing company from my home office, I am a member of several networking groups and am actively involved in my local horse riding clubs.

In my spare time (I say tongue in cheek) I run a small beef farming operation in Tynong North together with my husband Ian (who reminds me from time to time that he didn't make the cut in the photo), spend as much time as I can training and riding my horses and play "mother" to our two beautiful labs, Chloe and Gus.

Well, that's enough about me. Over to this edition of *Custodes*, firstly thanks to all contributors. The fuel grant is a significant achievement for the association. Read about it on page 7. Also included in this edition is an update on the website and on training, and notice the call for expressions of interest for more trainers. Please give this some thought as the Association really needs to increase the number of trainers it can call upon at any given time.

For those not familiar with the RVAHJ media kit, please read the article on page 5 as it explains the purpose and intended use of the kit and provides ideas on how it can help you and your branch promote and raise the profile of the Association through your local media.

Remember the Annual Dinner is not far away so make sure you secure your seats by booking now. Look inside for details.



Finally, it is my intention to offer and include advertising in the next and future editions of *Custodes*. An advertising rate card is being prepared and I can assure you advertising rates will be very competitive. I look forward to taking your bookings.

Not only is *Custodes* an excellent vehicle to promote your business to 2500 members but your advertising fees will help offset the costs of production and allow us to further improve and refresh *Custodes* over coming editions.

To conclude, I look forward to bringing you a member newsletter that meets your needs and exceeds your expectations but ultimately it relies on content. I ask you all to consider contributing. I'm not looking for chapter and verse; any snippet of interest is greatly appreciated. Or if you have come across an article in your travels that you think may be of interest to fellow members please forward it to me. I will accommodate your contributions as best I can.

Until next time.

Email: [custodes@rvahj.org.au](mailto:custodes@rvahj.org.au)  
Ph: 0438 594285



## Welcome to the RVAHJ

President Garry Runge JP has extended a warm welcome to the Association's recent inductees.

On behalf of the Board and greater membership we are pleased to have you aboard.

### New Members

Roslyn Affleck JP  
Flo Andison JP  
Lor Davis JP  
Walter Drinkwater JP  
Tony Hodder JP  
Bruce Knight JP  
Peter McPhan JP  
Harold O'Brien JP

BROADFORD  
ST ARNAUD  
WILLIAMSTOWN  
GLADSTONE PARK  
OCEAN GROVE  
OAK PARK  
RAGLAN  
BALLAN

Hans Paas JP  
Leo Schillaci  
Mark Somers JP  
Melita Taylor JP  
Lynette Townsend JP  
Garry Van Sinderen JP  
Rosslyn Watson JP  
Antony Wells JP

CASTLEMAINE  
GREENSBOROUGH  
BUXTON  
BEACONSFIELD  
RED CLIFFS  
LEONGATHA STH.  
OAKLEIGH SOUTH  
FRANKSTON SOUTH



## An important step forward in improving communications

By Michael JM Cheshire JP

Honorary justices have for too long hidden their light under a bushel and carried out much worthy work for the community without seeking or wanting any compliments or reward. While honorary justices are generally held in high regard by the community, their status could be raised even further which would assist relationships with government and government departments and other organisations.

After many years of no pro-active media activity and with the centenary approaching, it is timely that as an organisation, we should start a process to promote honorary justices and perhaps attract good and worthy people to apply to become honorary justices.

There are opportunities for every branch, and indeed every member of the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices to make known the good work they do in their community. This may be in their role as an honorary justice, or in some other voluntary community role they hold.

One would find that some honorary justices were acknowledged through the Australia Day or Queen's Birthday awards and in their local municipality. When this occurs, the opportunity should be taken to publicise this.

Local media love stories about local identities so we have therefore produced a media kit designed to assist in attracting positive publicity for honorary justices.

The objective is to build recognition and awareness of our local branches within their communities. The media kit is an essential tool in helping achieve this objective. Suggestions on how to build media coverage include:

1. If possible appoint a communications officer to follow up on stories for the media. They would seek out general, local stories plus take advantage of more high profile stories such as an Australia Day/Queen's Birthday award.
2. The Branch communications officer would either make up their local media list or seek assistance from the Association's communications officer - Michael Cheshire.
3. The Branch communications officer could supply the successful printed stories, from the media, back to the Association office in order to monitor success.
4. The Branch communications officer may also play a role in providing stories to *Custodes*.

In the event a branch is unable at first to find a communications volunteer, perhaps a few people could take it in turn to create the media releases.

All branches have been issued with media kits so if you have not seen it, I recommend you take a few moments to have a look at it.



## President visits Upper Yarra Branch

By Secretary Wendy Booth JP. Photo by Bill Wang JP

On 30th April 2009 RVAHJ President Garry Runge and wife Sue were guests at the quarterly dinner meeting of the Upper Yarra Branch of the RVAHJ.

The Branch meets once a quarter on the 5th Thursday in the month at the Chirnside Park Country Club for dinner which is followed by the business meeting and a guest speaker.

Meetings are generally well attended and at this meeting our President was witness to the Branch welcoming four new members, as well as meeting the 'regulars'. President Garry Runge was our guest speaker.

All in attendance enjoyed his interesting and informative address and the Upper Yarra Branch would like to formally express our thanks to Garry for attending.

The Upper Yarra Branch would like to encourage all JP's and Bail Justices who live in or around the Yarra Valley area to join the local branch and benefit from the great fellowship and networking opportunities. We would also welcome your contribution to our business meetings.

The next meeting will be held on July 30th 2009. New members are most welcome to attend.

If you wish to attend our dinner, our meeting or both please contact Branch Secretary, Mrs Wendy Booth on (03)5966 5278 or by email at [wendyjoyb@yahoo.com](mailto:wendyjoyb@yahoo.com) for further details.



L - R is Chairman Gary Tragardh, Treasurer Wendy Scott, RVAHJ President Garry Runge and Secretary Wendy Booth



## AIC Report - Australian Crime: Facts and Figures 2008

The release of the report *Australian Crime: Facts and Figures 2008* by the Australian Institute of Criminology has found that property crime rates were the lowest in the 12-year period since 1996 but some violent crimes are continuing to rise.

While recorded homicides have decreased in the past 12 months, and are now at the lowest level in 12 years, rates of other violent crimes such as robbery and assault have increased since 2004 but are still fewer than those occurring in the early 2000s.

A significant decline in arrests for cannabis and heroin offences has been offset by increases in arrests for amphetamines.

Some of the increase in recorded violent crime has been attributed to increased reporting to police, increased community awareness, changes in the way the justice system manages violent offences and the greater willingness of victims to report violence.

The report also shows expenditure on the criminal justice system has now risen to \$9 billion annually. Police services represent the largest component, accounting for approximately 71 percent of total expenditure. Corrective services account for a further 24 percent and administration of courts the remainder.

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology



## **RVAHJ successfully applies for government grant**

By Helen Ward - Editor

In an attempt to assist members financially and to fund some badly needed small equipment purchases, RVAHJ successfully applied for a \$72,500 Commonwealth Government grant late last year. The Volunteers Grant Program, offered by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs aims to support volunteers and encourage volunteering to help build social inclusion and community participation.

The grant was structured to encourage parent organisations such as the RVAHJ to apply on behalf of themselves and their branches to:

- buy tangible small equipment items to help their volunteers; and/or
- cover costs such as sporting equipment and uniforms, training of volunteer sports coaches, and travel for specific sports-related purposes; and/or
- contribute towards fuel reimbursement for volunteers, for fuel costs incurred in volunteering work.

RVAHJ member, Helen Gilhome spent many hours preparing the grant application. "The Association owes Helen a big thank you for her commitment and dedication to ensuring our grant application would be successful," said President Garry Runge.

The grant of \$72,500 has been allocated on the basis of \$10,000 for small equipment purchases with the balance - \$62,500 allocated for fuel reimbursement to members. The equipment will be used to professionally train honorary justices throughout Victoria to carry out their duties whilst the fuel grant will help defray petrol costs associated with attending bail, independent person and document witnessing duties conducted at police stations, courts, hospitals, nursing and private homes. With 36 document signing centres run by the Association and 37,000 documents signed per month that adds up to a lot of travel by members.

### **NEWSFLASH!**

The fuel grant claims period has been extended from 30 June 2009 to 12 July 2009. Claims to be lodged by 31 July 2009. Visit the RVAHJ website 'Latest News' for a claim form and information.

"RVAHJ acknowledges that honorary justices on fixed or low incomes are limited in the activities they can undertake because of the costs involved so this grant money provides some relief and the opportunity for those honorary justices to continue to perform the excellent work they do in their communities," said President Garry Runge.

President Garry Runge will be recommending to the Board that the Association reapply next year but there is no guarantee the funding will be available or that the Association will be successful so he encourages all members to take advantage of this funding opportunity now.



## **Understanding why honorary justices leave**

By Helen Ward - Editor

Whilst all organisations and associations regret the loss of valuable members, progressive and forward thinking ones want to know why their members leave. RVAHJ is one such organisation having just recently implemented a Member Exit Survey.

"Keen to keep pace with expectations and to offer the best possible service to members the Board agreed it was important to understand why members leave the Association," said President Garry Runge.

"The departure of a member could result for a variety of reasons. All we want is to better understand if it was something we, as an association, did or didn't do," he said. "

From the information received the association will consider what, if any changes or improvements need to be made.

The intention is that the survey will be mailed out to members who depart requesting them to answer just a couple of questions and for them to return it.



## Report from Upper Murray Branch

By Carol Allen JP – Co-Branch Secretary

Doug Heiner JP spoke very ably on his trip in 2006 to Europe. As well as visiting the Chrysler/Daimler/Mercedes Benz factory in Stuttgart Germany (also saw the “Trabant” plastic body car), he visited the Swarovski Factory, Innsbruck, Neuschwanstein Castle, Fussen and Auschwitz and Birkenau where 1.5 million people lost their lives.

To see the cells and gallows knowing that so many lives were taken was a very sobering experience. The quote by George Santayana bears listening to.....

“The one who does not remember history, is bound to live through it again.”

Our hope is this will never be the case again!

The Document signing at the Wodonga Police Station is doing well with over 10,000 documents witnessed since April 2007. More help to cover the roster is much needed!



### Are you interested in becoming a trainer?

The Association is seeking members with a training certificate or similar and an interest in being part of our training program. Training is conducted on a volunteer basis on weekends and involves some regional travel.

It is envisaged that trainers (with the assistance of the training team) would run a particular module of the training program eg. Powers of Attorney.

Expressions of interest can be emailed to the Association at [admin@rvahj.org.au](mailto:admin@rvahj.org.au) outlining any relevant training or teaching experience.



### Free in-house training available

By Linda Rainsford – Vice President RVAHJ

The Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices works to ensure a high level of administrative and judicial service to the Victorian community. The Association promotes the critical role honorary justices play in the judicial system.

In order to serve the community in a professional consistent manner and to keep abreast of any changes in legislation, ongoing training is essential. In addition to hearing of the challenges faced by other honorary justices these sessions provide a wonderful networking opportunity.

Currently the Association runs one metropolitan training session and two or three regional sessions per year. Time permitting, an additional session may be hosted by a metropolitan branch. We encourage all honorary justices to take advantage of these sessions.

Training on offer through the Association includes duties and legal responsibilities when witnessing documents such as Affidavits, Statutory Declarations, Certified True Copies and Powers of Attorney.

Remaining training dates for 2009 are 11 July 2009 in Traralgon and 3 October 2009 in Wodonga. To attend either of these training sessions, please complete the booking form on the next page.



## Training - Document Witnessing

The following training for Justices of the Peace will be held at no cost to members (and those who have applied for Membership):

**The course is open to all honorary justices and highly recommended to those newly-appointed. Topics include Statutory Declarations, Affidavits (including Oaths and Affirmations), certifying true copies, interstate and federal matters and more.**

**Date:** 11 July 2009 **Time:** 9.30 am to 3.00 pm. approximately  
**Venue:** St James Church, Grey Street, Traralgon (Opposite RSL)  
**RSVP by:** **ASAP**

**Date:** 3 October 2009 **Time:** 9.00 am to 3.00pm approximately (Note earlier start).  
**Venue:** Felltimber Community Centre, Ritter Road, (off Melrose Drive), Wodonga  
**RSVP by:** **September 3rd**

**Registration on arrival:** 15 minutes before start time.

Please return completed registration form to: RVAHJ, PO Box 317, Elwood, 3184 or fax: (03) 9525 7765

-----  
Name: .....

BJ/JP Registration no..... Email .....

Address .....

Contact Ph: (Landline) ..... (Mobile) .....

I wish to attend the Training Course on:

11 July 2009 - Document Witnessing - Traralgon

3 October 2009 - Document Witnessing - Wodonga

**Non RVAHJ Members** - Please complete credit card details below or enclose a cheque or money order (cost is \$100 per day).

Credit Card Details	
Card type (MasterCard/Visa only; no phone payments):	
Credit Card Number:	
Expiry date:	
Cardholder's name:	
Cardholder's signature:	



## Document Witnessing - A growth business

By Laurie Taig JP

Traditionally our Justices of the Peace have performed document witnessing duties such as affidavits and statutory declarations, ensuring a dignified and professional process was observed and readily accessible to members of our community.

In recent times there seems to be an increased demand for these services for all manner of documentation, including certified true copies, requests by various authorities to support applications and verify identity, qualifications and for other needs.

Although your association has for many years operated rosters at courts and elsewhere, the recent growth in JP rosters for document witnessing commenced through our Dandenong Branch, when in 2002, a JP Signing Centre was established at the Dandenong Police Station.

From humble beginnings, that service now operates a Monday to Friday daily service which recently exceeded 700 documents processed in a single day, by the JP's in attendance.

We now have almost 40 such rosters operating as JP Signing Centres throughout the State to the credit of some 240 honorary justices who freely give of their time to serve the community in this way.

Whilst everyone plays a significant part, the coordinators of each Centre deserve a special mention for their untiring part in organising and maintaining the service.

We are now processing some 40,000 documents a month and have reached a total of 1,150,000 documents processed since 2002.

Presently, we are in the process of establishing new Centres at Moorabbin, Preston, Rosebud, Pakenham and elsewhere, but we need more JP's to assist.

Please advise if you can make yourself available or contact Laurie Taig, JP Rosters Coordinator, for further details after hours (03) 9585 8244.



## It's all systems go for website upgrade

By Linda Rainsford -  
RVAHJ Vice President

Over coming months the RVAHJ website will be upgraded in an effort to keep pace with changes in technology. Our website, which has been in its current format for some years, has become problematic for some users, prompting this upgrade.

Our aim is to improve accessibility to all members. Initially the focus will be on design; however it is planned that the content will be updated and branch pages expanded.

Results of the recent audit conducted by the RVAHJ indicated the number of member visits to the site was low. Whilst there could be a number of reasons for this, our objective is to increase traffic to the site from both members and the public.

Some areas of the website are for members only and you need a password to access these areas. Your user name is jpxxxx or bjxxxx (substitute your jp or bj number for the x's) and the default password is xxxxjp or xxxxbj (again, substitute your jp or bj number). You can change your password in the Webmail area under Options. If you change, and then can't recall your password, please contact the office via email on [admin@rvahj.org.au](mailto:admin@rvahj.org.au) to arrange for it to be reset.

In the members area you can find past editions of *Custodes*, and *e news*. Also available are forms for use by honorary justices in the course of their duties. The merchandise area of the website has pictures of the products that are available for purchase and you can order on-line. If you prefer you can complete a merchandise order form included with your copy of *Custodes*.

We welcome comments about the website changes and your suggestions about possible future content such as useful links to relevant legislation and jurisdictions, news and events from branches, photos of members, as we aim to develop our website into a resource to be used by all.

Contributions can be sent to [admin@rvahj.org.au](mailto:admin@rvahj.org.au).

**Time on your hands?  
Join a document signing roster today!**



# RVAHJ business cards now available

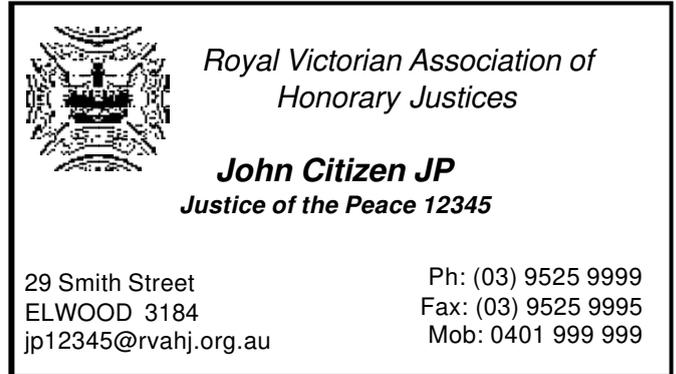
RVAHJ business cards are now available in lots of 100 (\$59 for 100 and \$94 for 200).

prefer just Tom Smith or Thomas G. Smith JP) and forward with payment.

*\*Note: Sample is not to scale and the RVAHJ Logo will be in colour.*

To order, fill in the fields with your details as you wish them to appear (for example, Thomas George Smith JP might

For example -



## BUSINESS CARD ORDER FORM

<b>Field 1:</b>	
<b>Field 2:</b>	
<b>Field 3:</b>	
<b>Field 4:</b>	<b>Field 5:</b>
<b>Field 6:</b>	
<b>Field 7:</b>	<b>Field 8:</b>
<b>Field 9:</b>	
Quantity: <input type="checkbox"/> 100 cards (\$59) <input type="checkbox"/> 200 cards (\$94) <input type="checkbox"/> Other - No. of cards .....	<b>Sub-total \$</b>
Plus Post & Hand: (\$6.00 first 100 cards, add \$2 per 100 cards thereafter)	<b>Post &amp; Hand \$</b>
Delivery Address:	<b>TOTAL \$</b>
Contact phone: <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque/Money Order <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card	
<b>Credit Card Details (MasterCard/Visa only)</b>	
Cardholder's name:	
Cardholder's signature:	
Credit card number:	
Expiry date:	



## Community engagement - a must for courts

Judicial independence should not be used as a shield against reasonable public scrutiny, Deputy Premier and Attorney-General Rob Hulls told a Hong Kong conference early in April 2009.

Speaking at the 16th Commonwealth Law Conference in Hong Kong, Mr Hulls said while he would always be the first to champion judicial independence and judicial discretion there needed to be continuing and open dialogue between the three arms of government and the community.

Mr Hulls said the judiciary should not only be able to withstand an element of public scrutiny, it should engage with the community in order to be stronger and more effective.

“I see judicial independence as a sword, rather than a shield; and a strong judiciary as one that is on the front foot – out in the community, explaining the principles behind decisions without having to make excuses; bringing the population with it,” Mr Hulls said.

“The law is, after all, simply a mechanism designed to serve the public, with the judiciary its highest paid servants.

“In serving the rule of law, then, judges cannot fully meet their obligations if they do not also cement the confidence of the community.”

Mr Hulls said real, long-lasting reform needed to be accompanied by cultural change to be effective but he was concerned that ‘needless tradition’ often hindered important reform and legal culture had often failed to evolve with the law.

“No amount of important legal reform will resonate to its potential unless it is accompanied by cultural change within the judiciary and legal profession,” he said.

Mr Hulls said the government had been encouraging wide-ranging discussion about making mediation and other forms of Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) the core business of courts, to provide easier and cheaper access to justice.

“It’s time to look beyond old boundaries that cannot reasonably be expected to house the complexity of 21st century demands; it’s time to think creatively and recognise that, although crucial, money is not the cure all.”

The 16th Commonwealth Law Conference is a significant event on the international legal calendar and was attended by about 1000 legal delegates from around the world.

Source: Office of the Attorney-General

### **Dreams**

*Dreams,  
Though intangible,  
Know no bounds  
And are free to all mankind.*

*Dreams  
Are not discriminatory,  
Are neither racist nor sexist.  
They are international and  
interdenominational,  
Multi-lingual and multi-cultural.*

*Dreams  
Are non-taxable  
For they cannot be bought or sold,  
So go ahead, feel free,  
Dream.*

*Kay Armstrong, Murtoa*

Members and friends are cordially invited to attend the popular  
Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices'

# Annual Dinner 2009

Friday 21 August 2009

7.00 pm for 7.30 pm

Special guest speaker  
**Mr Michael Strong**

(former County Court Judge)  
Director, Office of Police Integrity

The event will take place at the Treacy Conference Centre  
126 The Avenue, Parkville (Melways Ref: 29 F12)

Dress code: Lounge suit / after five

**RSVP: 24 July 2009 (or until sold out!)**

To: Attn: Cathy Owens  
(by mail) PO Box 317, ELWOOD 3184  
(by fax) (03) 9525 7765

List names of all attendees:

- 1..... 5.....  
2..... 6.....  
3..... 7.....  
4..... 8.....

**Cost: \$57.00 per head (Drinks at bar prices)**

Credit Card Details	
Card type (MasterCard/Visa only. No phone payments):	
Credit Card Number:	
Expiry date:	
Cardholder's name:	
Cardholder's signature:	
Postal address (for delivery of ticket)	
Name:	
Street address/PO Box:	
Suburb/town:	
Postcode:	
Contact phone:	



## Victoria's laws best for dealing with bikie gangs

Victoria's approach on organised crime has been endorsed by a meeting of Attorneys-General in Canberra, which agreed to a nationally coordinated response to bikie violence.

The Standing Committee of Attorneys-General agreed to consider introducing a range of legislative measures already in place in Victoria to combat organised crime.

Victoria's approach targets all forms of organised crime, whether perpetuated by bikie gangs, triads, underworld figures or other criminals.

State and Territory Attorneys-General agreed to consider legislative measures that would:

- Permit coercive questioning of individuals to assist with the investigation of organised crime offences.
- Introduce consorting or similar provisions that prevent a person associating with another person who is involved in organised criminal activity.
- Enable police to engage in controlled operations.
- Enable the use of assumed identities to facilitate investigations and intelligence gathering.
- Permit the use of surveillance devices for the purposes of investigating serious and organised crime.
- Introduce witness protection legislation.
- Introduce asset confiscation legislation to enable a court to restrain and forfeit a person's assets where they are tainted.
- Introduce model cross-border investigative powers for controlled operations, assumed identities, witness identity protection and surveillance devices.

Source: DOJ website 21 Apr 2009

## NEWSFLASH!

**Petrol reimbursement -  
claim period extended to  
Sunday, 12 July 2009  
(previously 30 June 2009)**



## National regulator for the legal profession

The Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG) has agreed to Victoria's proposal to look at a national regulator for the legal profession. Deputy Premier and Attorney-General Rob Hulls said a national regulator could reduce legal costs for Australians, simplify rules across states and territories and assist with the national reform agenda.

"In this day and age, it does not make sense for there to be more than 50 regulatory bodies around Australia to oversee the legal profession," Mr Hulls said.

"This mish-mash of bodies makes for a complex system that leads to inefficiencies and a greater cost of legal services. Australia has an increasingly national and international economy, and legal profession and state boundaries are often irrelevant to many consumers of legal services."

State and Territory Attorneys-General agreed to ask the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to consider a national regulator as part of its proposed reforms of the legal profession.

Mr Hulls said a single national regulator would help streamline:

- admissions and practising certificates;
- incorporated legal practices and multi-disciplinary practices;
- trust account handling;
- costs disclosure and billing;
- complaints handling and professional discipline;
- professional indemnity insurance; and
- fidelity insurance.

Mr Hulls said a national regulator would benefit national law firms and lawyers who either move interstate or practise in more than one jurisdiction. "But, importantly, consumers would ultimately benefit because it should result in more streamlined processes and reduced compliance costs," he said.

Mr Hulls said a national regulatory regime could be administered through branch offices in each state or territory, supported by an intergovernmental agreement to allow jurisdictions to continue to have a role in the scheme. "The exact model for establishing a national regulator will need to be the subject of negotiation and debate, and Victoria will take a cooperative approach to COAG's proposed reforms," Mr Hulls said.

Source: Dept Premier and Cabinet website



## Criminal Proceeds Squad seizes assets worth millions

During 2008, the Victoria Police Criminal Proceeds Squad (CPS) seized assets suspected of being proceeds of crime worth an estimated \$56 million. This included:

- real estate worth \$35.7 million;
- shares worth \$15.7 million; and
- cash, vehicles and boats worth \$4.1 million.

Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner (Crime Department) Danye Moloney said the CPS had had a significant impact in the recovery of millions of dollars worth of cash and assets.

Due to the success of the CPS, a smaller team was permanently embedded with the Purana Taskforce and another squad has begun operating within the Drug Task Force since November 2008.

Victoria Police established the CPS in 2005 after the enactment of the Major Crime Legislation (Seizure of Assets) Act 2004 gave it new powers to target high-level organised crime.

Assets are sold through public and Internet auctions, with the proceeds returned to the State and victims of crime.

Source: Department of Premier and Cabinet



## Back on the soapbox...

As I write this, I have just arrived home from attending a very enjoyable civic function hosted by the Wyndham City Council to honour and thank local Justices of the Peace. A fine evening was had by all, and speeches from the Mayor, Cr Shane Bourke JP and Wyndham branch chairman, Trish Vejby JP, confirmed the accepted view that JP's have the capacity to do a tremendous amount of good work in their local communities.

For me though, some of the most interesting remarks came from a senior sergeant from the Werribee police station. The senior sergeant observed that, whilst all Wyndham police appreciated the huge time saving afforded by the station's document signing centre (which signed 14,000+ documents last year), officers (and in particular the "younger Connies") also:

- appreciated the opportunity to work with "clever and articulate volunteers" such as JP's;
- felt good about working with JP's who they saw as community leaders from all sections of their local community; and
- felt reassured by the presence of JP's as community members.

The senior sergeant concluded by reflecting that the JP's role is quiet and subtle, but that all officers

recognised the role and greatly appreciated the volunteer commitment.

These are aspects to the document signing centre which I had never contemplated and give insight into 'behind the police counter' perceptions of JP's and the document signing centres. Absolutely, JP's working at these centres provide an important community service and relieve sworn officers from thousands of hours of clerical work – but they are also perceived on a much wider level, as respected community members, leading by example, and serving their communities at their local police station.

It goes without saying that the many document signing centres across the state provide a tremendous community service and are an ideal opportunity for honorary justices to volunteer their time and skills in a structured and meaningful way. Many rosters have vacancies and are seeking new members. So if you're not on a roster, why not give it a go? You'll find it a rewarding and generally enjoyable service.

I'll get off my soap box now...  
Cheers,  
Chris Reside