



SUPREME COURT
OF QUEENSLAND

Central Queensland Law Association Conference
Yeppoon
Toast to the Law
Saturday 12 October 2013, 7pm

**The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice**

Your Honours, ladies and gentlemen,

Over, I think 15 successive years, Kaye and I have been privileged to join you at this annual conference. I imagine the majority of those present tonight would not have been with us for, indeed, most of those 15 years.

Our being here signifies not a wish to escape a dreariness about the metropolis, but our determination to support the profession State-wide, and to acknowledge the significance of the regional profession.

Ladies and gentlemen of Central Queensland, I have said on many occasions that your level of collegiality is comparatively very strong, and that is very much in the public interest. It is fostered in no small degree by the Central Judge Justice McMeekin, and I am sure in more recent times by His Honour Judge Smith, and as always, by the Magistrates.

I am asked to deliver a toast to “the Law”. I suggest that in this regional context, “the Law” is characterized by an immediacy it may sometimes lack in the capital: relationships here are better known, the effects of offending conduct – civil and criminal – are more keenly felt throughout the somewhat more confined community, the resolutions effected by the Capricornian lawyers are probably more greatly appreciated, and the necessary adjudications, by the Central Queensland Judges and Magistrates, are certainly more broadly publicized.



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When appointed as Chief Justice in 1998, I vowed actively to uphold the regions. Partly as a broad Queenslander, rather than as a creature always of Brisbane, that has been very important to me, and to Kaye who likewise spent her youth in many centres. As to whether we have succeeded, the litmus test is administered by you.

I acknowledge and repeat, as I have said so many times, that you epitomize the very best qualities of legal practice: public service, professional independence, personal expertise...and here in Central Queensland, very good interpersonal supportive relations.

Kaye and I congratulate you. We find you inspiring. We are honoured that you should have welcomed us back over so many years. We hope to continue to serve you for the next five years – a period, from our present aspect, rather sadly too short!

But what I say tonight is in the end not about us but about you: the professional life you enjoy; the courts you respect; the public interest you advance.

Ladies and gentlemen, “the Law”.