

Memorabilia

Judge Wheelahan

Overwhelmed by news of his Honour's appointment and cut by the allegation of plagiarism in his speech, Roderick Pitt Meagher Q.C. burst into prose to celebrate the occasion.

If one asks a citizen of Armidale who are the most famous lawyers associated with the town he will reply at once Mr Justice Kitto (who has long lived there and been Chancellor of its University) and his Honour Judge Dennis Anthony Wheelahan (who was born there 53 years ago, but has never lived, or been game to practise there).

His Honour was in due course banished from the Northern Tablelands to Sydney to be educated (if that is the word) at Cranbrook, where his colleagues found him a trifle precious. This was followed by an LL.B course at Sydney University.

On arrival at the Bar, he read with D.F. Rofe, who became a close friend and idol.

At the Bar he had an enormous practice in the grubbier aspects of common law: motor car cases, industrial accidents, insurance company claims managers *et tout cela*. He particularly enjoyed displaying his talents in these fields in dark places where he went unobserved: Goulburn, for example.

On his rare visits to Sydney, he initially practised from Chambers on the wrong end of the distinguished 8th Floor, where he played bongo-drum music and was tansured by visiting barbers.

He there became acquainted with Jim Baldock, another friend and idol.

He leaped into public prominence by spending some years on the Bar Council, most of them as its Honorary Secretary. He survived not only the pleasant years, but also a stint under the choleric McHugh and another under the glacial A.M. Gleeson. He narrowly escaped being fed to the fish.

His Honour's knowledge of the law was intuitive and vocal rather than learned and subtle. He was an excellent licensee of the Bar's club premises. He was always flamboyant. He favoured clothes like velvet suits (a la Oscar Wilde), yellow waistcoats, duck trousers, coats in bold checks and patent leather shoes. The whole ensemble was always surmounted by a rose. He gave the impression of trying to be so conspicuous that he could at all times be spotted by overhead aircraft. He will be a liberated County Court version of Lord Denning.

His greatest contribution to the Bar was to organise, last year, a large Ball at Sydney University. One thousand elegant judges, barristers and their glamorous wives dined from lavish food and drank splendid wines in a flower-bedecked marquee, to the accompaniment of never-ending dance music. No felt needs were satisfied; no public purpose was served; the proceeds were not donated to charity. People simply revelled in the fun and elegance.

His Honour was an accomplished sportsman, excelling at cricket, football, hockey, tennis and ping-pong. He boasts of playing better golf than Mr Justice McInerney.

As befits someone who is both a *bon vivant* and a *bon viveur*, he is one of Sydney's leading restaurateurs, one source of his considerable wealth.

He married, above his station, a rich and beautiful heiress, Margaret McDonald. □

Fifty — Not Out

Clive Barker (Dick) Dillon celebrated his 50th year as a Barrister to the New South Wales Bar this year. Members of the Third Floor celebrated his achievement with a dinner in his honour at Tattersall's Club on Friday 29th May 1987.

Many notable guests were in attendance including The Chief Justice Sir Laurence Street, Mr. Justice Slattery, Sir William Prentice, Mr. Justice Perrignon and Alec Shand Q.C. who was representing the N.S.W. Bar Association.

Dick was educated at North Sydney Boys High School, Sydney Grammar School and Sydney University. He served his articles with Faithfull Maddock and Baldock and became associate to Owen J. and Milner Stephen J. Dick was admitted to the Bar on 28th May 1937. He commenced practice in Oxford Chambers, having read with Les Herron.

Dick was commissioned in the R.A.N.R. in 1936 and mobilized in October 1939. He volunteered for service with Britain's Royal Navy and left for war early in 1940. He started his naval career on H.M. Trawler Alouette as a First Lieutenant in the Atlantic and North Sea and in the occupation of the Faero Islands. Subsequently aboard various larger ships he served with the Mediterranean Fleet (where his destroyer Napier was badly bombed during the evacuation of Crete), on escort duties in the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea in the Eastern Fleet (including the 1942 Easter raid on Ceylon) and on the convoys to Murmansk.

Dick holds Volunteer Reserve Decoration with 2 clasps all campaign stars and clasps (except air crew Europe and 8th Army clasp) all medals including the Greek Medal for Crete and the Russian (Forty years of victory in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945) medal which was awarded to Dick in Canberra on Friday the 8th May 1987 by the Soviet Ambassador, Mr. Eugeny Samoteikin.

On his return Dick recommenced practice at the Bar and still practices on the 3rd Floor Wentworth Chambers.

Incidentally, in all his war stunts Dick did not suffer so much as a scratch as a result of any action and he was only scared once — "from 1939 to 1945". □



Chief Justice Sir Laurence Street, Dick Dillon and Alec Shand Q.C. presenting Dick with 2 books of the Royal Australian Navy history.