

Editor's note

As editor of *Bar News* over the past five years, perennial questions for me have included: What is the role of *Bar News*? What types of articles should be published? How can the magazine best engage with members and obtain contributions from them?

There has been no easy or simple answer to these questions. My broad aim has been to try to present material of interest and relevance to members across a broad spectrum, from recent developments in the law and their practical implications for barristers; the activities of the New South Wales Bar Association and its interaction with members, both professional and social; addresses or speeches by prominent members or judges; through to sport or humour. Sometimes the balance may not have included enough at the lighter end, but then again distinguished subjects like Bullfry QC develop new tricks slowly.

The Bar News Editorial Committee has gradually expanded over the past five years. One of the aims has been to include progressively members on the committee from as many areas of the Bar as possible. At present we have representatives who specialise in commissions of enquiry, equity/commercial, personal injuries, criminal, industrial and in family law. To be a committee member one has to commit to either writing or sourcing some material of interest for each issue. As the spread of the committee becomes broader, so hopefully there is a better means to extend the subject matter of the magazine across more areas of the Bar.

We are pleased to include in this issue the first in a series of occasional guest columns by Attorney General Bob Debus. We are also fortunate to have once more a perspective on northern events (this time Indonesia) coming from Colin McDonald QC of the Darwin Bar.

Two particular projects which the editorial committee is working on which should come to fruition in the issue following the present are as follows. First, an analysis and discussion of the impact which changes in personal injury law are having upon the Bar. It is planned to put out a survey to members to assist in this task. Second, there will be a report on progress made in discussions between the Bar Association and the protective commissioner on the contentious issue of changes in the fee structure imposed by the protective commissioner.

The invaluable centrepiece of the magazine over the last five years has been Chris Winslow, the Bar Association's public affairs officer. It has been his long term goal to see *Bar News* take its place alongside the *Medical Journal of Australia* and other journals of the professional associations; not only as a source of thoughtful analysis of the law, but as a 'window on the Bar' for solicitors, politicians, the media and informed members of the public.

One difficulty, however, remains in obtaining sufficient feedback from members on what is published in *Bar News* and, indeed, sufficient unsolicited contributions from members on topics of interest to them. The magazine does come at a cost to members: about \$25,000 in external cost per issue. We would like to see the breadth of views of members represented as well as possible. Members are urged to write, or e-mail the editor, with any contributions, or with criticisms or comments on the content of the previous issue.

My term as editor has now come to an end. President Ian Harrison SC has appointed Andrew Bell as the new editor. I wish him well.

Justin Gleeson SC



Quest on William offers the closest accommodation to the Melbourne Legal Precinct.

Enjoy 4 1/2 star fully equipped serviced apartments starting at **\$145** per night.

Quest on William
172 William Street
Melbourne
Ph: 03 9605 2222

questonwilliamenquiries.com.au