



The 1998 **APLA** National Conference

Eva Scheerlinck, APLA Media Officer, Melbourne

The 1998 APLA National Conference at Hamilton Island in October was a huge success. 312 delegates attended with 150 accompanying persons and over 90 children, a record number for the National Conference. There was a relaxed family atmosphere during the four sunny days at Hamilton Island and a good time was had by all.

The Honourable Justice Michael Kirby of the High Court of Australia inspired members with a broad-ranging key-

note speech. Other honoured guests included her Honour Judge Linda Ashford of the NSW Compensation Court, Nick Xenophon MP from the Legislative Council of the SA Parliament and the NSW Attorney General Jeff Shaw QC MP.

Our international guests included Richard Middleton, President-elect of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, Colin Ettinger, a Councillor of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers in the UK and John Pickering also from the UK.

APLA launched two new Special Interest Groups at the conference in Commercial Litigation and Employment & Discrimination Litigation. These groups created a lot of interest and anyone still wanting to

be a part of those SIGs should contact Jane Staley in the National Secretariat. The members of established Special Interest Groups were also able to recruit new talent to help fight their respective causes.

Two members of the press made it to the remote Hamilton Island location to report on what the experts had to say. Of special interest to the media was tobacco related litigation, school place injury litigation, APLA's investigation into legal fees insurance and the words of wisdom of Justice Michael Kirby.

The Conference dinner on the Saturday evening was a great success with many APLA members dancing the night away until 3 am. Other highlights of the Conference included a spe-



cial birthday wish from Justice Kirby to Cathy Henry, NSW Branch President of APLA. The Whitehaven Beach cruise enabled hard-working delegates to soak up some sun and enjoy the magnificence of our Great Barrier Reef.

Special thanks goes to the Conference organisers and Committee for all their hard work over countless months to put this event together. Particular thanks goes to the Conference Chair, Ron Pearce who guided the development of the program over the months leading up to the event. The Conference organising company, Yarran and Baxter, also did an outstanding job in coordinating the four-day Conference and allowing all those who attended to make the most of their tropical island getaway.

For those APLA members who were unable to attend this year's conference we urge you to set aside time in your diary for the 1999 National Conference in Sydney, October 21 -24. Join your colleagues and other professionals and their families for a fun time of meeting new friends, getting together with old ones and, most importantly, sharing knowledge of plaintiff law practice in Australia.

[1] Richard Middleton presents APLA President Peter Carter with a friendship gift from ATLA [2] Peter Carter addresses delegates [3] L - R. Martin & Wynke Bell (NSW), Mark Pichhaver (SA), Eva Scheerlink (APLA National Media Officer) [4] L - R: Dylan Mckimmie and Richard Carew (Qld) with APLA National Policy Manager, Simon McGregor [5] Pamela Smith from LBC presents delegates with prizes [6] The Hon Jeff Shaw (left) and The Hon. Justice Michael Kirby (right) with APLA Tort Essay Competition winner, David Topp [7] Civil Justice Award recipient Rob Davis with Peter Semmler (background) [8] The Hon. Justice Michael Kirby [9] L- R NSW Committee members Brian Donovan QC, Cathy Henry and John Watts enjoying the Gala dinner with Susan Watts (standing) [10] Dancing the night away at the Gala Dinner



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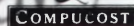
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