



POWER AND HART FAMILIES EXHIBITION
Friday, 27 August 2004, 5:30pm
Banco Court

Chief Justice's introduction of guest speaker

Your Honours, ladies and gentlemen, and especially our guest speaker, Sir Noel, and Lady Power ...

I welcome you all to the Banco Court.

We are very pleased to have such a large representation from both the Power and Hart families here with us this evening. That so many could be here to join in the opening of this exhibition, the second in the Prominent Legal Families series, is a tribute to the contributions made to Queensland's legal heritage by these two families – Power and Hart.

We are also fortunate, this evening, to play host to two far-travelled and distinguished guests, our friends from Austin, Texas – Professor Roy Mersky and his wife Rosemary, here as guests of our own Supreme Court Library. Professor Mersky, whom some of you may have already met, is Director of Research at the Tarlton Law Library, and heads the Jamail Center for Legal Research at the University of Texas. As a pioneer in law librarianship, his career has been long and distinguished, and we are honoured to have the Professor and Rosemary here with us this evening.



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Though not far-travelled, we are also joined by Mr Warren Oxnam, Project Manager of the National Trust of Queensland, from whom we will be hearing later.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge and accept two recent important donations to the Library. I believe Mr Archie Douglas is present. We are greatly indebted to him for depositing an original serving tray from the QGSY *Lucinda*, which as you know holds a special place in both Queensland's and Australia's legal history. The serving tray was originally in the possession of Mr William Archibald Douglas, who worked as an articled clerk at the Brisbane firm of Flower and Hart at the end of the 19th century – certainly fitting to acknowledge, with so many Hart family members present. The tray is a treasured addition to our other *Lucinda* memorabilia, presented alongside the recreation of the Upper Deck Gentlemen's Smoking Room at the far end of the public corridor.

Unfortunately we are not joined now by our other recent donor, Brigadier Thomas Parslow. An old black and white photograph taken in 1924 was the inspiration for Brigadier Parslow's painting of the old Supreme Court building, which is yet another interesting reminder of our legal heritage. Brigadier Parslow himself, as former Crown Solicitor and Solicitor-General, has a strong association with the Court, and his kind donation of this painting provides a valuable addition to our growing collection of legal memorabilia and artwork.

Moving now to our main commitment this evening. I again mention how pleasing it is to see such extraordinary attendance at this, the second exhibition in the Prominent Legal Families series. Many of you will know that this Power and Hart exhibition follows the highly successful exhibition entitled: "Shaping Queensland: the Douglas, Lilley and Macrossan families and their contribution to law, politics



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and society". That exhibition was opened by Mr Cedric Hampson QC in February last year.

Tonight it is more than fitting that this exhibition is opened by a distinguished member of the Power family; and especially someone with experience of China, on this day which many claim as the anniversary of the birth of Confucius. Sir Noel's judicial career in Hong Kong spanned some 34 years, commencing as Magistrate in 1965 and concluding as Acting Chief Justice of the High Court in 1997. In his role as Acting Chief Justice, Sir Noel experienced the tumultuous phase of Hong Kong's history before the transfer of power from Britain to China. Sir Noel continues to sit on the Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong as a non-permanent judge, and has also been appointed as a Commissioner on the Brunei Court of Appeal.

Sir Noel's extensive service in Hong Kong was not limited to judicial undertakings. Other appointments included Chairman of the Board of Inquiry into the Future of Radio and Television in Hong Kong in 1987; Chairman of the Educational Board of Hong Kong Law Reports from 1994-1997; and Chairman of the University of Hong Kong Investigation Panel, 2000.

Recognition of his service was forthcoming in 1999, when he was knighted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, alongside, as a matter of merely subsidiary interest, Julie Andrews and Elizabeth Taylor. You may care later to take particular note of the ceremonial booklet bearing Julie Andrews' autograph.

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to hear this evening from a person who is not only a representative of the Power family, but whose outstanding judicial career has been equalled by his service to the Hong Kong community.



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Three and a half years ago in this courtroom, Sir Noel interestingly addressed us on the topic of “Hong Kong – The Phoenix, Law and Life to the Handover and Beyond”. Tonight, he is to bring us the epic stories of his own and the Hart families.

Ladies and gentlemen, would you please welcome Sir Noel Power...

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I now invite the Director-General of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Ms Rachel Hunter, to express thanks to our guest speaker.

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It is now my pleasure to invite Mr Warren Oxnam of the National Trust to introduce you to a project of the Trust which I know will interest you, and which has particular relevance to the issues underlying this series of exhibitions. Mr Oxnam...

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That concludes this evening's presentation, save for my complimenting the Supreme Court Librarian and his staff for the fascinating exhibition mounted outside. May we now meet there for refreshments?