

Transcript of Proceedings

MAGISTRATES COURT

JUDGE IRWIN SC
MR DAVID GLASGOW, Magistrate
MR LAURIE VERRA, Magistrate
MR GRAHAM HILLAN, Magistrate
MR GRAEME TATNELL, Magistrate
MR BRIAN SMITH, Magistrate
MS STEPHANIE TONKIN, Magistrate

FAREWELL TO MR GRAEME TATNELL, REGIONAL COORDINATING
MAGISTRATE AT TOWNSVILLE

TOWNSVILLE

..DATE 13/10/2004

WARNING: The publication of information or details likely to lead to the identification of persons in some proceedings is a criminal offence. This is so particularly in relation to the identification of children who are involved in criminal proceedings or proceedings for their protection under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, and complainants in criminal sexual offences, but is not limited to those categories. You may wish to seek legal advice before giving others access to the details of any person named in these proceedings.

JUDGE IRWIN: Good morning and welcome. As you all know we are meeting here today to recognise Graeme, or should I say Rocky, Rocky Tatnell's contribution to the Townsville Magistrates Court and to the surrounding Magistrates Courts in North Queensland.

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Today's ceremony is an opportunity for us all to show our appreciation to Rocky for his contribution and to wish him the best for his future in his transfer to the Magistrates Court at Hervey Bay.

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It is with great pleasure that I welcome to this ceremony Rocky's wife, Denise, and also his son, Joshua, and his grand-daughter, Ashley.

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I would like to particularly thank his Honour Justice Cullinane for making the Supreme Court available for this ceremony. It gives a rare opportunity for us to sit as a Bench of Magistrates in Townsville. And I am sure that this will be the first of many ceremonial occasions of this nature.

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I would also like to welcome his Honour Judge Wall QC. Judge Pack is sitting elsewhere today; he is in Brisbane and he sends his apologies. I also welcome his Honour Judge O'Brien who is sitting in Townsville this week.

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The Attorney-General is out of the State at the present time and, like the Director-General of the Department of Justice,

he has asked me to extend his apologies for being unable to be with us today.

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I am pleased to see one of the retired members of our Bench, Magistrate Ian Fisher, present with us. It is good to see that Ian is healthy again and he remains very much a part of the Magistrates family.

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I also welcome Professor Stephen Gaw, the head of the law school at the James Cook University. And I note at the Bar table this morning Mr Smid, who I understand is representing both the State DPP and the Commonwealth DPP. Mr Davey is in Cairns and he also extends his apologies this morning.

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Also Mr White and Mr Durward SC who are representing the Townsville Bar and the Queensland Bar Association. It is always a pleasure, of course, to welcome Mr Glen Ferguson, the president of the Law Society of Queensland, who always goes out of his way to be present at these ceremonies and to speak on behalf of the solicitors of Queensland.

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Also Ms Catherine Raynor from the Townsville solicitors. And, of course, Sergeant Adam Ainsworth of the Queensland Police Service.

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I welcome all members of the legal profession who are here today and I welcome all of you, our distinguished guests. It is wonderful to see so many people in attendance. The numbers themselves and the cross-section of the community present are

an indication of Rocky's standing within the community, and I am sure that this will be supported by kind words from everyone who speaks this morning.

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In fact, the respect and the affection in which Rocky is held is demonstrated by the strong support for the holding of this farewell ceremony, because ceremonies of this nature are usually reserved for swearing-ins and valedictories.

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Rocky has the respect of his judicial colleagues and the staff within the Magistrates Court because of his friendly and affable nature and the proficiency with which he conducts Court and coordinates the arrangements of the Courts in this region. And that is eloquently demonstrated by some words from his Honour Judge Wall that he has expressly requested that I share with you as part of this occasion.

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His Honour says:

"I have known Mr Tatnell since he was transferred to Townsville. We have since become friends.

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We have an easy going professional relationship. He has a friendly disposition and a keen sense of humour. He is an easy person to know and like. He is approachable and willing to help.

He has been a keen supporter of the monthly Bench and Bar lunches at the North Queensland Club. These facilitate an ongoing friendly relationship between Judges, Magistrates and members of the Bar.

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The local Judges of the District Court and the local Magistrates meet at our respective chambers twice a year where matters of mutual interest are discussed. Mr Tatnell has been an important part of that process.

On a regular basis each year I have discussions with him about the respective District Court and Magistrates Court

calendars for the forthcoming year to avoid clashes in Charters Towers and Hughenden. These discussions have enhanced the harmonious relations which exist in Townsville between both Courts.

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He has also seen me on occasions as a Childrens Court Judge asking if I would agree, as the Juvenile Justice Act allows, to an increase in his sentencing powers in a particular case. He has adopted a professional approach on those occasions.

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I wish him well in his new posting. We will no doubt see each other when I next sit in Maryborough, which is the nearest District Court centre to Hervey Bay."

This week we swore-in a Magistrate in Cairns; someone who would be well-known to many of you, Tom Braes. Tom started in the Magistrates Court service as a clerk when he was 15 years of age. I mention that fact because the same can be said of Rocky. And since that time he has worked his way up through the ranks of depositions clerk, honing his typing skills undoubtedly in that era. And through the various levels of the Magistrates Court service from assistant clerk to Clerk of the Court. And positions such as Officer in Charge, Registrar and area manager before his appointment to Townsville as a Magistrate in the middle of 1996.

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In keeping with the "I've been everywhere, man" lifestyle of Magistrates, as well as working in Brisbane and various suburban Magistrates Courts in Brisbane and in Ipswich, he has also sat in Cairns and in Longreach and in Mackay, and in numerous other locations around the State on a relieving basis.

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Today not only marks Rocky's farewell but it also marks the eighteenth anniversary of his admission to practice as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland. It was only a couple of years after his admission in 1986 that Rocky began performing duties as an Acting Magistrate. That experience obviously stood him in good stead for his appointment to the position of Magistrate.

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In 2000 he was appointed to what was then called the role of Supervising Magistrate in Townsville. That is now the role of Coordinating Magistrate and he is also the regional coordinator for the northern region of the Magistrates Court which extends to Cape York and also to the gulf.

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I would like to personally acknowledge the extra time and effort which I know that Rocky has put into fulfilling the additional responsibilities which come with this role and for which you can never be adequately compensated. But, of course, that is not the reason that you undertake these responsibilities.

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I would like you to know that your advice and experience has been of great assistance to me in the 12 months that I have been a part of this Court.

Rocky has also been involved with numerous projects in the north to enhance the justice system, particularly with supporting the involvement of indigenous groups and

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encouraging the various stakeholders to develop a means of
having an input into Magistrate Court processes and practices.

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Rocky is one of those persons who will walk the extra mile in
the interests of the Magistracy and in a collegiate way, as he
has demonstrated to me on many occasions, he places the
interests of the Magistracy before himself.

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Having said that, I know that with the appointment of David
Glasgow as coordinator and regional coordinator that the north
remains in good hands. And I also note, for those of you who
may not already know, that John Brennan, formerly a Magistrate
of this Court but who has been in Bowen for a number of years,
will be returning to Townsville early in the new year to take
Rocky's place.

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Now, Rocky, in the last week since he knew about this
ceremony, has demonstrated a side to his character I have
never known before. That of shyness.

He threatened to escape to Palm Island and stay there to do
Court work. He even did his best to be part-heard in Charters
Towers yesterday. So, I thank you, Rocky, for being here
today even if I had to issue one of the very rare Magisterial
directions that I give to achieve this.

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I understand that there have been quite a few send-offs for
you in the past couple of weeks. I am sure they are not to
celebrate the fact you are leaving but rather they show an
eagerness to make the most of your remaining time here in

Townsville and they have been intended to wish you well in the future.

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Everyone, in fact, is sad to see you go but appreciates the desire for you to return to preside in a Court which is closer to your parents' residence.

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We all can anticipate how you will be spending your weekends in Hervey Bay. While it might be a little far for your golfing partner to travel each weekend I am sure that on those weekends where you do not have somebody offering to meander around the course with you and continue to corroborate your regular accounts of why you only were one off the trophy, that there will be other hobbies to interest you.

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And in that regard I would like to make an official presentation to you which I would like you to open and reveal to the audience here. You have not seen it yet so do not get too confident.

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Maybe this is something you can do while you are in Hervey Bay.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: This is the good side of life.

JUDGE IRWIN: So, Rocky, on that note, thank you for the work that you have put in here in Townsville. I wish you and Denise and the other members of your family all the best for your new future in Hervey Bay.

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I understand that that golfing partner that I was talking
about before would also like to say a few words before I
invite others in this gathering today to address the Court.
Mr Hillan?

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MAGISTRATE HILLAN: Judge, your Honours, fellow Magistrates, ladies and gentlemen, it does give me great pleasure to say a few words about this fellow, Graeme John Tatnell.

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You may ask who is Graeme John Tatnell. The reason why I mention that is that a lot of people only know him as Rocky Tatnell. Whether he be known as Rocky, or Graeme, he is still the same character that we have all come to know and love.

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Now, on such occasions as this you would expect to hear words and phrases, such things as, "He's a wonderful bloke who has all the character traits such as integrity, trust, held in high esteem, hard working, respect, confident", et cetera, et cetera. Well, I do not believe that it is necessary to speak about those matters because we all know he possesses those qualities already.

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So, I will move on and go further. Now, the emotions that I felt at the time when I first heard the news that Rocky had accepted a transfer to Hervey Bay was both a mixture of elation and regret. Regret because it will be sad to see Rocky leave as he has been a very close friend of mine for a very long time now. A friendship which has developed during the period that we both came up through the ranks in the Magistrates Court service. And, as mentioned, he has been my golfing partner at Rowes Bay Golf Club for the last three and a-half years. I will definitely miss the good times that we have had together; and there has been many.

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Now, moving to the elation side of things. I believe the transfer has come at the right moment for him. Rocky has been a Magistrate at Townsville for approximately eight years or so and has held the position of regional and coordinating Magistrate for the last five years, as mentioned by his Honour, Marshall Irwin - been up here in Townsville too long.

A very stressful position to hold when one accepts that Rocky has been in charge of 13 Magistrates in the northern region. And has attended to the administration and control of the Magistrates Courts at Townsville, Cairns, Mareeba and Mount Isa.

The position of regional and coordinating Magistrate at Townsville is not an easy one, however Rocky, to my mind, has the unique ability to deal with the most difficult situations and come up with sensible and just solutions that work.

He has the uncanny ability to put people at ease; certainly has. I think we will all agree. And I also believe that he has gained the trust of and is held in high regard by his fellow peers, lawyers and many others who have had business with the Courts, together with other members in the community. Just look at the people here, present. It is testimony of that fact.

As coordinator he has a lot of duties and one is that the generally accepted backlog of the Magistrates Courts is three months. Here in Townsville the backlog has been kept to and

under that period, and I believe it is mainly due to Rocky's administration skills and his idea of introducing the summary-mention callover. It has worked very well indeed up here.

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I believe, Rocky, you should regard that as a feather in your cap.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you.

MAGISTRATE HILLAN: As you may well know Rocky's health has not been good of late. This transfer to a one-person centre will be good from a health point of view as it will mean that he will only have to look after his own Court and have less administration work to do.

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And another good thing, I believe, that has come out of the transfer to Hervey Bay is that both Rocky and Denise's parents live close by in the Maryborough region. So, I think that is a good factor that has come into play with the transfer.

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Now, this is the part where I had to cut down some stories because I was told to restrict it to three minutes, so I deleted some stories.

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There is a number of good and not so good stories I could tell about Rocky. Such as the incident involving some face painting and the rock group Kiss. But I do not think it is

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appropriate on such occasion as this to go into that so I will
not. I will just leave it to your imagination.

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I will finish up now by saying that on behalf of all the
Magistrates here in Townsville, Rocky, you will be sorely
missed. And thanks for all the good times and we all wish
both you and Denise the very best in Hervey Bay.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you.

JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Magistrate Hillan. I understand that
there will be a more informal farewell ceremony for Rocky on
Friday evening. Perhaps some of those stories that have been
expurgated today will be told then, so that might be another
incentive for everybody to attend on that occasion.

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I would now like to invite Mr Smid to address the Court on
behalf of the DPPs.

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MR SMID: Thank you. Your Honour, your Honours, your Worship, ladies and gentlemen. Your Worship Mr Tatnell, I have been asked to deliver a speech first of all on behalf of Mr Gary Davey who you know is the assistant director of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions here in Townsville.

I have been asked to read this because unfortunately he is unable to attend. I quote:

"Regrettably I'm unable to attend your farewell. It is indeed fitting that a person with such longstanding connections with Townsville should have the opportunity to be honoured here today.

I myself first met you when I was a clerk in the northern Crown Prosecutors office, as it then was, and you were the Clerk of the Court in Townsville. I found you to be a good administrator and to be committed to your career.

Later, when I renewed my acquaintance with you as a Magistrate, I found that you had retained those qualities and had a subtle sense of humour and a commitment to justice. You demonstrated that you were prepared to give stakeholders in the Court system an opportunity to be heard. And it was through your efforts that a separate callover day was provided for Commonwealth matters.

As a Prosecutor it has always been a pleasure to appear before you. You have always been fair and reasonable and retained control of your Court.

You demonstrated to me on many occasions that you had a unique ability to be able to deal with people at their level. You demonstrated to me that you were a man of compassion and fairness and had an understanding of people's problems and weaknesses.

Your decisions have been reasoned and you have displayed a good and sound understanding of what is often difficult Commonwealth law. Quite often I hear people in the media say that the Courts are too far removed from everyday society. Obviously they do not know you.

On behalf of the Townsville office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions can I wish you and your family well in your move to Hervey Bay and I hope that our paths may cross in the future."

May I add to that some of my own comments and say this: that although I have never appeared in your Court our paths, as you well know, have crossed on many occasions, mainly in an informal setting. I think, therefore, that I am in a position to say a few words here today on behalf of my office and myself. In saying that I am sorry that your Worship is leaving I believe I am not alone, indeed I have yet to meet anyone here in Townsville and beyond who does not regret your departure. You leave behind a solid reputation; adjectives such as fairness, firmness, even-handedness and approachability readily spring to mind.

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It is plain, your Worship, that those connected with the legal world in Townsville and beyond that you have done much to maintain and may I say, in fact, to enhance the reputation of the Magistracy. I hasten to add that your successor is held in similar high regard and we welcome him to his new position.

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I have always enjoyed our conversations whenever we met. They somehow always, I must say, ended in a laugh and somehow the rest of the day seemed brighter for it. Having got to know you just a little bit over time, could I, on this occasion, take the liberty of saying something a little bit more on a personal note.

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What I like about you is not only that you were a very good Magistrate, which of course takes into account serious considerations. No doubt we somehow take that for granted. But, what to me really stands out is that you never took

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yourself too seriously. To have that precious quality
involves balance, insight and a sense of humour, and those
qualities, those very important qualities, you have in
abundance. We all will miss you, we miss you well, we wish
you and the family all the best for the future. Thank you.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you, Mr Smid.

JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Mr Smid. I would now invite Mr White
to address the Court.

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MR WHITE: Your Honour, your Worships, Mr Tatnell, the President of the Bar Association of Queensland, Glen Miller SC, is unable to attend this ceremony this morning and he has asked me to be his deputy and to extend to your Worship both his apology and his congratulations on a distinguished tour of duty as regional coordinating Magistrate in Townsville. I am pleased to be able to do this on behalf of Mr Martin and also take this opportunity to add my own congratulations to your Worship.

I have appeared in your Worship's Court on a number of occasions, always found your Worship to be worldly wise, fair-minded, even-handed and a pleasure to appear before. As regional coordinating Magistrate your Worship has led the way in establishing a closer relationship between the legal profession and the Magistracy, and this has been at all levels of the legal profession, the Bar, solicitors and members of the superior Courts, the District Court and the Supreme Court. And this has been a credit to your Worship and a legacy which I hope will continue after your Worship's departure. I know that the job of regional coordinating Magistrate is not an easy one and requires a great deal of diplomacy.

I have had cause to call upon your Worship in your role as regional coordinating Magistrate for assistance in relation to an inquest in which I was involved, and your Worship was most helpful and also most diplomatic, and I thank you. The Bar is sorry to lose you to Harvey Bay. I am sure, however, that

your career there will be as successful as it has been in
Townsville. May it please the Court.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you.

JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Mr White. Mr Durward, I would invite
you to speak.

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MR DURWARD. Yes. May it please the Court, I arise to speak
on behalf of the members of the North Queensland Bar
Association which, of course, includes the members of the
Townsville Bar.

Your Worship is completing your tour of duty or perhaps
deployment as regional coordinating Magistrate in Townsville,
I understand, tomorrow. Your Worship has presided over a busy
number 1 Court as well as a variety of defended cases across
all of the relevant jurisdictions in the Magistrates Court.
Most of the members of our association have had the pleasant
experience of appearing before your Worship in the Magistrates
Court and the reports that I have received indicate that you
have always been courteous to and considerate of those counsel
who have appeared before you. Your judgments and decisions
have been fair and well-reasoned.

You have, as a matter of professional consensus, been a good
Magistrate in Townsville. Indeed the reports that I receive
go beyond matters judicial and indicate that your Worship has
been a good all round sport. However, as is often said, and
quite sensibly I might add, what goes on tour stays on tour
and so it shall be. The members of the Bar trust your
continued recovery from ill health continues and that you
leave Townsville with our best wishes for your future.

MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you.

JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Mr Durward. I invite Sergeant Ainsworth to address the Court.

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SGT AINSWORTH: Thank you. Your Honours, your Worship, Mr Tatnell. Your Worship, one of my regrets is that I did not get to work with you as the officer in charge of police prosecutions. However, today at least I have the privilege to speak on behalf of the Prosecutors at your farewell ceremony. Your Worship, I know the police Prosecutors want to acknowledge the strong personal and working relationships that you have shared with them during your time serving as a Magistrate here in Townsville.

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Your Worship, in 2003 you were very supportive of and instrumental in the Prosecutors course held here in Townsville, the first of its kind ever held outside of Brisbane. From that course our Court received an additional five Prosecutors, doubling our size almost instantly. Although the Prosecutors who completed that course at times ask themselves why they ever did such a thing, they are very much appreciative of your patience, guidance and advice provided to them during their practical development.

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Your Worship, as a Magistrate you treat all parties who appear before you professionally and fairly. You apply commonsense to your decision-making and always arrive at decisions that are sound and fair. Your knowledge and abilities as a Magistrate are truly respected by the police Prosecutors. I can assure you that your presence and your personality will be

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surely missed around these Courts once you have taken up
duties in Harvey Bay. The police Prosecutors wish you and
your family all the very best in Harvey Bay, we wish you good
health and, of course, plenty of golf.

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Finally at about 2 p.m. each day as you gaze out over the
ocean from your post at Harvey Bay, perhaps whilst taking in a
spot of whale watching, spare a thought for the five or so
police Prosecutors here trudging up for afternoon Court.
Thanks for your friendship and support.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you, Sergeant.

JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Sergeant. And may I now invite Mr
Ferguson on behalf of the Queensland Law Society.

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MR FERGUSON: May it please the Court. In a very real way the Magistrates Court is rather like local Government. It is the branch of the judiciary that is closest to the people and handles matters that impact directly on the lives of the majority of our population that come into contact with the Court system. His Honour, the Chief Magistrate, in a recent interview made the point that Magistrates are not divorced from the community, they are part of it, and as much in touch with community expectations as anybody.

Today we honour a Magistrate who would know more than many how true his Honour's comments are. Magistrate Tatnell has been around Magistrates Courts for longer than most of us have been in the profession. He has been either clerk, acting Magistrate or Magistrate throughout much of the State. Sworn in as a Magistrate in 1996 he was posted here to Townsville and has since been appointed coordinating then regional coordinating Magistrate. He has proactively sought to involve his community with the Court. Under his guidance three important liaison groups have been established; a children's, child safety and stakeholders group.

His Worship, Magistrate Glasgow, who takes over the role of regional coordinating Magistrate, described Magistrate Tatnell to me as a real people-person. Townsville is going to miss him. He clearly has the respect, affection and friendship of the community which is evidenced by the people that are here today. It is a privilege for me to represent the Queensland Law Society here today and the solicitors of Queensland and

all our good wishes go with you as you travel south to Harvey Bay. May it please the Court.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you.

JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you again, Mr Ferguson for those kind words. Ms Raynor, I would ask you to address the Court on behalf of the Townsville solicitors.

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MS RAYNOR: Thank you, Judge. Your Honours, your Worships, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great pleasure to have been asked to address the Court this morning on behalf of the Townsville District Law Association. These days solicitors are taking on a greater advocacy role, however, the Supreme and District Courts have remained, to a great extent, the territory of the Bar. It is the Magistrates Court generally where solicitors gain their Court experience and I am sure that many a practitioner can remember his or her first appearance in the Magistrates Court.

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The Magistrates Court deals with a huge variety of matters. The volume of work and the variety of cases give solicitors, and particularly junior solicitors, the opportunity to hone their advocacy skills. A solicitor I spoke to yesterday said that she had found her appearances in the Magistrates Court to be a great confidence booster for her whole practice. Having to stand up and present a case or present facts in mitigation on a guilty plea and to face questions from the Bench is an invaluable experience for junior, and not so junior, practitioners, and the Magistrates Court is where solicitors gain that experience.

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I have spoken with a number of solicitors and have asked them about their experiences appearing before your Worship and the responses that I received were remarkable in their consistency. Solicitors spoke of your Worship being fair and always taking a consistent approach. They spoke of your commonsense approach to the matters before you. They spoke of

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your Worship's ability to balance community interests against the rehabilitation of the offender when sentencing. Your Worship takes the time to explain the reasons for your decisions to defendants and one solicitor said that he felt that his clients always left the Court with something to think about.

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Your Worship has an enviable reputation of running your Court efficiently, always behaving as a gentleman to the solicitors appearing before you and handing down the right decision, which is not to say it was necessarily the one we were hoping for, but always the right one in the circumstances. Your Worship also has a reputation of leading the Court from the front. As president of the Townsville District Law Association I can personally attest to your Worship's willingness to promote and improve the relationship between the Magistracy and the local solicitors.

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Your Worship attends District Law Association functions, you circulate amongst the solicitors and your willingness to attend functions with the solicitors promotes and develops the relationships between the Court and the solicitors. Your Worship's involvement in and support of the meetings between the Magistrates and stakeholders such as solicitors, police and the legal aid division with other legal entities has also been greatly appreciated.

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Your Worship, on behalf of the Townsville and District Law Association, I offer my best wishes for the future.

MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Thank you, Ms Raynor.

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JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Ms Raynor. And now it is time to
allow his Worship Magistrate Tatnell to have the last word.

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MAGISTRATE TATNELL: Court's adjourned. You will have to put up with me I am afraid because I am quite overwhelmed and somewhat embarrassed about this, this morning, but I have just started to warm to it really when I look around the room and see so many of my friends. I have also had a look at the jury box over here at their Honours and thought what a learned jury that really would be, and it is probably the last time you will ever see them sitting in a jury box I would imagine. So, we got something unique today.

Your Honours, colleagues, guest speakers and, as I indicated, all my friends, I wish firstly to make special acknowledgement of my wife Denise, son Joshua and grand-daughter Ashley. As indicated, my colleagues past and present, and it is really good to see Mr Fisher sitting down in the front row of the foyer next to a very good friend of mine, Dr Bruce Logan. They have both had difficulties over the times that I have known them, but they are alive and well and I class them very good friends of mine. I also should mention, I notice members of the Justice Group are here in attendance and I thank them especially for making the effort to attend.

I thank those individual speakers for their kind words, I somewhat wonder why they have been so kind. I came here to do a job and as far as I am concerned I have done my job, I have achieved what I wanted to achieve, but I did not know that I was doing it in the way all those guest speakers have said.

There is no doubt that the Townsville Magistrates Court is the most efficient multi-Magistrates centre in this State, so you can take that home, your Honour. I do not necessarily take credit for that because that foundation was made many years ago and, as far as I am concerned, started with retired Magistrate John Beck who put certain systems in place, followed by retired Magistrate Rod Ingram who I took over from. And it is those two retired Magistrates that laid the foundation for the processes of the Magistrates Court in Townsville.

What I attempted to do, and what I hope I achieved, was to open the Magistrates Court not only to the community but, more importantly, to the stakeholders so they could have a say in the processes of the Court. With the help of my very good friend David, and I hope someone assists David when I leave as much as David has assisted me, we have achieved that. And, as I said, that achievement makes this the most efficient Court in the State. That could not have occurred without the cooperation of all the stakeholders, and I do not intend to pay special attention to any of those stakeholders except to say that the police prosecutions, solicitors and barristers of this town show cooperation between themselves that I have never seen in any other centre in this State.

That cooperation between the police prosecutions, or the police service, I should say, and the legal fraternity has made it fairly easy to control this Court and particularly to control the diary. I always like to have a shot at my good

friend Graham and his Worship got a couple of things wrong in his speech. He forgot to mention that I also had charge of Innisfail - and its 15 Magistrates, not 13.

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I have a number of regrets about leaving Townsville and you may have heard me talking to Dave Harrison on 4TO one month ago when I indicated to him that it was likely that I will have some tears as I leave the southern gateway. But, there are times when decisions cannot be made on what you think of your work situation, but that they have to be made on personal reasons, and it is for that reason we leave Townsville and go to Harvey Bay.

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I have thoroughly enjoyed the eight and a-half years that I have been in this centre and, finally, all I wish to say is each and every one of you here has played a part in the success I have achieved and I thank you very much for that.

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I will finally finish by saying, and I think I have got to say it, there is morning tea across on the Magistrates Court side of the building and you are all most welcome to join all of us for that morning tea. I thank you very much.

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JUDGE IRWIN: Thank you, Rocky. Yes. I would certainly like to endorse those last remarks in particular about morning tea. The Magistrates Courts are going to start a little later this morning at about 10.30, so for those of you that do not have 10 o'clock Court appointments or other urgent commitments I would hope that you join us. I would like to thank Rocky for setting the record straight on some matters, as usual he has given me something to think about. I will be taking your comments back to all your brother and sister Magistrates.

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It is wonderful to see such support and such a cross-section of the community here today and, as Rocky said, to see the members of the Community Justice Group. It is particularly pleasing to see you. So, thank you for joining us on this special occasion and I look forward to catching up with some of you more informally over morning tea.

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