



# The College of Law Queensland: opening of new offices at Wesley House Monday 10 May 2010, 5:30pm

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## **The Hon Paul de Jersey AC Chief Justice**

President of the Board Glenn Ferguson, Director Ann-Maree David, President of the Queensland Law Society Peter Eardley, Your Honours, ladies and gentlemen,

The Judges and I are very pleased to be with you here this evening on this celebratory occasion.

The cause for celebration is not limited to the College's move from Law Society House to this excellent new accommodation. It extends to an acknowledgement of the highly regarded work accomplished by the College in Queensland over the last seven years.

The College is now a leading provider of practical legal training in Queensland. Current enrolments, I understand, exceed 400. A feature particularly beneficial in this vast State is the on-line distance delivery facility.

And the offerings extend beyond qualifying novice practitioners for admission and practising certificates. It also concerns continuing professional development, through graduate diploma courses, both in particular areas of law – commercial law and family law for example, under the Master of Applied Law program, and in relation to legal practice, through the Graduate Diploma of In-House Legal Practice Course.

I have heard only commendatory observations of the College, which to us Judges is reassuring. What a contrast there is between the truly professionally based programs available today, and the rather hit and miss approach of three or four decades ago, which in many cases depended upon a process of osmosis: in my own case for example, through only a 12 months associateship prior to hanging up my shingle as a barrister, and



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with other Judges, being articulated to successful and very busy partners with limited time to offer comprehensive guidance.

The professionalism of the work accomplished at the College leaves one with a real sense of assurance that young graduates and practitioners are being prepared for the rigours of practice with optimal attention to contemporary conditions and expectations.

This is the occasion to acknowledge the benefit the College has undoubtedly drawn from its close association with the Queensland Law Society, which is well-equipped to identify those contemporary conditions and to gauge those contemporary expectations. It is also the occasion to thank the Society's Board members for their contribution to the effectiveness of the College: Glenn Ferguson, Peter Eardley and Noela L'Estrange.

Well the College of Law Queensland has come to Wesley House. That is not to imply its taking on a specifically evangelical role, although its marketing arm might be so inclined.

What intrigue John Wesley would sense to know of this new resident of the building which now bears his name: a college to equip legal practitioners for admission to potentially lucrative legal practices. Wikipedia reports that when John Wesley died in 1791, his net worth was about 30 current US dollars. He was not interested in material success, but social justice. He travelled the country by horseback, as indeed did judicial officers in pioneering Queensland, although their quest was not social justice but justice according to law.

However Wesley would I suspect have applauded aspects of contemporary legal practice. He would have applauded the current pro bono thrust in the profession. But also consistent with his philosophy is any endeavour to ensure that a profession discharges its public mission with maximum effectiveness, and to that end, the College is playing a very important part of which I am sure he would approve.



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Your Honours, ladies and gentlemen, I am very pleased now formally to launch the College of Law Queensland in these new premises, and to wish the College well with its continuing work to ensure appropriately equipped burgeoning practitioners, and appropriately trained established practitioners.