



City of Sydney Law Society



A Regional Society of the Law Society of NSW

2007 under Review

President's Message

City of Sydney Law Society

2007 under Review

The year 2007 was very successful for the City of Sydney Law Society. We have served our members. We have again been responsive to our members. We have gained new members virtually every month. We have maintained our quality "sunset" Spot Talks holding 23 through the year and 7 Small Firm Practice Forums. Both Spot Talks and Forums are excellent skill learning meetings. The talks have varied, ranging from, for example, the National Stock Exchange, Negligence, Costs, "A Coroner Recalls", to Expert Evidence, New Technology, Update on Strata Plan Purchases and Legal Marketing etc.

Opportunities for fraternisation have also occurred in our Annual Law Week Breakfast, our Cocktail Celebration and CSLS Special City Dinner. Maintaining our low cost functions and incorporating the cost of Spot Talks into our very reasonable membership fee of \$ 80.00 per annum (with discounts for newly admitted solicitors) has been appreciated.

Our annual Law Week Breakfast reviewed "Mental Health - Significant Changes" with guest speakers, Professor Ian Hickie A.M. from Sydney University and the Hon. Justice Peter Johnson of the Supreme Court. The Hon. Greg James QC, President of the Mental Health Review Tribunal was Chairman. An excellent and topical function!

The major event was our Annual CBD Cocktail Celebration on 12 October, 2007 with over 150 judges, magistrates, barristers and solicitors attending. We are again grateful to the Chief Judge of the District Court, the Hon. Justice Reg Blanch, the Chief Magistrate, Hon. Graeme Henson, the Deputy Chief Magistrate, the Hon. Helen Syme, and the Attorney General's Department for their full support. A function much enjoyed!

The CSLS Special City Dinner held after this year's AGM at the S.S. South Steyne Floating Restaurant was much enjoyed, with our guest speaker, the Hon. Justice Greg James QC and special visitor, Garry McGrath of the NSW Bar Association.

Our major sponsor, Corporate Express, company incorporation and secretarial services, have been generous and supportive. They deserve the full support of our members.

Law Fund has also provided sponsorship funding and an excellent opportunity for our members to offer direct funding benefits to their clients. A \$ 300.00 grant from Law Week was appreciated.

Even with sponsorship, it was still necessary to introduce certain cost-cutting measures. We have made a surplus on the year's operations of \$ 12,252.57.

The website is now up and functioning well under Web Editor, Ken Harkness. Improvements to the design are being considered and suggestions are welcomed. A Website Register of members and their specialties is being established and an affordable "mini-website" hosting service for members is being implemented.

Our Newsletter was produced on 9 occasions last year. It is regular and readable.

I again attended all 5 Regional Law Society Presidents Meetings held at the NSW Law Society. Whilst the relationship with the Law Society has improved, it is disappointing that it has not updated its Constitution on the operations and status of Regional Societies. Their value is, I believe, not fully recognised. They offer considerable local benefits for the Law Society and for lawyers which the Law Society of NSW alone can never achieve. They should have input into significant policy issues and submissions of the Law Society and it should post on its website, Minutes of (non-regulatory) decisions of the Law Society Council.

An example of our contribution is the campaign by the CSLS for AUSTLII sparked by a motion at a Regional Law Society meeting proposing \$ 50,000.00 be given to AUSTLII. The Law Society paid \$ 25,000.00, with a further \$ 25,000.00 being subject to AUSTLII submitting a business plan. AUSTLII is co-operating with the Law Society on this. Another example was the Criminal Infringement Notice policy proposed by the NSW Government which Regional Societies opposed and so recommended to the Law Society. The CSLS also opposed withdrawal of briefs by the police in certain summary matters. The police erosion of individual rights is a worry. Your Society was also active in the Tort Law Reform Campaign, "A Fair Go for Injured People", with me chairing a reception at Parliament House in support of the Campaign.

Our Committee held its own Constitutional Review and its proposals were largely accepted, including the appointment of honorary life members after 30 years meritorious service in legal practice.

Last year was a very active year serving the lawyers of the City of Sydney. Join us - your local society. Support small firms for a better practice.

ANTHONY RESTUCCIA
CSLS President

Support our Sponsor

CORPORATE EXPRESS for incorporating companies

special discounts for members

www.corporateexpress.com.au

City of Sydney Law Society Inc

Email: info@sydneycitylawyers.com.au

Postal Address: GPO Box 1907 Sydney 2001
Telephone: (02) 9266 0012 Fax (02) 9266 0062

www.sydneycitylawyers.com.au