

I am pleased to report to Fellows on several developments.

Website

The Academy's website has been substantially updated: see www.academyoflaw.org.au. Although it could be improved further, a matter on which further work will take place, I hope Fellows will agree that the website is at least much more up to date now than it has been for some time. Thanks are due to Sarah Hulls for her work on the website.

Fellows are reminded of the invitation to allow the Academy to publish or re-publish on the website appropriate articles and papers that they have written. For the time being, they should be sent to me (kevlindgren@gmail.com) as Chair of the Website and Publications Committee---a role which I will in due course relinquish in favour of someone else.

No doubt we all write at different levels and on different subjects according to our audience or readership. Neither I nor the other members of the Website and Publications Committee would wish to assume the role of censor but it can be said that the articles and papers sought are those that are consistent with the broad scholarly objects of the Academy as distinct from more specialist and technical works, worthy though they can also be. Works suitable for publication or re-publication on the Website might, for **example**, fall within the general areas of legal education, constitutional law, legal history, the legal system, the rule of law,

jurisprudence, and relationships between legal education, legal practice and legal adjudication. Of course, this list is not exhaustive. If you would like to discuss this with me please feel free to give me a call on (02) 9422 2085 or 0414 914 827.

Projects for 2012

The Projects Committee has been very busy under the chairmanship of Ralph Simmonds. Would Fellows note in their diaries the following Academy events that will take place this year:

Thursday 19 April 2012 (5.00 pm to 6.00pm, followed by refreshments in the Supreme Court Library from 6.15 pm to 7.00 pm): AAL Symposium on the Victorian Charter of Rights in the Banco Court of the Supreme Court of Victoria. John Digby QC of the Victorian Bar has had a major role in organising this event

Tuesday 3 July 2012 at 5.00 pm: Joint Academy of Law/ Australasian Law Teachers Association seminar to be held at The University of Sydney in conjunction with the annual meeting of ALTA. A joint AAL/ALTA Committee comprising Peter Rose, Laurie Glanfield and Michael Chesterman is planning the detail of this event.

Tuesday 30 or Wednesday 31 October 2012 (precise date to be confirmed): Inaugural Patron's Address to be given by The Hon Robert French AC, Chief Justice of Australia in Court No 1 (the Ceremonial Court) , Federal Court of Australia, Level 21, Law Courts Building, Queen's Square, Sydney.

This last event calls for special mention. The Projects Committee thought it would be a good idea to have an annual address associated with and supported by the Academy's Patron. The address would not necessarily be given by the Patron but he or she would support it by, for example, contributing to the planning of it. Chief Justice Bob French thought the idea a good one and has agreed to give the inaugural address. The Projects Committee and the Board of Directors are delighted that he has agreed to do so.

The above paragraphs are in the nature of a preliminary notice of the events to which they relate. More detailed and formal notice will issue in due course. The Projects Committee has other events in the pipeline but as they do not yet have dates assigned to them, further and better particulars will be provided in the next Newsletter.

Membership

The Membership Committee has the next round of invitations to become Fellows in hand. The "pairs" system is up and running and some of the pairs have already sent in their recommendations. Other pairs are reminded that the deadline for their nominations is 24 February 2012.

At its meeting on 21 February 2012 the Board of Directors adopted a policy of enlarging the source of nominations for membership of the Academy. Until now all nominations have been made by the designated pairs of which there are seventeen. While this arrangement seems to have worked well enough, the Directors recognise that there may be persons suited to be admitted as Fellows who are not known to any of the pairs. Accordingly, the Directors resolved that all Fellows should be allowed and invited to nominate persons for admission to membership.

Members of the Academy are, according to cl 6.3(a) of the Academy's Constitution, "persons of exceptional distinction in the discipline of law who are demonstrably committed to the objects of the Academy". Clause 4 of the Constitution sets out the Academy's objects. The most relevant ones for present purposes are those that speak of "individuals of exceptional distinction from all parts of the legal community, including academia, the practising profession (including private and public sector lawyers) and the judiciary" and the promotion of "the highest standards of legal scholarship, legal research, legal education, legal practice and the administration of justice".

The Board decided that a Fellow wishing to nominate a person for admission to membership of the Academy as a Fellow should forward the nomination to the AAL Secretariat (www.academyoflaw.org.au) with a short statement indicating why it is thought that the nominee satisfies the criterion "persons of exceptional distinction in the discipline of law who are demonstrably committed to the objects of the Academy" (this is the procedure followed by the pairs at present) The nominator should not approach the nominee at this stage. The nomination of a Fellow will follow the same procedure as the pairs' nominations and will therefore be forwarded to the Membership Committee for advice to the Board. The Membership Committee may consult one of the pairs in relation to the nomination before making its recommendation to the Board.

Fellows are encouraged to nominate appropriate persons for membership as Fellows of the Academy.

On another matter, the AAL Secretariat is in the process of preparing a list of all members of the Academy, divided into

States and Territories of residence, which will be distributed to all Fellows. This is a precursor to possible informal meetings of locally resident Fellows, of which more anon.

General

I wrote on behalf of the Academy congratulating The Hon Nicola Roxon MP on her appointment as Attorney-General of the Commonwealth and expressing the desire in due course for myself and one or two other officers of the Academy to meet with her when convenient to acquaint her with the nature and role of the Academy.

I also wrote on behalf of the Academy to Fellow, The Hon Michael Lavarch AO, congratulating him on his appointment as an Officer in the Order of Australia as announced on Australia Day, 26 January 2012



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