

BUCK\$TOP: President's report

The 1991 Legal Year had a sad beginning with the tragic death of Alicia Johnson and the resignation of Justice Rice from the Supreme Court. The official opening of the legal year was wet.

Tony Hartnell, the Chairman of the Australian Securities Commission, spoke at the luncheon which followed a unique service in the Greek Orthodox Church.

It was disappointing that only 30 per cent of his audience was lawyers; the accountants were substantially in the majority.

New-look publication

Balance will be published monthly and articles from members are encouraged.

We anticipate publishing every month with the exception of January.

The copy deadline for each issue is the second Friday of the month.

The Society welcomes Jim Campbell, the Executive Officer (Managerial). Robyn Smith has recently been appointed Secretary of the Public Purposes Trust and editor of *Balance*.

Council has a commitment to the provision of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) to its members.

Lawyers, unlike accountants, appear less committed to updating their knowledge.

The Attorney-General has expressed his desire for lawyers to continually upgrade their knowledge and to maintain a keen interest in the dynamics of the law.

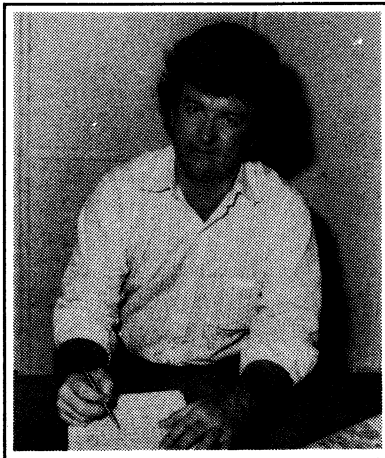
Some state societies have introduced a mandatory minimum CLE component for renewal of Practising Certificates.

Whilst this society is considering mandatory CLE components, it is firmly of the view that CLE should be offered in any event.

We are anxious to hear of the interests of practitioners for specialist CLE topics.

Leanne Robertson is the Councillor responsible for CLE, (see Council guide for contact number).

Representatives from the Australian Taxation Office will be in the Territory



next month (see story, this page) for CLE seminars.

The ASC has advised that it will provide workshops on the Corporations Act in the near future.

Fee scales

The Supreme Court scale was increased \$10.00 per hour from the beginning of January.

The Legal Aid Commission adopted its new scale this month.

There is considerable disquiet about the Local Court scale and the Society is once again taking up the matter with the Attorney and Chief Magistrate.

I anticipate that 80 per cent of all civil litigation will occur in the Local Court as a result of jurisdictional increases. The scale adopted disregards the independent findings about the costs of practices which underpin the Supreme Court scale.

Seminars on tax file numbers

The Australian Taxation Office, in conjunction with the Law Society, will hold seminars dealing with tax file number arrangements for solicitors.

Seminars will be held in Darwin on Monday April 8 and in Alice Springs on Wednesday April 10.

Both seminars will be between 2 and 4pm.

They will cover a general introduction to TFN arrangements, specific information relating to solicitors (including investments affected, solicitor obligations as investment bodies and TFN quotation rules), income tax ruling and examples of TFN requirements for given investment structures involving solicitors, and a question time.

The seminars are expected to take about two hours and information papers will be made available.

We are presently arranging venues and the seminars will probably be held in a court room.

ATO officers Tom Story and Tim Drown will present the seminars.

Mr Story is the Assistant Commissioner of Taxation responsible for the Tax File Number initiative and Mr Drown has been a member of an ATO/legal profession working party on TFN arrangements. Register with the Society on 815104.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

Practitioners to act as coaches for teams in the 1991 Inter-School Mock Trial competition.

Teams from Alice and Tennant are competing for the first time this year; we need coaches in both Darwin and Alice Springs (& someone for Tennant).

If you can help, please call Robyn on 815104 -- quickly.