

## Professor Paul Brand of Oxford University to deliver Patron's Address for 2015

The year 2015 will mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of the *Magna Carta* by King John at Runnymede. With this in mind the Board of the Academy invited Professor Paul Brand, Professor of English Legal History at the University of Oxford and a Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, to deliver the Patron's Address on the subject of the *Magna Carta* next year.

I am happy to inform Fellows that Professor Brand has accepted our invitation.

The date will be Monday 18 May at 5.30 pm and the venue will be the Ceremonial Court of the Federal Court on Level 21 of the Law Courts Building, Queen's Square, Sydney.

This advance notice will, of course, be followed up by a flyer giving more details early next year. In the meanwhile members of the Academy may care to enter the event in their diaries.

The Academy acknowledges the support of the Rule of Law Institute of Australia and the Magna Carta Coordinating Committee in this venture and the fact that the University of Melbourne, which is funding Professor Brand's visit to Australia, has generously agreed to our taking advantage of his being here.

## Date for the postponed ACT Academy event

Members of the Academy, particularly those in Canberra, may recall that the ACT event for 2014 which was scheduled to take place

on Thursday 20 November had to be postponed until early in 2015.

The postponed event will now take place on Wednesday 25 March 2015 at 5.30 pm.

Again the venue will be the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory.

Please see the flyer attached.

I dare say that most Fellows would know little of the operation of the International Court of Justice in respect of an actual case. Therefore we will be privileged to hear from Professor Hilary Charlesworth and Henry Burmester AO QC because of their roles as a Judge ad hoc, and Australian counsel, respectively, in the Whaling Case.

It promises to be a most interesting evening and I would encourage all Fellows to register.

## Honour conferred on Academy Fellow, Raelene Webb QC

The Law Council of Australia has announced the recipients of the 2014 Law Council of Australia President's Medal. They are the Honourable Geoffrey Eames AM QC and Ms Raelene Webb QC. Ms Webb, a Fellow of the Academy, is the President of the National Native Title Tribunal.

Ms Webb was nominated for the award by the NSW Bar Association for her extraordinary leadership within the legal profession, her contribution to issues in the areas of constitutional law and native title law, and contribution to women in the law and reconciliation for all Australians.

Michael Colbran, as President of the Law Council, noted that Raelene Webb had served as President of the Northern Territory

Bar Association from 2009 to 2012 and as Treasurer and Vice President of the Australian Bar Association and noted her leadership in the development of the Law Council's first Reconciliation Action Plan.

Congratulations Raelene.

### Vice President David Weisbrot appointed as Chair of the Australian Press Council

Vice President of the Academy, Emeritus Professor David Weisbrot AM, has been appointed to succeed Professor Julian Disney as Chair of the Australian Press Council (APC).

In announcing Professor Weisbrot's appointment, the APC noted, in addition to his Vice Presidency of the Academy, that he is Emeritus Professor of Law and Honorary Professor of Medicine at the University of Sydney, a part-time Commissioner of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission, a Member of the Strategic Advisory Board of the Garvan Institute's Centre for Clinical Genomics, and a Director of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.

The announcement also contained a long and impressive list of David's past positions held and achievements.

I am sure that all Fellows join me in congratulating David on this further appointment and in expressing the hope that he will find the task an interesting and satisfying one.

### Events held in 2014 and to be held in 2015.

Professor Rosalind Croucher, the Chair of the Academy's Projects Committee, has prepared the attached table of the events that the Academy has held in 2014.

She has also written to the members of the local Organising Committee in each State and Territory asking them to start planning now for their event for 2015.

### Local meetings in 2015

Quite apart from "the" State or Territory event for a year just mentioned, during the course of 2014, several members have raised the possibility of holding local meetings of Fellows. These might be held, say, twice a year and would provide an opportunity for local members to meet for an informal discussion to be led by one of their number.

These meetings could be smaller than "the" annual event and more informal in structure.

The idea is a good one, but its implementation would depend almost entirely on the initiative and energy of the local Fellows. Of course, the Academy would be delighted to publicise such events and could consider contributing some support funding.

I would encourage Fellows to pursue this idea early in 2015.

### An Academy plan for the future

At the annual general meeting held on 23 October, the question was raised of our adopting a plan for the immediate future of the Academy against which the Academy's performance could be assessed. In particular, this would enable us to see whether we are achieving the aims for the pursuit of which the Academy was established.

Professors Rosalind Croucher and Natalie Klein have been working on a draft plan which will be put before the Board of Directors in the New Year to initiate discussion in this direction.

### Prizes and Scholarships Committee

This Committee, consisting of Justice Alan Robertson, Professor Bee Chen Goh and me, has been meeting to finalise the details of the Academy's inaugural Annual Essay Prize in 2015.

## New Fellows

Since the last Newsletter, the following have become Fellows of the Academy:

Dr Nuncio D'Angelo  
Mr Kanaga Dharmananda SC  
Mr John Emmerig  
The Hon Peter Heerey AM QC  
Professor Peter Johnston  
Professor Geraldine Mackenzie  
The Hon Justice Michelle May  
The Hon Justice Philip McMurdo  
Professor Graeme Orr  
Professor Erika Techera

I am sure that all Fellows join me in extending a warm welcome to these new members.

## Christmas/New Year

I take this opportunity to wish all Fellows the compliments of the festive season.

In relation to the Secretariat, it will be unattended from 23 December 2014 and will re-open on 2 January 2015.



Kevin Lindgren

President

[kevlindgren@gmail.com](mailto:kevlindgren@gmail.com)

Tel (02) 9422 2085

0414 914 827

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