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ACHIEVING A JUST & SECURE SOCIETY



ATTORNEY-  
GENERAL'S  
DEPARTMENT





Left: The Hon D J C Kerr, the Hon M H Lavarch, the Hon T E F Hughes AO QC, the Hon E G Whitlam AC QC, the Hon M J Duffy, the Hon R J Ellicott QC, and the Hon D R Williams AM QC MP.



Above left: the Hon T E F Hughes AO QC  
Above right: the Hon R J Ellicott QC

A number of events have been held during the year to commemorate the Department's Centenary with the focus of the celebration being the week of 4 to 8 June.

*“the Department has succeeded in providing a link between the principles and theory of the law and its practical application in our daily lives.”*

THE HON DARYL WILLIAMS QC MP

On 5 June, the Secretary hosted a Centenary Dinner in Old Parliament House attended by six former Attorneys-General, the current Attorney General, the Hon Daryl Williams AM QC MP and the Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator the Hon Chris Ellison. The former Attorneys-General in attendance were the Hon T E F Hughes AO QC, the Hon E G Whitlam AC QC, the Hon R J Ellicott QC, the Hon M J Duffy, the Hon D J C Kerr and the Hon M H Lavarch. Also present were the former Minister for Justice, the Hon. Rev Fr Michael Tate, most of the current heads of portfolio agencies and many past and present staff of the Department. Four former Secretaries of the Department; Pat Brazil, Alan Rose, Stephen Skehill and Tony Blunn, attended as well.

Each of the former Attorneys-General recounted experiences from their term in office. Each paid tribute to the support given to them by officers of the Department, further reinforcing the understanding of the prominent role played by the Department in, as expressed by the current Attorney, ‘the establishment and maintenance of Australia as a stable democracy with civil, social and economic conditions as good as any country in the world’.

As the Attorney-General observed, ‘the laws and policy administered by the Department constitute a vital part of the social fabric of Australian society’. He added, ‘the Department has succeeded in providing a link between the principles and theory of the law and its practical application in our daily lives. This has made an enormous contribution to our national stability and cohesion’.



Above: the Hon E G Whitlam AC QC



Above left: the Hon D J C Kerr  
Above right: the Hon M J Duffy  
Below: the Hon M H Lavarch





Presenting a brief history of the Department; Mr Robert Cornall, Secretary, Ms Rayne de Gruchy, CEO, Australian Government Solicitor and Mr Robert Orr PSM QC, Deputy General Counsel, Australian Government Solicitor.

A highlight of the evening was a most interesting and informative audio/visual presentation compiled by Robert Orr PSM QC, Deputy General Counsel, Australian Government Solicitor and Geoff McDougall of the Department. The Secretary, Robert Cornall and the Chief Executive Officer, Australian Government Solicitor, Rayne de Gruchy contributed to the presentation by reciting selected quotations from leading figures in the history of the Department.

Other events held during the week of celebrations included an informal Women's Network presentation on 5 June, on the roles women have played in the Attorney-General's Department. On 6 June the Attorney-General and the Secretary addressed departmental staff. A lunchtime seminar on the history of the Attorney General's Department was conducted by Robert Orr, on 7 June.

A history of the Attorney-General's Department edited by Carmel Meiklejohn, a Project Officer within the Corporate Services Division, is to be released as a further commemoration of our centenary year.

