

## **CAMLA DRINKS THURS 20 NOVEMBER 2014**

### **END OF YEAR SPEECH**

Thank you all for coming. These after-AGM drinks seem to mark the official start of the Christmas season so we hope you'll enjoy them.

Thanks too to Gulley Shimeld and the Partners of Henry Davis York for hosting us this evening.

This year at CAMLA we've spent a lot of time focusing on the future of the Association and its membership. The CAMLA Young Lawyers Committee has been integral to this focus and I'd like to thank all of them and Raeshell Tang in particular for the time and energy they've spend with us as we plan for CAMLA's future.

Our future-focus exercise has forced all of us on the CAMLA Board to think about what's important about an organisation like ours, what's still relevant and what are the attributes most likely to carry us forward into a new generation of lawyers practicing in our industry.

This is obviously a long conversation. But as I thought about what to say this evening, it seemed to me that we do two things really well at CAMLA.

The first of these has a lot to do with how fast and big media and communications law is getting.

As Paul Fletcher so clearly outlined in his CAMLA presentation in September, our industry has become exponentially more complicated over the last decade, largely due to the new technologies defining it.

Increasingly, this means that lawyers who still consider themselves media and communications law generalists, need to be more and more specialised to properly service their clients and companies; In privacy and data management for example, or film financing and its rebate implications, or trade practices issues and their interface with broadcasting and print ownership and control.

As a result we're less able, as individuals, to keep abreast of developments in other parts of media and communications law that we still feel we should be across.

CAMLA, through its seminars and the Bulletin, gives members a relatively gentle way to emerge from their day to day silos, even if only to the point of dulling the guilt I suspect most of us feel at not doing enough reading.

We are extremely privileged as an organisation to have such expert tutors as Professors Barbara McDonald and Jill McKeough, Paul Fletcher and the myriad of other specialists who sat on our panels this year, to guide us through some of the most complicated and fast developing areas of law around. We're very grateful to all of them.

The second thing I think we do well is – have fun.

I know of no other annual work event quite like the CAMLA Cup Trivia Night. Even with CAMLA memberships slightly down, this year's Cup was our biggest yet.

It's a surprise to all of us I'm sure that a buy-your-own beer and fried food soaked evening at the NSW Rugby Leagues Club has turned into an event to which Australia's most prestigious law firms actually want to invite their clients.

Who knew? In any event, it's something we're very proud of and for which we continue to be indebted to Deb Richards, our Cup Ring Master.

So, if breaking down legal silos, cocktail parties and mediacoms trivia is what we do best, let's get back to it. Thanks again for coming tonight and for all your support this year.

Happy Christmas to everyone. We wish you all good things for 2015.