



**SUPREME COURT
OF QUEENSLAND**

**QPILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic and
Refugee Civil Law Clinic 10 year anniversary**

Ashurst, Level 38, Riverside Centre, Brisbane
Monday 22 April 2013, 5.30pm

**The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice**

My object this evening is warmly to thank and commend the individual practitioners, and the firms, who have facilitated this important clinic over the last decade.

With your help, QPILCH has coordinated an invaluable legal service for our homeless fellow citizens.

I know that our Queensland profession is an altruistic profession, and that is insufficiently acknowledged.

The clients of the service may often be poor in spirit, and they may not be comforted to be told theirs is the kingdom of heaven. But I am sure that at least many of them will have been grateful to be informed of the metes and bounds of their legal situation, even if not capable of easy resolution, and the direct accounts we have been privileged to hear tonight confirm that.

The Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic of QPILCH is the only legal service in the State designed to address the legal needs of homeless persons. It began with a six month pilot, following the launch in December 2002, and that pilot was made possible by a grant from QLS and the support of six welfare agencies, and very importantly, the contribution of pro bono support by practitioners from 10 law firms. 114 homeless persons were the primary beneficiaries at that pilot, but so I venture were the participating lawyers. Helping others is an inherently enriching experience.



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The service thereafter expanded progressively, including regionally, to the point where last year, the number of clients was 541. In total over those 10 years, the service has assisted more than 4,000 homeless clients, and the value of that assistance computes to more than \$2.6 million worth.

The project we celebrate tonight has I think been a signature project for QPILCH, launched the next year after the inauguration of QPILCH. Just as QPILCH has exemplified the very best strain within our profession, so I suggest the Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic has exemplified QPILCH's attention to the most deserving of our fellow citizens.

The effectiveness of the clinic represents a magnificent effort, and I sincerely hope QPILCH will be able to find the funds necessary to ensure the continuation of the service.

Our expression of thanks tonight extends to the lawyers and students, the firms, the financial supporters – individuals, QLS and the Queensland Government, the institutional contributors – the University of Queensland and the welfare agencies, and QPILCH itself – acknowledging the generous involvement of the voluntary members of the management committee led by Robert Reed and the committed staff led so ably by Tony Woodyatt.

For your primary role in assuring this substantial and worthwhile achievement over 10 years, ladies and gentlemen, as patron of QPILCH I thank you all, and my thanks are heartfelt.

I look forward very much to the forthcoming QPILCH Walk for Justice, early in the morning of Tuesday 14 May, this year with the added attraction of a concluding breakfast on the stately grassed plaza outside the new courthouse. I hope you will be joining me.