

Grahamstown

Contributed by Izak Smuts SC, Grahamstown

Welcome for the Judge President

After the confirmation of the appointment of Judge CM Somyalo as Judge President, the Grahamstown Bar held a welcome party attended by judges and members of the Bar during October 1999. Some Bar members were clearly so overjoyed by the appointment that they continued to celebrate well after the departure of the Judge President.

Acting appointments

Andrew Lang SC, John Whitehead SC, Murray Lowe SC and Izak Smuts SC held acting appointments during the fourth term of 1999.

Advocacy training

The Grahamstown Bar hosted the advocacy training programme for the three Eastern Cape Bars during December 1999.

Ben Ford (chair), Andrew Lang SC, Izak Smuts SC and Richard Brooks from Grahamstown, Perry Benningfield from Port Elizabeth and Viwe Notshe from Bisho assisted with the local training programme.

Co-operation agreement with Rhodes University Law Faculty

The Grahamstown Bar has entered into a co-operation agreement with the Rhodes University Law Faculty in terms of which senior members of the Bar will provide a mentoring service to aspirant members of the Bar amongst final year law students, offering insight into opposed motions and appeals. Students will be given opportu-

nities to prepare heads of argument in actual motion and appeal matters, will attend the argument of the matters, and discussions will be held in respect of the judgments in such matters. The Bar and the Law Faculty will jointly offer a continuing legal education programme, and the Faculty's Lexus-Nexus facility will be made available to members of the Bar at a negotiated price.

North West

Contributed by L C J Maree SC, Mafikeng

Members

We are still in existence but barely so. Two of our members had to resign from the Bar. They were depending on criminal legal aid work for survival but due to non-payment and the new fee structure for the Legal Aid Board were forced to leave. It is not impossible that more members will follow suit.

Cecile Zwiegelaar from the Johannesburg Bar has joined us. She is still to undergo the local course of thumb twiddling and naval contemplation as legal work in this part of the world is virtually non-existent.

Appointments to the Bench

Nkabinde J, a member of our Bar, was elevated to the Bench and so was Leeuw J, an erstwhile member of this Bar.

This Bar has now produced five judges, a rare feat for such a small Bar.

Bringing justice to the people

It is indeed sad that the principle that each province has its own High Court has not yet been implemented. This division

is ready, and has been for years, both with regard to facilities and infrastructure to serve the people of the North West. It is indeed difficult to understand why there is such an inordinate delay. If it is because of the lack of readiness of other provinces why not do it piecemeal and implement the principle in those provinces which are ready by the stroke of the pen of the legislature?

Once implemented, the absurdity that people living in, for example, Zeerust and Lichtenburg, 60 kilometres from Mafikeng, must travel 300 kilometres to Pretoria to litigate and people living in Thaba Nchu, 40 kilometres from Bloemfontein, must travel 500 kilometres to Mafikeng to litigate will cease, and the principle of bringing justice to the people will triumph.

To call the High Court in Mafikeng the Bophuthatswana High Court with jurisdiction only in the area of the erstwhile Bophuthatswana is in any event unacceptable and should be a political embarrassment to the present Government. So, why not do something about it – soon!

Pretoria

Bygedra deur Bill Prinsloo SC, Pretoria

Waarnemende aanstellings

Sedert die verskyning van die laaste uitgawe het die volgende lede van die Balie waargeneem op die regbank in die Transvaalse Provinsiale Afdeling:

N Cassim SC, JW Louw SCNJ Coetzee SC, A de Vos SC, AG Derksen SC, WRC Prinsloo SC, HJ de Vos SC, TJ Kruger SC, PJJ de Jager SC, FG Preller SC, BC Bredenkamp SC, WPN Sceales SC,

DA Smith SC, FJ Jooste SC, H Goosen SC en E Jordaan SC.

Membership and pupils

The present membership of the Pretoria Bar stands at 384 including 66 members who practise in the New Court Chambers and 12 associated members.

Twenty new pupils started with their pupillage on 1 February 2000.

In memoriam

Ons het met groot leedwese kennis geneem van die afsterwe van Nicolaas Stephanus (Niekie) Schoeman in 'n motorbotsing op 8 Februarie 2000. Niekie was 'n passasier in die voertuig en was onderweg na Ermelo waar hy 'n verhoor sou waarneem in die loop van sy pligte.



The late Niekie Schoeman

Niekie was 'n lojale en uiters populêre lid van ons Balie.

We quote an extract from a moving tribute written by colleague Simmy Lebala:

"Being a humanist myself, I sought answers as to what produced a human being so gentle, an enthusiast so naughty, a compassionate man so humble. I however found answers in the belief that Nic Schoeman's life teaches us about human beings as social beings, craving to live in harmony, love, goodwill and appreciation of life. Indeed, Nic Schoeman taught me that life is beautiful."