

DEREK RAOUL HENTZE: 1937–2007

Peter McQueen*

I knew Derek for over 25 years, having first met in 1981 at a meeting in Sydney of the New South Wales Branch of the Maritime Law Association of Australian and New Zealand (MLAANZ).

At that meeting, Derek gave a talk on current maritime law issues which had been the subject of an international maritime law conference which he had recently attended in London.

In typical Derek fashion, his talk was strong on content, concise, perceptive and sprinkled with humour. I remember he gave us a detailed description of the room of his hotel in the West End of London, observing how small and dark it was and how could they charge so much for such a room!

Derek was admitted as a solicitor, attorney and proctor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales on 24 November 1961 (almost 46 years ago to the day). He continued to hold a current practising certificate throughout his life.

After practising in private law firms and on his own account in the first half of the 1960's, Derek joined Brambles Industries Limited where he was the Senior Legal Officer responsible for legal aspects of various acquisitions and joint ventures by Brambles in Australia and also in respect of its expansion into Europe with Chep and Cleanaway. The position at Brambles, a listed public company, gave him the opportunity to hone his skills as a corporate lawyer. He became the 'complete' in-house counsel.

In 1984 he joined Caltex Australia Limited, another listed public company, as both the Group Secretary and Group Corporate Solicitor, where he was responsible for all secretarial, legal and insurance services to the Caltex Group. This was a demanding position and, from my perspective as an external lawyer instructed by him, he conducted himself in the role with efficiency, courtesy and good humour. His work included advising on trade practices law, corporations law, petroleum retail marketing legislation, acquisition of properties for service stations, depots, terminals and equipment, maritime law matters relating to the ships operated by the Caltex Group and environmental laws, including cleanups and rehabilitations.

His last hurrah at Caltex was his intimate involvement in all negotiations relating to the legal and secretarial aspects of the Caltex/Ampol merger in the mid-1990s.

He retired from Caltex in 1995 and then worked part time for a number of years for Thomas Miller Australasia, the manager of various international mutual marine and transport insurance companies on legal and insurance matters.

I had the privilege of working with Derek during his time at Brambles, Caltex and Thomas Miller, providing legal advice and representing these companies in various litigation matters, as my law firm was retained by those companies.

Derek and I shared a passion for maritime law. He often reminded me how lucky we both were to be able to work in an area of law which we both enjoyed so much and how lucky he was as his employers were involved in matters maritime. Derek was very knowledgeable on his maritime law, as is indicated by his associate authorship of the standard maritime law text, *The Law of Tug, Tow and Pilotage*, the lead author being his good friend from the USA, Alex L Parks.

High amongst Derek's loves in life was MLAANZ, being the Australasian maritime law industry body, which is represented here by a past President, Stuart Hetherington. The current President of MLAANZ, Frazer Hunt, has asked me to extend the deepest condolences from all members of MLAANZ to Joan and Derek's family and friends.

Derek, I know, would have been very happy to know that I was going to talk to you today about MLAANZ.

* An obituary delivered by Peter McQueen at the funeral service held at St John's Uniting Church, Neutral Bay, on 22 November 2007.

MLAANZ is an association of more than 500 members mainly from Australia and New Zealand, including lawyers and judges, academics, representatives of major exporters, shipping companies, port operators, ship, cargo and liability insurers and other members of the maritime and insurance community. Its major objective is to support domestic and international institutions in their efforts to bring about the unification of maritime and commercial law, maritime customs, usages and practices, and greater harmony in the shipping laws, regulations and practices of different nations.

From its modest beginnings in 1974, the Association has grown vigorously and holds an annual conference which is held around the Australian capital cities and in New Zealand. Such conferences have also been held in Singapore, Maui and Hong Kong. Delegates regularly attend from Hong Kong, Singapore, United Kingdom, the USA and Canada. This year's conference was held in Canberra and next year's will be held in Perth.

Derek worked long and hard for MLAANZ. He held various positions in the New South Wales Branch Committee (including Chairman). During that time, he was remembered by John Lean and fellow Committee members as having great rapport, being a great participator and having never missed an annual conference! He was also the Executive Secretary of the National Executive of MLAANZ from 1997 to 2000. The President of MLAANZ at the that time was Tom Broadmore, now a New Zealand District Court Judge, who would have been here today but for his Court commitments. Tom says that Derek's business and legal experience was invaluable to him during his presidency, particularly on strategic matters. Derek held a very acute eye at all times on the best interests of MLAANZ. Tom says that Derek was very loyal and supportive to him during his presidency and was always thinking and talking about issues relevant to the running and the progress of MLAANZ. For Tom, Derek's only possible downside was his disregard (some would say a healthy disregard) for email. Joan tells me that Derek did conquer 'the email' but thought it impersonal and never really liked it.

Joan and Derek were fixtures at the annual MLAANZ conference over many years. They have been described as a 'team in harmony' by one MLAANZ member. They were always great fun together and participated fully in all of the conference activities.

Derek and Joan had made many great and long lasting friendships in the international maritime community, both through Derek's work and through his involvement in MLAANZ. Derek is held in the highest regard by them all.

To a person they say Derek was a quintessential gentleman, replete with all the 'old world' courtesies.

He was an incredibly decent human being. I was privileged to have been one of his many friends. He will be greatly missed.