A new beginning

HIGH COMMISSIONER
MPH RUBIN '66
DEAN'S MESSAGE
SUPPORTING THE LAW SCHOOL
A MEMORIAL FOR PROFESSOR GEOFFREY BARTHOLOMEW
AN INSPIRATION TO ALL
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CLASS OF '96 AWARD
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from the editor
Life is a journey and for many of our Law School alumni, the path taken since graduation has been a series of new beginnings.

Featured in this issue of LawLink are several different journeys. Our "cover boy", retired Supreme Court Judge MPH Rubin '66, is now High Commissioner to South Africa. He reflects on his early career with the Straits Times, his years on the Bench and life in Pretoria. Many of our alumni have found their calling in the Arts world and they share their thoughts with LawLink as well.

Like many of our alumni, the Law School has gone through significant change and development and as NUS celebrates its 47th year, its Centennial year, the Law School marks its 47th year with a move back to its original home - the Bukit Timah Campus. LawLink brings you a pictorial update on the Law School's new Campus in the Park.

As Lao Tzu once wrote, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Indeed the Law School has taken bold steps through the years. This year particularly noteworthy new programmes have been launched including double degree offerings and the Master of Laws - NYU@NUS. Our students will also be taking part in new Mooting competitions and going abroad for internships.

So do keep in touch with the Law School (we can help you celebrate your Class reunion!) and join us with a toast to all who have lent their unflailing support through the years.

Daphne Loke DipSing '01
Editor,
Assoc Director,
Alumni and Development
DEAN'S MESSAGE

For the many alumni and friends who have visited our website at http://law.nus.edu.sg/, you will have noticed the tagline Asia's Global Law School. These four words say a lot about our self-understanding and increasingly reflect how others see us as well. We are a globally oriented law school located in Asia and of course rooted in Singapore. This is clear from most of the courses we teach. Hardly any course is taught without a comparative perspective. In part this is because Singapore is a small jurisdiction and does not generate as much case law as say Canada or England. But it is more than just this; it reflects an educational philosophy to broaden the minds and thinking abilities of our students for it is only when we consider a variety of different approaches can we come to a better assessment of what may be the most appropriate given our particular circumstances. Our global mindset is also clear from the opportunities that we have created for our students to spend an academic year in other leading law schools abroad. I know of no law school that allows 40% of its students a significant student exchange opportunity abroad. In addition, we have now begun securing overseas internships in addition to the ones so generously provided by our partner law firms and corporations based in Singapore.

Our global orientation is also seen in our many academic collaborations with other leading law schools. These include the following. We have started a Master of Law programme in International Business Law in Shanghai. We continue to play a leading role in the Asian Law Institute that brings together 13 of the best law schools in Asia to collaborate in teaching and research. We have been approached to host the secretariat for another pan-Asian legal body. We continue to collaborate with the University of Toronto in research projects and we have
reached an agreement with the New York University School of Law to collaborate on a new Master of Law programme that will be taught at NUS. This programme is scheduled to enrol its first batch of students in May 2007. Needless to say, our research is also of interest to overseas lawyers and academics as is evidenced by the number of publications in leading overseas law journals in addition to the many books and articles that we publish in Singapore.

It should also not be forgotten that around 75% of our graduate students are non-Singaporeans and that we regularly have students from more than 20 countries reading for our LLM and Ph.D. degrees.

It is my belief that the law school’s global orientation coupled with its continued focus on Singapore law will lead to better legally trained minds and ultimately further enhance Singapore’s position as a legal services hub. The mission of producing good Singapore lawyers is enhanced by the law school’s global initiatives.

After this message was with the printers, Justice (Retired) Lai Kew Chai passed away. He was a great friend of the law school, having been a tutor in the 1970s and an External examiner in the eighties. But more than that, he was a friend and mentor to many of us in the law school. I, for one, remember many occasions when he was very kind to me and gave me valuable advice. He also gave me a great deal of encouragement when I was appointed Dean. I was therefore most saddened to hear of his passing. The grief felt by the entire legal community was also plain in the many obituaries that were placed in the Straits Times following his demise. He obviously touched many of us in a personal way. Justice Lai fought the good fight and I am certain he is now reaping the joy that comes from a life well lived. Nevertheless, while we take comfort from this, he will be missed by many of us and in particular, Dorothy, Stanley and Amy. To them and the other members of his family, the law school sends its heartfelt condolences.

The law school also sends its heartfelt condolences to Vice-Dean Robert Beckman and his family. Bob’s mother passed away recently in Wisconsin at the age of 93.

Professor Tan Cheng Han, S.C. ’87

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Many distinguished individuals gathered at the Faculty’s Moot Court to pay tribute to a great teacher, scholar and former Dean of the law school — the late Professor Geoffrey Bartholomew who passed away on 10 March 2005 in Sydney.

The event also saw the launch of a campaign to raise at least $1.5 million for The Geoffrey Bartholomew Professorship. Through the Professorship, the Faculty hopes to further the inspirational legal scholarship and, as Attorney General Chan Sek Keong described at the memorial, the “refreshing, provocative and stimulating” teaching best exemplified by Professor Bartholomew. Thanks to generous contributions including those by Principal Donors - Shook Lin & Bok, Drew & Napier, Rajah & Tann and Allen & Gledhill, more than $450,000 had been raised so far.

Professor Bartholomew taught many prominent alumni including former Deans - Prof Tommy Koh ’61, Ambassador-at-large; Dr Thio Su Mienn ’61 and Prof S. Jayakumar ’63, Deputy Prime Minister, Co-ordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Law - who all attended the memorial.

Sharing their memories of Professor Bartholomew at the event were Dr Kevin YL Tan ’86; Attorney-General Mr Chan Sek Keong ’61; Dr Philip Pillai ’72 and Prof Hugh Hickling (the first Parliamentary draftsmen and Law Review Commissioner of Malaysia) who both used to teach at the Faculty and representing Professor Bartholomew’s former students from Malaysia, Hendon Bte HJ Mohamed ’62.

LEGENDARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO SINGAPORE LEGAL HISTORY

Dr Tan spoke of Professor Bartholomew – the Scholar. He recalled the profound impact that the “exceedingly kind, generous, open and friendly” Professor had on his own legal scholarship through their years of correspondence and collaboration. Professor Bartholomew’s final published article was a joint work with Dr Tan on the history of law reporting in Singapore in Essays in Singapore Legal History (2005).

Elaborating on the Professor’s influence on Singapore’s legal history, the Attorney-General recalled the late 1980’s when he was looking at various ways to reform the ‘notorious’ s.5 of the Civil Law Act and decided to invite the Professor to write an article for the Singapore Academy of Law Journal. The Professor produced a ‘magisterial’ work on legal statutes in Singapore law which contributed in no small part to the Application of English Law Act 1993.

INSPIRATIONAL TEACHING “LIKE A TORNADO THAT HITS YOU”

An extremely versatile teacher, Professor Bartholomew taught a wide variety of subjects though he is best remembered for teaching Legal History, Legal Systems, Comparative Law and Jurisprudence.

Recollections of Professor Bartholomew’s teaching style brought laughter to lighten the mood. The Attorney-General reminisced upon his first encounter with the Professor at his lecture on “Hermaphrodites & the Law” in 1959 which left him and many others wondering when they would be “assailed again with and stimulated by such a speaker on another exotic legal topic.” To this day, the Professor’s teaching of Jurisprudence has left the Attorney-General with “a lifelong habit of thinking about law in a jurisprudential way.” Dr Pillai ‘complained’ about the Professor’s “unwelcoming but ultimately beneficial” style of teaching which involved no lecture notes or suggested reading list which understandably greatly disconcerted his Conflicts of Law class. Meanwhile, Dr Tan had asked many former students what it was like to be taught by Professor Bartholomew and all described the Professor as one who always spoke spontaneously in lectures, often with a beer in hand! “His mind was encyclopaedic, his memory formidable.”

As Dr Pillai put it, “his contributions to generations of lawyers in Singapore and Malaysia should not pass unmarked.” The memory of this inspiring man led Dr Pillai to spearhead the drive to establish a Professorship at the University where Professor Bartholomew made seminal contributions. Professor Bartholomew left us with his legal legacy and we should also leave one for the law students of the future.

If you wish to make a contribution to The Geoffrey Bartholomew Professorship, please contact Ms Daphne Loke at daphneloke@nus.edu.sg or call 65-6516-3181.
trip to China made possible by the generosity of the class of '95

Michael Chiam Daomin '07 writes about his trip over the December vacation with student organisation 'Business Incubation of Global Organisations' (BINGO)

The sheer pace of China's economic development left 17 NUS student entrepreneurs impressed and inspired.

The opportunity to visit the world's fastest growing economy came from NUS Business Incubation of Global Organisations (BINGO) which was formed in 2002 to spread the spirit and values of entrepreneurship. In December 2005, BINGO took her infant steps towards international networking - an 18 day business trip to meet student and corporate delegates from 9 different cities.

I was personally drawn by the chance to engage business personalities from Hong Kong, Macau, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Xiamen, Wenzhou, Shanghai, Suzhou and Nanjing. BINGO had a list of objectives which included: • Helping students to engage China and its growing economy • Encouraging students to cultivate business interests in China • Establishing a network for joint business activities • Understanding the business culture and operations in China by visiting companies.

As representatives from Singapore and NUS, we visited various universities including Fudan University, Tongji University, Jiaotong University, Nanjing University and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST). The hosts were greeted with souvenirs from NUS and a formal presentation about Singapore and NUS's vision for enterprise.

Huanan Technological University students, who were trained by P&G and IBM, showed us organisational maturity beyond that expected of a Career and Business Development Society.

The highlight for myself, was indulging in mealtimes conversations, particularly with entrepreneurs and various alumni. They affectionately expounded on the challenges faced, almost in story-like fashion, and motivated us hopefuls to continue setting higher goals.

The trip provided a rare opportunity to meet Raffles College alumnus Mr Robert Kuok. Mr Kuok, known to be Southeast Asia's wealthiest man, is famous for the Shangri-La chain of hotels and the Kerry Group. We had a hearty conversation with the humble man and his senior management, who then brought us on a tour around his companies in Hong Kong.

We truly appreciated the warmth and hospitality shown by the companies and their leaders throughout the trip. Even given short notice, Rodyk & Davidson (Singapore) granted us a meeting with their solicitors in Shanghai. This gave us valuable insight for our research on Government and legal policies in China.

We then visited EDB, IE Singapore and Global Business Insights. Brief but spontaneous activities like these made our trip dynamic and memorable.

I am grateful to the Faculty for providing the NUS souvenirs and would like to give special thanks to the Class of 95 for their kind sponsorship which helped make this trip possible.

the first recipient of the Mirandah Scholarship

Thanks to a generous donation by Mrs Gladys Mirandah '76, Jolly John LLM '06 was the first recipient of the Mirandah Scholarship. The Mirandah Scholarship is awarded to a selected student each year from the Master of Laws (Intellectual Property & Technology Law) programme.

Prior to joining NUS, Jolly John obtained his LLB from Goa University and worked as a lawyer in Kerala before pursuing his first LLM in Mercantile Law from Mahatma Gandhi University. He also obtained a Post Graduate Diploma in Cyber Laws from the National Academy of Legal Studies and Research University in Hyderabad. Jolly John who got married very recently, plans to work in Singapore after graduation from NUS. He has clearly established a good grasp of Singapore Law and his review of Singapore IP Law was published in business magazine ‘BizQ’ in November 2005.

Our generous donor Gladys is a keen long-distance runner and a director at Patrick Mirandah Co. (PMC) which has offices in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and an affiliate office in India.

Supporting the Law School 06

Michael (back row, third from the right) with senior staff of the Kerry Group and its Chairman Mr Robert Kuok (seated second from right)