

# PREFACE

*A T H Smith\**

It is a great privilege – one of the many privileges attributable to my position as Dean – to have been invited to contribute some prefatory remarks to this celebratory volume for the 60th Anniversary of this Review. I follow in the footsteps of my predecessor Professor R O McGechan, who must take much of the credit for the launch of the Review in 1953. He was clearly greatly influenced by his recent visit to Harvard University, and his Foreword to the first number makes it plain that the primary purpose of the Review was "educational in the sense that its aim is to develop the capacity of students to expound the law clearly in print". The editors (senior and junior) were to be the students, although in the very first part, "the teaching staff have put shoulders to the wheel as some of the senior editors...". This student orientation set it apart from the established English Reviews such as the Law Quarterly Review, the Cambridge Law Journal and the Modern Law Review. Although I cannot now recall the circumstances that gave rise to it, I was a beneficiary of this solicitude for students when I spent some time at Victoria studying for my "profs" and the Review accepted for publication my very first effort to be published – in 1969 – a case note on "Provocation and the Lesser Offences: *R v Laga*".<sup>1</sup>

In 1953, the Victoria Faculty was showing itself to be one of the leaders in Australasian legal education. The VUWLR is oldest academic review in New Zealand by a decade (from the New Zealand Universities Law Review, which celebrates its half century this year), and one of the oldest in Australasia. Sydney Law Review was also started in 1953, as Professor McGechan, an Australian, was no doubt aware. Zelman Cowen, then Dean at Melbourne, is credited with converting the student publication *Res Judicata* into the Melbourne University Law Review in 1957, and the Adelaide Law Review started in 1960.

It would be right to say that the Review has metamorphosed somewhat over the years, and now has something of a hybrid character. It continues with its mission to publish the work of students, and for the students to continue to have a significant editorial role – there is a Student Editor-in-Chief supported by a group of Student Editors. But the Review is also a refereed journal, publishing the work of scholars world wide, that process being overseen by a Faculty "Managing Editor" supported by an Editorial Committee composed of Members of the Faculty. In my view, it is a

---

\* Professor, Dean of Law and Pro Vice-Chancellor, Victoria University of Wellington.

1 (1968–1970) 5 VUWLR 361.

felicitous admixture, and a credit to those whose efforts make it such an excellent publication. One contributor over all whose efforts warrant particular mention is Judge Ian Borrin, whose financial and moral support for the Review over many years has enabled it to maintain the highest of publishing standards.