

IN MEMORIAM

Edwin (“Ted”) John Glasson
1934-2004
Law Librarian, Monash University
1967-1993

On hearing of the news that Edwin (“Ted”) John Glasson had died on the 18 June, Associate Professor Rob Watt of the University of Technology in Sydney said “he certainly was a great influence on me in the 1970s and I remember him as a man with extraordinary kindness and patience.” Others spoke of their fondness for him, the fact they found him to be such a special man, a man of intellect and integrity. All expressed a sense of loss to the law library community of a “real pioneer.”

I first knew of Ted and had heard of his pioneering spirit when I was working in what was then known as the Monash University Main Library in Melbourne. At that time, Australian law school libraries were subsumed by their main university libraries. Ted, however, fought long and hard for the autonomy of the Monash Law Library within the University and won. It was no mean feat as branch libraries in those days were regarded as something akin to colonies of the Main Library and Ted’s aura took on a distinctly revolutionary glow. The world of law librarianship has lost a fine mind and those of us who knew him, a kind and caring friend. Vale Ted.

The following tributes to Ted are given by Jacqui Elliott, Court Librarian, High Court of Australia; Dick Finlay, former Law Librarian, Adelaide University; and James Butler, Librarian, Supreme Court of Victoria. They speak for all of us who had the good fortune and privilege to know him.

Petal Kinder
Federal Court of Australia
Melbourne, Australia

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Friday, 18 June 2004, was a very sad day for the law library profession. Ted is such a loss. No one since Ted Glasson's time at Monash University Law Library has done as much to encourage Australian law librarians to write and produce works benefitting law library research in Australia. Ted was a shining light to law librarians, particularly in the seventies when he was at his peak. He was a quiet man who led by example. He was modest and gentlemanly, a scholar who worked away quietly and produced some of the most enduring works that assist law librarians today. His *Union List of Law Reports Held in Australian Libraries* produced in 1979, is always by my desk to answer queries on holdings of obscure law reports. I would panic if I lost it. It is an indispensable aid. Ted worked on this *Union List* day and night. It consumed him at the time, but it is a lasting tribute to his scholarly approach to law librarianship. In addition to the *Union List*, Ted worked on the second edition of *Legal Research Materials and Methods* (Law Book Co, 1979), one of the first books on legal research in Australia, and was a joint author of the third edition published in 1988 over which he labored long and hard. Further, Ted was responsible for setting up and supervising the *National Survey of Law Libraries in Australia* (1984), providing library accommodation and considerable assistance to Beth Wilson who carried out the *Survey*.

As a senior law librarian in the profession, Ted was active on committees and was appointed a member of the *IALL* Board in 1974. He was one of the hosts of the *IALL* meeting in Sydney in 1981 when he chaired one of the sessions. Ted was never one for the limelight and in later years preferred to work quietly away at Monash rather than go to conferences but he always encouraged his staff to attend and broaden their horizons.

When I was at Adelaide University Law Library from 1974 to 1982, Dick Finlay and I would consult Ted first for wise counsel. His common sense and quiet humor were reassuring. Ted's was always the voice of moderation in a period when Australian law libraries were starting to suffer from budget cuts, inquiries, and calls for standards. When he left Monash to ease into retirement and indulge in his favorite past-time, yachting, we missed him. I still miss him, but he has left an indelible mark on law librarianship in Australia. As the profession becomes engulfed in technology and some opine that the future is all online, let us honor the memory of one whose ground-breaking research in print materials still enables many of us to do our jobs better: a fitting tribute to this man, Ted Glasson, who graced the profession in Australia with such dignity and care.

Jacqueline Elliott
High Court of Australia
Canberra, Australia

Ted was the Law Librarian at Monash University for most of the 30-odd years that I had the equivalent office at Adelaide. For all the time that he was there he was always the person that I turned to first whenever I had a problem, and it was important to know what was done by a good librarian in a good library. Ted always seemed to me the model of what a law librarian should be, sensible, moderate, quietly humorous, always reliable.

Ted was never a publicity-seeker. Unfortunately, he was not a frequent attender at conferences. To meet Ted at one of his rare appearances at these gatherings was a pleasure. I will always remember the way that when he did break his rule and duty forced him to come to a conference, like the *International Association of Law Libraries (IALL)* in Sydney in 1981, where as a member of the organizing body he had to chair a meeting, he seemed to demonstrate that he was from a hardy country, Victoria, and, when other males were wearing sports coats or pullovers, Ted was there in his shirt-sleeves.

Everything that Ted did was done as well as it could be done, and better than anyone else would have done it. He set standards for us all, and even if we couldn't reach them at least we knew what should, and perhaps could, be done. He was the best and most inspiring, law librarian in Australia.

Dick Finlay
Law Librarian Emeritus
Adelaide University
Australia

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When I began working in law libraries in 1980, Ted Glasson's name was legendary, and deserved to be so. In his quiet, persistent way, Ted had managed to separate the Law Library at Monash University from the main Library, a feat which many other University law libraries wished to emulate but never succeeded in achieving. He had also produced the Union list of law reports held in Australian libraries, a ground breaking piece of research, undertaken well before computer processing, and still as useful today, possibly more so, as it was when first published in 1979. Despite the advances in technology and the cooperative venture of Kinetica, it is still the basis for much law library research, and is referred to in my library on an almost daily basis, with annotations being made to the text to update it when necessary. As Jacqui has said, I would be lost without it.

Ted built up the law library at Monash University from virtually nothing to be one of the very best in Australia, even developing his own classification scheme which is, I think, still used today. It was, I suspect, partly Ted's breadth of collection in the law library and his organizational skills, which led to the

Monash University law degree fast becoming so well respected. The Chiefs of all four jurisdictions in Victoria are Monash graduates from Ted's time.

Ted was a senior, respected and well-loved figure in law librarianship who always had time for junior colleagues, as I remember well. He retired early almost 11 years ago, so it is that probably many of the current profession do not remember him. It is definitely their loss. For his passing removes from our midst one who blazed a trail in our profession and made life easier for all of us.

James Butler
Supreme Court of Victoria
Melbourne, Australia