



**Christmas is a time when kids tell Santa what they want and adults pay for it.
Deficits are when adults tell the government what they want and kids pay for it.**



The Lyon, the glitch economic and the wardrobe issue

OK, what happened in 2008.

- David Lyon turned 70 and doesn't look a day over 69.
- Barrack Obama won. Osama Bin Laden is lost. Both have the same initials (in reverse), star sign, height and colour. They should have an affair.
- Helen Clark lost. Labour voters get lazy after nine years. Besides, her couturier is seriously conservative and voters thought the PM should be working for UN.
- Westies went National, why? They became aware (by petrol head osmosis) that Bob Harvey's holiday bach looks exactly like Helen's wardrobe, oooh don't go there.
- Rob Wills has entered and done well in more multisports events than David Beckham has tattoos. Keep curving it Rob.
- The economy, according to our National newspaper is shot. I think our National newspapers economic journalists should be shot. Can someone lend me a Heckler & Kock MP5 9mm?
- Happy Holidays dear friends. Let's hope 2009 is as interesting as 2008.

ED.

Disclaimer: The views expressed by the editor in this newsletter are not necessarily shared by the firm (and in fact are generally regarded as outrageous and unnecessarily controversial). Any offence is unintended and regretted.

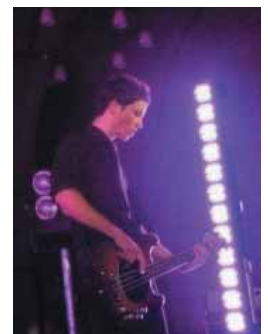
Never judge a book by its cover

By day he is a collar and tie solicitor in the property team. But beneath that polite and civilized veneer is a talented bass guitarist touring with one of New Zealand's rising solo artists.

Currently playing bass for former Zed front man Nathan King, Mike has been keeping himself busy with regular gigs all over town. He was recently spotted in a plaid shirt on the Good Morning Show and will be on show at a number of hot spots over the Summer period.

Some of the staff here at HL went along to watch our fledgling rock star at a recent concert at St Matthews in the City. Mike was certainly impressed by the unexpected vocal support and encouragement he received. He now refuses to disclose to the firm the location of future shows in the Auckland area...

So, next time you meet what you think is another drab property solicitor, remember you should never judge a book by its cover.



The office will be closing on the 23rd of December and re-opening (with a skeleton staff) on the 7th of January, with most staff returning on the 12th of January.

Staff changes at Haigh Lyon

Welcome to:



Sonja Palinich joined our family team in November. Sonja started her career in general practice where she gained a broad litigation experience. She specializes in all aspects of family law.



A'lanah Harrison (no relation to Don) who joined us in October after her admission to the bar in August. A'lanah will be working in the areas of property, trusts and litigation support.

Farewell to:



Claudine Toleafoa has left Haigh Lyon to work for the Police Prosecutors office in Manukau City. Claudine was keen to expand her court work and this was a great opportunity for her to increase her criminal court experience. Claudine has been a vibrant and valued member of the firm and we wish her all the best in the future.

Wills Act

The new Wills Act 2007 came into force with very little fanfare. It replaced the existing Wills Act, which was enacted in 1837.

The intent of the new Act was to restate the law relating to Wills in easy to understand English so as to make it accessible to more people, not just lawyers. Of course there are very few people who actually tuck up in bed on a cold winter's night with a cup of tea and a statute book, so it might as well have been written in Latin.

The Act restates the long existing law on the requirements of a valid Will. A Will must still be in writing and witnessed by two witnesses. The witnesses must be present when the Will is signed and must state on the document that they were present at the time the Will was signed. The witness must not be a beneficiary (or a spouse or defacto partner of a beneficiary) named in the Will.

In our experience most clients take very little interest in Wills until a rich uncle dies leaving them a beachfront property in the Coromandel. Suddenly the said client is anxious to know that the Will has been validly signed and witnessed!

The new Wills Act does introduce one significant change. Previously a Will that was not validly executed and witnessed was invalid and probate would not be granted. This tended to be rather distressing to the niece or nephew who had just found out they were to inherit a bach in Pauanui. They will now be relieved to learn that the new Act includes a provision allowing the High Court to make an order to declare a document valid if it is satisfied the document expressed the deceased's intentions. The Court can also correct clerical or technical errors in the Will.

The new Act serves as a timely reminder to all of us to begin visiting rich old uncles more regularly...

Push Play



Rob Wills insisted that we all (or most of us) participate in the Push Play corporate challenge at the Auckland Domain.

Don was lucky - he got to do the BBQ.

We of course were the last to leave the park.