

WOLLONGONG MERCURY

SINCE 1855

June 29 - 30, 2002

\$1.40 (incl GST)

WEEKENDER

HEY, HEY, IT'S SATURDAY

LIFTOUT INSIDE



DRIVE

ROLL OUT THE BARRA

LIFTOUT INSIDE



NEWS

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PAGE 2

Struck off!

A new era dawns for BHP



BHP cuts its historical links with our regional steel industry on Monday, but it leaves a 78-year legacy that has touched the lives of thousands of its workers. People like the Ward family, who have five generations of service. From Monday, BHP Steel becomes a stand alone company. FULL REPORT: PAGES 6-7-8-9

FAMILY OF STEEL: (From left) Aileen Ward, Ron Townsend, Lynne Townsend holding grandson Aaron, Tom Ward and Steven Townsend. Picture: KEN ROBERTSON

Lord Mayor unfit: Law Society

Wollongong Lord Mayor George Harrison has been struck off by The Law Society.

The controversial civic leader's practising certificate was cancelled at midnight last night.

He will have to mount a full appeal in the NSW Supreme Court if he is ever to practise law again.

Last night Councillor Harrison said he was embarrassed by the society's move, announced yesterday by Wollongong and District Law Society president Paul Hopkins.

He denied he had been struck off.

The Law Society initially took action to cancel Cr Harrison's practising certificate on March 20, but the decision was stayed pending the outcome of proceedings in the Supreme Court of Appeal which were concluded on June 21.

□ FULL REPORT PAGE 3



WHALE WATCH

National Parks and Wildlife Service volunteers yesterday counted 14 whales off Cape Solander, near Kurnell. Two whales were sighted at Eden.

Law Society strikes off Lord Mayor

By LOUISE TURK, PAUL
McINERNEY and JODIE DUFFY

Wollongong Lord Mayor George Harrison has been struck off by The Law Society.

Councillor Harrison's practising certificate was cancelled at midnight.

The controversial civic leader will now have to mount a full appeal in the NSW Supreme Court if he is ever to practise law again.

Last night Cr Harrison said he was embarrassed by the society's move, announced yesterday by Wollongong and District Law Society president Paul Hopkins.

Cr Harrison denied he had been struck off.

The Law Society initially took action to cancel Cr Harrison's practising certificate on March 20.

But the decision was stayed pending the outcome of proceedings in the Supreme Court of Appeal which were concluded on June 21.

"The basis of that stay was that (cancellation moves) would come into effect seven days after the Court of Appeal decision," Mr Hopkins said.

"If Cr Harrison had been successful in his appeal then he would have had the opportunity to approach the court to have The Law Society's decision challenged.

"However, Mr Harrison wasn't successful and as a result his practising certificate was cancelled."

Cr Harrison, a solicitor since 1973, had his hopes of a retrial in the Delcie Schipp case dashed in the Supreme Court of Appeal.

The fresh evidence which Cr Harrison had said was certain to overturn the earlier Supreme Court and Court of Appeal decisions was found by three judges not to be fresh at all.

The decision sparked the immediate resumption of bankruptcy proceedings against Cr Harrison as Mrs Schipp's lawyers try to extract the \$700,000 he has been ordered to pay her.

In addition, Cr Harrison announced earlier this week he was selling his legal practice.

Mr Hopkins said in order for Cr Harrison to ever practise again he would have to demonstrate to the NSW Supreme Court that he was a fit and proper person to hold a practising certificate.

"It is difficult to see that Cr Harrison would be able to, in the future, reverse that decision although the option is always open to someone to approach the Supreme Court," Mr Hopkins said.

"I think members of the profession are disappointed with what has occurred but are pleased to see the society has taken action which uplifts the ethical standards of the profession.

"It's a good example of the ramifications that will follow when you don't keep up those standards."

Asked if Cr Harrison's action had been embarrassing, Mr Hopkins said: "I'm sure he has embarrassed himself. We aren't happy as a group when these things occur because it's not how we would deal with our clients. Cr Harrison has disappointed a lot of his colleagues".

Speaking to the *Mercury*, Cr Harrison said he was embarrassed by the law society's move but denied he had been struck off.

"The society's withdrawal of my practising certificate is part of legislation introduced last year by the Carr Government in response to media headlines of Sydney barristers using bankruptcy to escape paying tax," he said.

"That's certainly not the case with me but the legislation, although well-intentioned, is very onerous on all lawyers facing bankruptcy proceedings.

"All I now want to do is get on and do my job as Lord Mayor of this city and rebuild the Lagoon Restaurant."

"This has been a very difficult time for me and the media has been ruthless," Cr Harrison said.



CR HARRISON

Illawarra Region Structures Foreperson

WALTER Construction Group Limited is a leading Australian Construction Contractor with interests in Civil and multi-disciplined Engineering, Building and Mining services.

WALTER is seeking a Structures Foreperson for the Illawarra Wastewater Strategy. The Project includes a major upgrade of the existing Wollongong STP, as well as construction of new sewage pump stations and transfer pipelines from Bellambi and Port Kembla STPs to Wollongong.

The successful applicant requires around ten years experience in civil engineering on structures to work on the project.

WALTER has a strong focus on safety and the successful candidate will need to demonstrate abilities to ensure the works are constructed in accordance with the highest safety standards. The successful candidate will be required to take a leading role in the management of safety on the site, and a background in management of these issues would be an advantage.

The project office will be located in Wollongong. The Project's duration is approximately twenty months. An attractive remuneration package will be offered, commensurate with qualifications, skills and experience.

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