

The Forbes Society is pleased to inform members that the **NSW Solicitor General, Michael Sexton SC** will deliver the **Fourteenth Annual Plunkett Lecture** “The Model of a Modern Solicitor General” **this Thursday, 23 October 2025** at 5:30 pm in Banco Court, Level 13 Law Courts Building.

Michael Sexton SC was appointed Solicitor General in 1998.

John Hubert Plunkett, for whom this Annual Lecture is named, arrived in NSW from Ireland in 1832. For more than 30 years thereafter he made a major contribution to colonial law and society, serving, inter alia, as Solicitor General and Attorney General.

This is an **in person** event - if you are unable to attend in person, to receive details for **online viewing** please **register** here [Plunkett Lecture 23.10.25 \(online\)](#) – the viewing link will be in the emailed confirmation you will receive after registering. No registration is needed to attend in person.

Legal history tutorial: [Professor Gabrielle Wolf](#) (Monash University, formerly Deakin University), a recipient of a grant from the **Forbes Fund** in 2023, will deliver a legal history tutorial on **Thursday 30 October** in Court 13A, at 5:15 pm, “Medical Dominance and the Law: European Medical Exiles in Tasmania, 1933–1951”.

Abstract - Doctors who escaped Nazi-occupied Europe and immigrated to Australia were greeted mostly with hostility by representatives of the local medical profession. Australian doctors agitated for amendment of legislation that governed registration of medical practitioners in each state, to remove any legal entitlement of the European medical exiles to practise medicine. Tasmania’s Parliament was the first Australian legislature to accede to these medical practitioners’ pressure, and did so before World War Two began. This presentation will explore why some Tasmanian doctors were especially eager to prevent the émigrés from practising medicine, and why they were able to achieve their objective so quickly. It will also reflect on this episode as a case study of how doctors attempted (with varying success) to use licensing laws to entrench the dominance of the medical profession.

Bio - Dr Gabrielle Wolf is a Professor in the Faculty of Law at Monash University. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts (with Honours), Bachelor of Laws and PhD in history from the University of Melbourne. Gabrielle has published her research on the current and past regulation of health practitioners, public health law, health records, sentencing law and theatre history. She previously worked as a judge’s research associate and as a lawyer in private practice and in-house.

This is an **in person** event - if you are unable to attend in person, to receive details for **online viewing** please **register** here [Professor Gabrielle Wolf Tutorial 30.10.25 \(online\)](#) – the viewing link will be in the emailed confirmation you will receive after registering. No registration is needed to attend in person.

From ANZLHS: Registration and draft conference program now available for the **44th Annual ANZLHS conference - 'Currency' - Thursday 27 to Saturday 29 November**

The [draft conference program](#) for the forthcoming ANZLHS conference, which will be held at the University of Melbourne as part of the **Congress of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences**, is now

live. Registration for the event is now open. Both can be located at <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/44th-anzlhs-conference>

David Ash (Life member of the Forbes Society) will be in Session **B Corporate law and corporations** on Friday 28 November, speaking on 'Can an immortal person have currency? A reassessment of the corporation by reference to limited liability'. If anyone will be in Melbourne, David would love to see them.

Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law at the University of Melbourne 30th anniversary event In addition to the ANZLHS conference, on Thursday 27 November the Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law will be holding a 30th anniversary event. This event is open to all participants in the ANZLHS conference and further details can be found on the ANZLHS conference website.

Through the **Francis Forbes Fund** the Forbes Society supports a prize awarded for the best presentation by a higher degree research student or an early career researcher at the Annual ANZLHS conference. This paper may be published in *law&history*.

2026 Forbes events: A range of legal history tutorials will be presented in Court 13A, Level 13 Law Courts Building including by previous recipients of grants from the **Francis Forbes Fund**. We are delighted to announce presenters for early 2026:

- Occasional lecture on the origin of the doctrine of mutual wills – **Emeritus Professor Ros Croucher AM** (combined with 2025 Essayists presentation) – 10 February 2026, 5.30 pm (Banco Court)
- [Professor Paul B. Miller](#) (Robert and Marion Short Professor of Law and Associate Dean for International & Graduate Programs at Notre Dame Law School) – 18 February 2026
- [Professor Prue Vines](#) (Faculty of Law, UNSW) – 3 March 2026
- [Professor Fleur Johns](#) (Dean and Head of School, The University of Sydney Law School) – 31 March 2026
- [Associate Professor Alecia Simmonds](#) (University of Technology Sydney) 30 April 2026

Registration details for these events will follow.

FROM OUR RECENT EVENTS: Review the slides from recent events on our events homepage, at <https://forbessociety.org.au/>:

- the **legal history tutorial** by [Associate Prof Marina Nehme](#) (University of New South Wales) Thursday 18 September 2025 *"Corporate Reforms and the Emergence of Proprietary Companies in Victoria in 1896"* also with an abstract and biographical details.
- the **occasional lecture** by **Professor Mark Lunney** on Monday 11 August, *'The state of the road was such "as to be a disgrace to the responsible city officers": Immunity for nonfeasance for repair of roads and its challenges to the imperial legal order in the late nineteenth century'*
- the **legal history tutorial** by **Inma Conde** on Tuesday 29 July, *"Origins of the UN Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods"*

The slides from the **Forbes Lecture** by **Professor Kathy Bowrey** on Tuesday 22 July, *'The Diva, her Lover and the Recording Company scheme to "get Melba": Introducing Dame Nellie Melba (1861-1931), the business woman'* are available on our website, at forbessociety.org.au/lectures/forbes-lecture/ together with the programme. Slide 3 contains a link to the audio clip we were unable to play on the night: you can listen to Chant Vénitien by Dame Nellie Melba from the National Film and Sound Archives of Australia website.

If you have any queries, please email secretariat@forbessociety.org.au.

The Society is very grateful to the Hon. A S Bell, Chief Justice of NSW, for his continued generous permission to use Supreme Court facilities.

Upcoming dates

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| 14 October | Lawyers and Money: 20 Years on – Bret Walker AO SC and The Ethics Centre’s Executive Director of Dr Simon Longstaff AO – (Banco Court), 5.30 pm |
| 23 October | 14 th Annual Plunkett Lecture – NSW Solicitor General, Michael Sexton SC (Banco Court), 5.30 pm |
| 30 October | Legal history tutorial – Associate Prof Gabrielle Wolf (Monash University) (Court 13A), 5.15 pm |
| 27 – 29 Nov | ANZLHS Conference 2025 at The University of Melbourne |
| 2026 | |
| 10 February | Occasional lecture on the origin of the doctrine of mutual wills – Emeritus Professor Ros Croucher AM (combined with Essayists presentation) – 5.30 pm (Banco Court) |
| 18 February | Legal history tutorial – Professor Paul B. Miller (Robert and Marion Short Professor of Law and Associate Dean for International & Graduate Programs at Notre Dame Law School) – 5.15 pm (Court 13A) |
| 3 March | Legal history tutorial – Professor Prue Vines – 5.15 pm (Court 13A) |
| 31 March | Legal history tutorial – Professor Fleur Johns – 5.15 pm (Court 13A) |
| 30 April | Legal history tutorial – Associate Professor Alecia Simmons – 5.15 pm (Court 13A) |
| 19 May | Joint presentation with the Ngara Yura Committee Towards Truth – 5.30 pm (Banco Court) |

Secretariat of the Francis Forbes Society



The Francis Forbes Society for Australian Legal History

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