

The Samuel Griffith Society

President's Report

November 2013

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2013

It has been quite an exciting year for those who interest themselves in constitutional affairs. The tide of two threats has receded: media regulation and the possibility of a referendum for the constitutional recognition of local authorities. The former would have had, ironically for this Society, to surmount the hurdle of the implied constitutional freedom of political discourse; and the latter would have required the persuasion of a healthily sceptical electorate of the proposition that central government knows best, and should be entitled to target at whim the beneficiaries of its bounty. The Society needs to be wary however of tides that turn.

The website statistics continue to indicate a growing interest in the affairs of the Society. For example, there have been 40,000 hits and 10,000 visits this October to our website, by comparison with 27,000 and 5,000 respectively, for October last year.

I note with sadness the passing of Charles Copeman, a long and loyal supporter of the Society, Ronald Archer, David Thomson, Richard Gertzel and Geoffrey Miller, other long-term and valued members.

The current membership of the Society is 384 including 30 members who have joined during the past year.

The Society congratulates Bob Day on his election to the Senate where I have no doubt he will make a major contribution to the affairs of the nation.

The current conference is full of promise, and I do not doubt will attract the same degree of interest as those in the past.

I welcome all who have attended this meeting and thank you for your contributions to the affairs of the Society.

I Callinan AC
President
9 November, 2013