

The state of the State

What's happening economically in our fair State? At Grope Hamilton Lawyers we can judge it by the type of work we are currently undertaking.

When it comes to an economic downturn, Adelaide avoids the economic highs and lows the eastern states experience. We don't feel the burn as fiercely but we don't feel the intense buzz either.

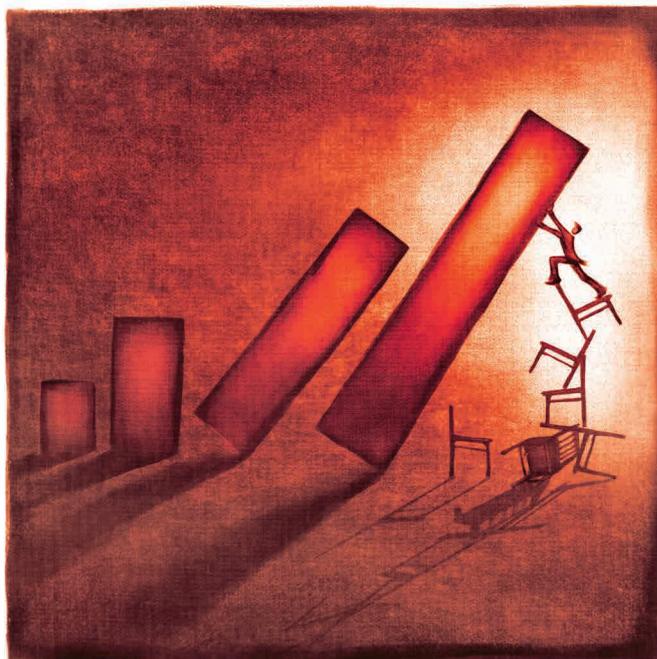
Nor should we be beguiled by the cranes on the north western city skyline associated with the new RAH, the Medical Research Centre, the Convention Centre or the Adelaide Oval. These projects are all Government funded from State borrowings, providing little benefit to local SMEs, business or private clients.

The economy remains very flat with our clients universally reporting subdued business performance and little or no growth. Holding their own and cutting costs, including personal expenditure, is the common response.

So what is flavour of the month in legal work? Fortunately we have a broad client base across many industry sectors including Adelaide based SMEs, private clients and investors, small property developers and one or two small cap locally based public companies.

As the economy flattens, so do the number of new property and business transactions. This has been the new norm for a few years now. Small to medium scale business disputes have escalated because in tough times, there's greater incentive for people to dispute liability to pay on meritorious and (it appears) unmeritorious grounds.

We are acting for liquidators or dealing with them on behalf of creditors. And we're doing people's wills and estate planning and smaller scale property investments. There are still company and trust formations; the drafting of general commercial contracts; and of course people are still needing conveyancing services when buying and selling homes.



The need for our family law services through Alexandra Wright continues unabated.

There seems no immediate sign of the general economy changing. There is evidence that in these hard financial times clients have cut back on legal work - using their lawyer when they must to keep their existing interests or affairs rolling along.

Celebrating *our 30th Anniversary Year*

This year we celebrate our 30th anniversary. The original Grope Hamilton Lawyers opened in 1983 with Managing Partner Mark Hamilton at the helm. For four years during the late 80s it merged firstly with Johnsons Lawyers, then Finlaysons. But the firm returned to its true roots and philosophies in 1991 and ever since has been fiercely focused on its vision to become Adelaide's leading commercial boutique law firm. Even after 30 years, the firm's founders are not intending to go

anywhere soon. They're looking forward to driving the next era of Grope Hamilton Lawyers.



Firm founders Peter Grope (left) and Mark Hamilton

GROPE HAMILTON LAWYERS

Ethical Service Innovative Solutions Astute Advice Strategic Focus
Specialist Excellence Tailored Approach Personalised Service Ethical
Strategic Focus Ethical Service Innovative Solutions Astute Advice

Strengthening our SERVICES

Alexandra Wright New family lawyer



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Expertise at a *glance*:

- Family law
- Criminal law/traffic law
- Wills and estates
- General civil and commercial law

Our family and criminal law clients will enjoy access to Alexandra - the perfect mix of tenacious lawyer and professional practitioner.

A determined, outcome driven advocate for her clients, Alexandra specialises in family and criminal law. She has a broad cross section of family law experience and knowledge. When working with our clients who are living through trying circumstances, she offers strong support, appropriate empathy and plain-language legal advice. While skilled in mediating agreements, if required, she fights tenaciously for her clients.

Colin Dorrian New Partner



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Expertise at a *glance*:

- Franchising and business advice
- Civil and commercial litigation
- Wills and estates
- Personal injury
- Criminal law

Colin's extensive business experience empowers him to take a highly strategic approach to solving his clients' problems, rather than just giving technical advice.

With 20 years legal experience in city and rural private practice, Colin's trump card is his exceptional business skills honed from many years of commercial experience outside of the legal industry.



"And then it hit me. I've reached that stage in life where most of my friends are lawyers."

From the New Yorker Book of Lawyer Cartoons

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT

THE SPOT WHERE WE LET OUR CLIENTS SPEAK FOR US!

"My brothers and I would like to express our many thanks for your hard work and diligence on our behalf in settlement of our mother's estate and associated legal issues. Your dealings in court and mediation were outstanding. Thanks for your knowledge, efficiency and compassion."

Sam, John and Anna

Tonia Karagiannis a partner in the commercial and civil litigation section of the firm, recently negotiated a favourable settlement for her clients on a complicated and hard fought estate litigation matter.



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For the love of Latin

Mark Hamilton's love and use of latin in law has bamboozled team members and clients alike for years. Here Mark urges our clients who, like most, are battling hard through a tough economic climate, to remain stoic.

perfer et obdura; dolor hic tibi proderit olim

Translation: Be patient and tough; some day this pain will be useful to you

National Wine Law Group formed

"As a group, our wine law credentials are unsurpassed by any law firm and I look forward to offering our Wine Sector legal services for the benefit of clients all across Australia."

Managing Partner, Mark Hamilton, has deftly blended group members with wine sector experience into a formalised powerhouse of wine law experts to service Australia's wine industry.

Now our new National Wine Group is poised to flex its extensive experience and expertise to provide strategically insightful solutions to matters and issues across this dynamic industry.



Mark Hamilton

His experience is unrivalled, his industry clout acknowledged.

Mark is a strategically insightful commercial lawyer with an amazing depth of experience in the wine industry. Born into South Australia's first wine family dynasty, he was a director of a major wine company at 21, set up his own law firm at 30 and has practiced extensively since as a commercial lawyer on a large variety of wine sector matters. Mark also runs his own wine growing and bulk wine selling operation, Hamilton's Ewell Vineyards,

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|| Mark Hamilton's strategy was innovative and effective. The way Mark approached our particular dispute was to create enough doubt in the mind of the receiver of the distributor that they tended to take Mark's advice over that of their own lawyers. ||

Peter Schulz, Proprietor, Turkey Flat Vineyards, Barossa Valley



Lorenzo Mazzocchetti

His property knowledge is unsurpassed in Adelaide.

With highly developed strategic skills, Lorenzo proactively provides commercially realistic legal solutions. He advises on property acquisitions and joint venture arrangements through to drafting infrastructure, construction and service agreements, leasing and general commercial documentation. Lorenzo conducted due diligence and completed the acquisition of the Barossa Valley's iconic Seppeltsfield.



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Nick Baldock

Tenacious, knowledgeable all round corporate and commercial lawyer.

Partner Nick Baldock's life is neither enhanced nor burdened - depending on your viewpoint - with ownership of any wine industry assets, but he has acted for years for a number of long term sector participants based here in Australia as well as the US. Nick is a great all-around commercial lawyer who deftly handles transactions and disputes and will work tenaciously in your best interests.



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Jim Bidstrup

Doyen conveyancer, long term grape grower.

Our doyen conveyancer Jim Bidstrup is a long term grape grower at Clare so he understands the industry challenges and foibles at grass roots level if you'll excuse the pun. A lover of big red wines, Jim almost certainly holds the record for the longest serving member of a wine club in Adelaide, and has acted for numerous land related wine industry transactions. You'd be mad not to mine his exceptional knowledge for your business.



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What to expect from us in 2013

2013 is the year of connecting with clients, strengthening relationships and going the extra mile. Why? Because good professional relationships lead to a deeper understanding of our clients' businesses and industries, which results in a higher level of commercially sound advice that can create a competitive edge for our clients.

So this year expect more communication, more quality service, and more insight into your business needs along with the excellent critical reasoning ability and problem solving skills that all this will bring to the table.

Going the *extra mile* for our clients

Nurturing a professional relationship based on understanding a client's needs as well as their industry and business, keeps Grope Hamilton Lawyers at the head of the boutique commercial law firm pack in Adelaide.

In the race to out-do each other on client service, Managing Partner, Mark Hamilton, fears that law firms may be forgetting to nurture technical excellence.

Clients want more than just the answer to their legal problem. So we strive to improve the client experience, by running staff programs to enhance skills such as empathy, listening and responsiveness.

Mark says "Our clients say our firm has a culture of technical excellence yet still goes the extra mile to improve service by building strong business relationships."

"When I started practise over 30 years ago, people used lawyers just to provide a specific legal service without really engaging the lawyer as an advisor. Now they view their lawyer like their external accountant; as part of an ongoing involved relationship.

"Our clients appreciate both the value of this extra service and building relationships with their lawyers. The result is a deeper understanding of their business, and a higher level of commercially sound advice that can create a competitive edge for our clients.

"Good commercial lawyers must have excellent critical reasoning ability and problem solving skills along with knowledge and insight into their clients' industries and businesses. We continually strive to go the extra mile for our clients. This is what separates the good and very good lawyers," says Mark.



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Offering efficient and cost effective advice in all aspects of conveyancing

Our conveyancing team is headed by long term Grope Hamilton Lawyers stalwart, Jim Bidstrup. As our senior conveyancer, he brings a working lifetime of experience to all facets of commercial and residential conveyancing.

Supported by registered conveyancer, Jeni Branolt, they offer efficient and cost effective advice and assistance for purchasers, vendors, developers, investors and land agents in all aspects of conveyancing including:

- Sale and purchase of homes
- Sale and purchase of commercial buildings
- The sub-division of land
- Sale and purchase of rural properties

Grope Hamilton Lawyers' conveyancing clients also have backup and access to the firm's property lawyers if any complications or difficulties with settlement arise.

Meet our Conveyancing Team

Jim Bidstrup Senior Conveyancer



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Jeni Branolt Registered Conveyancer



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Lucy Pargeter Searches



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