

## The Heritage Committee hosts Lord Reading Club dinner

As part of the Law Society Heritage Committee's Diversifying the Bar: Lawyers Make History project, the Society hosted a discussion and dinner with former members of the Reading Law Club and the Lady Reading Club on September 10, 2009. The club, named after the first Jewish Lord Chief Justice for England, was established in 1947 in response to the Lawyers Club restriction of membership to white Christian male lawyers under 40.

Over dinner, the participants reminisced about the clubs and provided valuable insight into the anti-Semitism Jewish lawyers faced in the legal profession and Canadian society at large between the 1940s and 60s when these lawyers began their careers.

The Law Society Heritage Committee's chair, Constance Backhouse, welcomed the participants with a reference to the importance of their stories: "We can record the clubs' stories in the hope that future generations can learn



*from what you experienced and avoid the prejudices and racism that should have no place in the legal profession or in society at large."*

In addressing the participants at dinner, the Treasurer noted: "You were subjected to attitudes and actions that had no place in a society that had just fought a war against the evils of Nazism and no place in a profession whose members and whose regulator were expected to uphold principles of justice, fairness and the public interest. It is a testament to your

*strength, courage and fortitude that despite everything you persevered and excelled."*

In 1964, the Lawyers Club extended automatic membership to all male members of the Reading Law Club. With the original impetus for the Club removed, it gradually ceased activities. The Lady Reading Club, whose members were the wives of Reading Law Club members, continued to raise funds for scholarships for law school and bar admission students until the 1970s. ■

## Osgoode Society celebrates 30th anniversary

The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, and held an all-day symposium on Canadian legal history on October 30, followed by a dinner at Osgoode Hall. The symposium was attended by nearly 100 people, and Professor John Beattie, the eminent English legal historian from the University of Toronto, delivered the keynote speech at the dinner.

The Osgoode Society was founded by The Honourable Roy McMurtry, O.C. in 1979, who remains the current president. Mr. McMurtry noted that over the last three decades the society has published 78 books and interviewed over 500 people for its oral history programme – and both of these achievements far outstrip those of any other legal history society in the world.

## Take our Kids to Work at Osgoode Hall 2009

On November 4, 270 grade 9 students and their parents or guardians gathered in the Lamont Learning Centre at Osgoode Hall for Take our Kids to Work, a nationwide job-shadowing experience organized by the Learning Partnership.

Another 150 participants joined via live webcast. This was the first year the day was open to participants province-wide.

Six speakers gave students an overview of the steps to becoming a lawyer or a paralegal, what it means to work in the field of law and the range of professional options available after graduation. Presenters included Cettina Cornish and Stephen McClyment of the Law Society; the Hon Madam Justice Mavin Wong from the Ontario Court of Justice; Erinn O'Marra, Assistant Crown Attorney for the Region of Peel; Michael Lacy from Lacy Barristers; and Alyssa Manning from Vandervennen Lehrer.

This was the fourth time the Law Society has hosted this program.