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Legal longevity

Haille Paine solicitors, the Highlands' oldest legal practice, celebrates its 140th anniversary this year, an achievement that owes its beginnings to the surprising and fluctuating health of founder Charles Clarence Gale.

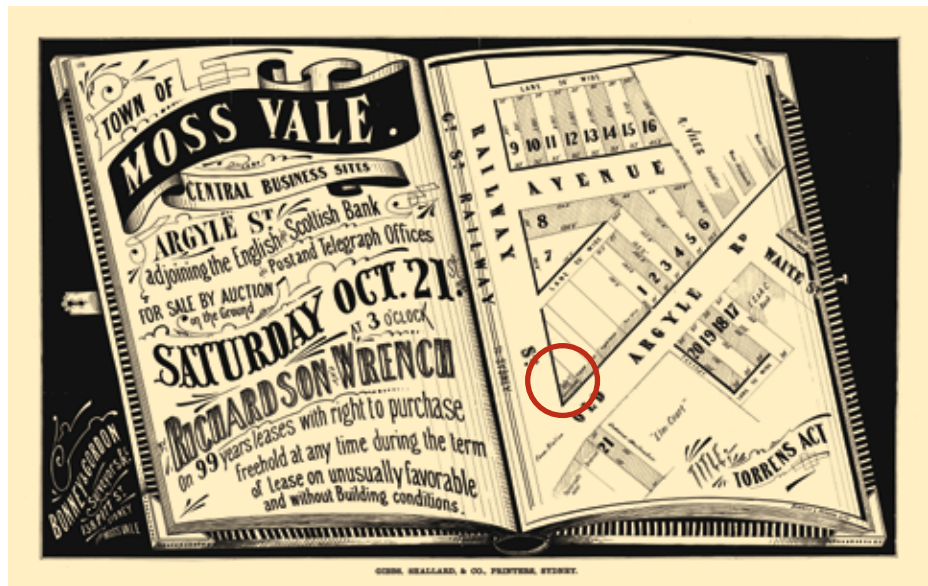
Both of today's principals, David Allen and Rohan McAlpine, have backgrounds in Sydney law firms and moved with their families to the Highlands for a rural lifestyle. Gale also left a Sydney law firm, but for health reasons.

"Gale was 25 in September 1879 when he moved to the Southern Highlands for the clean air," says Tina Allen, the wife of David Allen and an author who has been researching the practice's history. "He was tall and lean but had been refused life insurance due to poor health."

For two years, Goulburn solicitor Augustine Betts joined Gale two days a week to build the practice. The pair established themselves in Moss Vale just 16 years after the first subdivision of land (1863) and 12 years after the arrival of the railway (1867). By the late 1880s, Gale, who married Moss Vale's Isabel 'Mabel' Ross, had three legal colleagues: two in Moss Vale and one in Bowral.

In 1901, Gale formed a partnership with Bennington Haille Paine, who left a legal practice in Windsor to come to Moss Vale. "This took the weight off Gale's shoulders so he could regain his health," says Tina. "He later established a practice in Sydney with one of his sons. Charles surprised everyone by living to 102."

In Moss Vale, Bennington Paine was joined by his son, Haille Hands Paine,



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
1882 MOSS VALE AUCTION
POSTER FOR COMMERCIAL
PREMISES (AREA CIRCLED
IS THE ORIGINAL PRACTICE
LOCATION); DAVID ALLEN
AND ROHAN McALPINE
(PHOTOGRAPH TERRY
MULLER-MAHER); CHARLES
CLARENCE GALE.

in 1927 and for more than 50 years the practice was known as B. Haille Paine and Son. Former managing principal Haille Smith, who retired in 2001, was the last descendant of the Paine family to be involved with the practice – a family connection that lasted a century. Smith, who lives in Burradoo, says the practice "was a sound training ground for many solicitors". This includes Peter Fleming, who succeeded him.

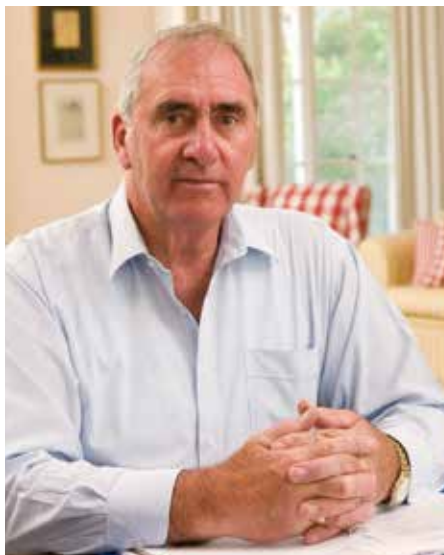
The practice recently moved from Bowral's Merrigang Street to the modern CBD building at 18 Station Street, opposite the railway station (above Witchery). Items on display in the boardroom date from the 1830s, including an 1882 auction poster for

commercial sites in Moss Vale, which shows the practice's first premises on the corner of Railway Street and Old Argyle Road.

"Our safe deposit boxes start from the original numbering and we still have the contents in box number three – the title deeds for the purchase of a block in Berrima in 1833," says Tina. "It's on parchment paper with a wax seal, and the land is measured in roods and chains."

"There are families who have used Haille Paine solicitors for three generations," she adds. Today the practice has eight staff "who continue the traditional, caring approach experienced by clients for more than 100 years".

Vale John Fahey



On September 25, as the State Funeral was held for former NSW premier John Fahey AC at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney, he was also remembered at his old school, Chevalier College in Burradoo, which will host a community celebration of John's life in 2021. John (1945-2020) grew up in Picton and won a bursary to attend Chevalier College, enrolling in 1958 and graduating in 1962. He captained the first cricket team and played in the first rugby team. John went on to play rugby league for Canterbury Bulldogs in his youth. Sport was always close to his heart and he is remembered by many for his celebratory leap when Sydney won the 2000

Olympics bid in 1993. On Australia Day 1994 he thwarted an attack on Prince Charles, when he and Ian Kiernan tackled student David Kang. John and his wife Colleen had three children, Melanie, Matthew and Tiffany, and moved to Burradoo in 1988, where they built their family home. After Tiffany died in a car accident in 2006, the Faheys raised her children, Amber and Campbell. John served as NSW premier (1992-1995) and federal finance minister (1996-2001) before retiring from politics due to health reasons. More recently he was president of the World Anti-Doping Agency (2008-2014) and Chancellor of the Australian Catholic University from 2014.