

ADDRESS BY  
HIS HONOUR MR TOM PAULING AO QC  
**ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**  
ON THE OCCASION OF  
**BOOK LAUNCH *FORTY FINE YEARS***  
Darwin High School  
7 December 2008

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In Shakespeare's comedy "Twelfth Night", Duke Orsino is madly and melodramatically in love with Olivia, a rich Countess, and Shakespeare begins the play with these lines:

*If music be the food of love, play on;  
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,  
The appetite may sicken, and so die.*

What would the opening lines of "Forty-Fine Years" be if Shakespeare had penned them? Perhaps:

*If love of food be music, play on!*

It would be a symphony orchestra at least.

For here dear friends we are dealing with some serious foodies.

Looking back over this splendid and sumptuous chronicle of fine people who constantly set new benchmarks of excellence in the range of products we set on our tables; it may be easy to forget just how basic things were in 1968. Even though George Fortiades and Paul Kanaris began bringing up small goods in the 1950s sophistication was far away.

When Parap Fruit and Veg was founded where Prickles restaurant now sits, the selection of sausage was between Polony and Devon and a few salamis from Western Australia. WA then serviced Darwin with WA State Ships whose names are immortalised in Darwin Street names such as Koolama, Koolinda and Kybra.

It was the State Ship *Koolinda* that delivered a young Rene Kanaris to Darwin on Boxing Day in 1946 when I was less than a fortnight old.

Cheeses were almost all cheddars, but included an excellent Watsonia Cheese in cloth and Dutch, Edam and Gouda. Details on new products were discovered from travelling salesmen who came two or three times a year and seemed to time their visits to the back of Parap Fruit and veg, and then Parap Fine Foods, in the later afternoon. This was when a motley crew of friends drifted in for an after-work drink. A roll call would include:

Danny Thomas, Jeff Pinkerton, Ken Peterson, Bert Kraft, Libby Cridland, Ross Anictomatis, Joe Doyle, Barry Tiernan, Alan

Metcalf – and Paul insists that I include mention of Tessa and myself.

On Fridays the entire ANZ staff were to be found ‘out the back’. Our son Fred’s first point of call after his birth was on a trolley still in use ‘out the back’ while Tessa and I and Paul and Rene ‘wetted the baby’s head’.

Some well known names enjoyed sliced meats, cheese and a drink ‘out the back’, including George Negus, the comedian Dave Allen and especially Barry Humphries who in the persona of Dame Edna told her audience that the Greek woman in Darwin made the best Taramosalata in the world. Rene’s recipe is at page 27.

The travellers and their tantalising catalogues of new taste sensations came from an increasing number of agencies, including Socomin and Pickle Agencies, and then a French cheese called Kiri was introduced and appetites were whetted.

Jacob Cheeses were also popular. Of course, today, Neville can find anything anywhere via the internet and we are the beneficiaries of this surfeit of choice.

But that is only a little bit of the wonder that these forty fine years have brought. Paul and Rene, and then Neville and Paula, have become family to many of us. We have been to christenings, weddings and namings, and they have been to the big “0” parties –

40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup> my Swearing-in last year and family Sundays with souvla at Ross Smith Avenue.

More than that, we treasure the unique Rene welcome to the shop – “Hello Tom”, the prodigious memory for names, the little Parap kids we have seen grow and blossom with words of wisdom, encouragement and genuine warmth from both Paul and Rene and those kids’ kids, and the recipes we have written down and played with. And we’ve received sound advice on how to improve a dish, match a taste and, over many years, to match a wine to a recipe. You certainly don’t go to Parap Fine Foods just to shop.

How did this all come about? The story is here in this wonderful book – jammed with photo memorabilia, yarns, favourite recipes and vivid history. It is impossible to summarise. It is a gourmet journey of intoxicating charm.

Neville was very focussed about where this production was going for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Peter and Sheila Forrest have done a superb job in achieving his vision. I will leave it to Neville to thank them both.

My pleasant task is to launch this book and to invite you to share it with your friends and family. There can be no better Christmas present for 2008 than this rich and tasteful history. It is worth the small cost for the recipes alone.

It should not be left to obituaries to hear terms such as “much loved”, “much admired” and “treasured”. The Pantazis family deserve every accolade for having brought to the Northern Territory not only the finest ingredients for our delectation, but also a style, a friendship, a joy that has marked these forty fine years as remarkable and unmatched.

Also unmatched is the generosity of spirit when they rejoice in their achievements or accomplishments of others as you will discover in the book.

It is something wonderful to walk through the door of such a pleasure dome and be excited. We all have been excited. We all will continue to be excited.

It has indeed been a privilege to be invited to launch this glorious account of our dearest Epicureans. I cannot delay.

*Forty-Fine Years* is officially launched!

Thank you all so much.