

RSB:SND

Revised

IN THE DISTRICT COURT  
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE ACTING CHIEF JUDGE  
JUDGE JAMES BENNETT SC  
AND THE JUDGES OF THE COURT

MONDAY 24 OCTOBER 2022

**SWEARING IN OF HIS HONOUR JUDGE KEVIN LEO ANDRONOS SC AS  
A JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Attorney General Mark Speakman SC MP on behalf of the New South Wales  
Bar Association  
Ms J van der Plaats, President, Law Society of New South Wales, on behalf of  
solicitors

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(Commissions read)

(Oaths of office taken)

BENNETT SC: A/CJ: The affirmations will be placed in the court archive.

Judge Andronos, on behalf of the Court I would like to welcome you to  
the Court. You come highly recommended I might say. We have not had the  
opportunity of working together in any time in our past, but I am looking  
forward to the chance this appointment will give us now. Congratulations.

Mr Attorney.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL: May it please the Court. I acknowledge the  
traditional custodians of the land on which we gather, the Gadigal of the Eora  
Nation, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

On behalf of our State and the Bar it is my great pleasure to congratulate  
your Honour on your appointment as a judge of the District Court of New South  
Wales.

We are joined here today by members of your family, including  
your Honour's wife, Elizabeth Frizell, your son Ben, your daughter Louisa and

RSB:SND

your brother Perry. We are joined online by your mother Mary.

Special mention to your father, Anargyros or Andy, as everyone knew him, who died very recently and I offer you and your family my deepest condolences.

Your Honour was born in 1964 at St Margaret's Hospital, Darlinghurst. You grew up in Dundas with your parents and older brother Perry. Your parents emigrated to Australia in the 1950s from Greece, and Port Said in Egypt. They lived in the same house they moved into almost 60 years ago.

The house in Dundas has been a constant in your life. Your parents opened a general store from the front yard to serve the local community. Your deep connection to family and community today was shaped by your parents. Connection to community and family played a huge role in your upbringing, with big gatherings full of music, food and fun, bringing joy and many happy memories.

Your older brother Perry and you were very close, sharing a deep love of music, especially the guitar. Both of you are very talented guitar players and love to compose music. Perry made a career of it by becoming the bass player of the Australian ska band, the Allnitters. A few of us here today of a certain age have danced or in my case attempted to dance to their song Montego Bay.

Your first words were in Greek. Only when you attended Dundas Public School did you start to speak English regularly. You were not into sport, but you were an excellent Greek dancer. So good that you were made dance captain of the local show, a fact I am told your mother is still very proud of today.

You were school captain of both Dundas Public School and Macquarie

RSB:SND

Boys High School in Parramatta and you excelled academically.

Your dream was to work in the music industry. You sought work experience with progressive rock icon Mario Millo. You enjoyed every minute of being his dogsbody. You also loved being a roadie for various bands in Sydney, including your brother's bands. Music was your life but your love of law is its equal.

Post school, from 1983 to 1988, you studied at Sydney University, where you completed bachelor of arts and bachelor of law degrees. In 1989 you became the associate to R F Loveday J. In 1990 you began as a solicitor with Allen Allen & Hemsley. Your work included commercial litigation, media and intellectual property, including a stint as inhouse counsel at Channel 9. Your excellence was recognised in promotion to senior associate in 1994.

You moved to Gilbert & Tobin in 1995 as a senior lawyer and became a partner in 1997. Your Honour was called to the bar in 2000 and had chambers on 11 Wentworth. You were a reader to David Hammerschlag, who of course is now Hammerschlag J.

You first met a talented barrister named Elizabeth Frizell, another Hammerschlag reader at the time. You and your future wife were opponents on a few occasions, although she has noted you are probably leading two nil. Liz recalls you being exceedingly polite and a thoroughly well prepared barrister. Hammerschlag J remembers you being a bright lawyer with unquestionable integrity and reliability.

These skills were put to the test early when you worked as a junior for Martin Einfeld KC. Martin had a reputation among barristers, including me when I was his junior, for being supremely prepared. His junior and he would often sit in his chambers for hours upon hours until a case was ready. Liz

RSB:SND

notes that you hold the unofficial record of 19 straight hours.

Martin disputes that he would ever keep you in chambers this long, but does not dispute the talent and skill that you had as his junior. You were astute, diligent and meticulous in every piece of work. He recalls that you were not a sycophant to your senior colleagues and you held no fear in giving your opinion at the appropriate time.

On 11 Wentworth you grew your broad legal experience in areas of contract, equity and trusts, intellectual property, real property, ICAC inquiries, other commissions of inquiry, corporations and consumer law. Your expertise in franchise is widely recognised and you have advised the ACCC in many matters.

In 2001 and 2002 you appeared for the liquidators of the HIH Insurance Group at the HIH Royal Commission before Commissioner Neville Owen. That of course explored the demise of HIH, which the Commissioner described as a “shambling journey towards oblivion”.

In 2007 and 2008 you appeared for the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service at the Equine Influenza Inquiry before the Honourable Ian Callinan KC, which sought to understand the circumstances contributing to the outbreak of the equine influenza virus into the general horse population in Australia in 2007.

Those with experience before commissions of inquiry will know that your work in these matters is a testament to your expertise, your strategic thinking and your document management.

In 2014 you were appointed senior counsel and continued practising at 11 Wentworth until now. Your colleagues there describe you as thoughtful and unfailingly polite. Your guitar has been a constant presence in your chambers,

RSB:SND

but they are disappointed that you have given no public performances or not many.

Your colleague Simon Keizer describes you as a great mentor, a wonderful collaborator and a dear friend. All have said that you will be deeply missed.

Your diligence in professional life is exceeded in your personal life. The lesson you learnt from your father in childhood that there is more to life than work is made clear by the comments your family and friends have made about you as a human being. Your wife says you are a dedicated family man.

After meeting Liz in 2000, you began dating in 2001 and were married at Freshwater in 2005. Ben was born in 2006 and Louisa followed in 2009. You all live together on the north shore. You are a close family. It helps that your children share your love of music. Both Ben and Louisa are gifted musicians. As your family grew, so did your guitar collection. This passion now extends to about ten guitars. Liz has noted that during lockdown you were able to conduct most business online with a guitar on your lap.

Liz and you are a great team. She is so grateful for your encouragement in her decision to retrain to become a French translator and tutor. Together you are active parents. There is nothing you like better than being around your family. You have not missed a soccer game or a recital, and you are always a willing volunteer at the children's schools, much to the surprise of other parents when they find out about your job.

Your other big passion is travel. This started when you were young and you had flicked through many travel catalogues in Dundas. It was cemented at 12 when you took a trip with your parents back to Greece. It is also a trip you took with your family in 2016. You visited Chania in Crete to introduce Ben

RSB:SND

and Louisa to their Greek heritage. They loved the holiday and were astonished to discover that you can speak pretty fluent Greek.

Colleagues have dubbed you the chambers travel agent as whenever someone is planning a holiday they come to you for the best recommendations. Your favourite places are New Orleans, New York, Venice and Rome because they satisfy your passion for music, as well as your interest in American history and renaissance Europe.

Your Honour, you are a much admired colleague and loved friend and family member. Family and friends know you to be measured, thoughtful, kind, even-handed and perspective.

Hammerschlag J offers that your quiet courage, thoroughness and reliability will be particularly valuable on the Bench. Einfeld KC says you are personable, fair and a good listener, all things required to make an excellent judge. He believes litigants in your Court will be satisfied no matter what the outcome because they will have been treated with respect by yourself and been in no doubt that the law has been applied exactly.

Liz offers the word "excitement". She says you are excited about the professional challenge and about the diversity of the work in this Court. She believes that due to your temperament you will have a positive effect on all who meet you. Your family has not seen you as excited as this about anything in your professional life than this important role.

Your Honour, all here and watching online are just as excited about the judge you are about to become. My warmest congratulations and best wishes for your future career on the Bench. May it please the Court.

BENNETT SC A/CJ: Ms van der Plaat, on behalf of the Law Society.

VAN DER PLAAT: May it please the Court. I too acknowledge the Gadigal of

RSB:SND

the Eora Nation, the traditional owners of the land on which this Court stands. I pay my respects to their elders, past and present, and extend my respect to all Aboriginal people with us today and online.

I come before the Court on behalf of the solicitors of New South Wales to offer congratulations and wish your Honour well in your appointment to this Bench.

“You've got to dig it to dig it, you dig?” so said Thelonious Monk, celebrated jazz pianist, whose life guide has always been of great interest to your Honour. The handwritten document the jazz legend entitled “Monk’s advice” was so interesting you were known for a time to distribute it to clients, solicitors and even opponents. Only a student of philosophy who practices law could make such an erudite choice. Mr Monk’s advice about digging is correct, we must understand you to know you.

Your Honour grew up in Dundas, taking your HSC at the now closed Macquarie Boys High in Parramatta. After matriculating you enrolled in an arts/law degree at Sydney University. For arts you studied modern European history and philosophy which, as we have seen, has given you a keen eye for fine thinking.

While you were at university you undertook gainful employment as a roadie for your brother Perry, who was the bass guitarist for the Sydney ska band, the Allnitters. I remember that song too.

You were also roadie for other well-known bands, including Rose Tattoo, the Electric Pandalas and the Delltones. This sparkling snippet of 80s history was in fact demanding and exhausting. It required four hours of work for a bump in, a brief period for a restorative nap and then returning after the performance to pack it up and truck it all off.

RSB:SND

You too were an accomplished guitarist and for a time played in your own band, known as I'm Drinking. Your Honour enjoys listening to classical and jazz music and playing the two acoustic guitars you keep in your chambers. Your Fenders and Gibsons are safe at home. I have it on good authority that you play very well indeed.

Your Honour's musical taste is eclectic, encompassing Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Mahler, Debussy and Gershwin, even the Red Hot Chilli Peppers. Thelonious Monk would approve, "A note can be as small as a pin or as big as the world, it depends on your imagination," he said in his life guide.

Whilst still a student you worked as a paralegal with Ebsworths, and after graduation as a tipstaff to Loveday AM J in the Supreme Court. That was a satisfying start to your career, his Honour was generous with his knowledge and treated you fairly. You worked hard and learnt a lot. You would then join Allen Allen & Hemsley, where you worked for 5 years before joining Gilbert & Tobin, where you would eventually become partner.

As a solicitor you briefed barrister David Hammerschlag, as he then was, who describes you as a diligent, no-fuss practitioner who thought things out carefully and played close attention to detail. You would later read with him and you remain very good friends, bonded by your mutual love of music.

As a fellow music devotee his Honour finds you invaluable company. We have heard how you recently took him shopping for a new guitar when he found himself determined to own a Fender Telecaster, the electronic guitar of choice from Keith Richards to Bruce Springsteen. The sales associate was first quite unimpressed by two middle-aged men in suits coming in, however after he heard both of you take the Fender for a test drive he said, "Mm, you guys can keep playing". Thelonious Monk's life guide would teach us that



RSB:SND

when you are swinging, swing some more, and your knowledge of guitars helped get the guitar at an excellent price.

In 2000 you would take chambers in 11 Wentworth and were appointed senior counsel in 2014. In your 22 years in chambers you have earned a sterling reputation as a barrister with a broad commercial and regulatory practice. One of your instructing solicitors described you as approachable, easy to get along with, well prepared and the silk of choice amongst many of your clients. He looked up to you and appreciated your guidance, noting that you were always able to work with all levels of lawyers. They could ask any question and you would respond with respect and informed advice.

Often long and complex cases would require you and your team to work through lunch. On these occasions they would return to your chambers from court and find you had already ordered lunch, often from the Law Society's dining room, which I can say no doubt was quite delicious. Again we turn to Thelonious Monk, who would likely observe your respective instructing solicitors with this gem, "The inside of the tune is the part that makes the outside sound good."

Your Honour, you are a devoted family man. One good friend noted lovingly, "He talks about his kids a lot, a real lot, a hell of a lot." You and your wife Elizabeth enjoy a happy life with your children, Ben and Louisa, ably supported by Milo and Daisy, two of the sweetest cavoodles living in Sydney today.

Alongside your love of music, you are an avid traveller, as we hear, and take everyone else's trips as seriously as your own. You will research friends' trips for them and even go so far as to write them an itinerary, which would almost seem like overkill except it is such a kind gesture.

RSB:SND

You have worked hard and made many sacrifices to establish your career. You have always treated colleagues and peers with respect and courtesy. Your generosity of spirit, talent and hard work are recognised today by this appointment.

The people of our State are privileged to be served by you in this role and solicitors have every confidence that you will make an exceptional judicial officer. We wish you all the best in this new stage of your career, and as Thelonious Monk advises you, "Let's lift the bandstand". Your Honour, on behalf of the solicitors of New South Wales please accept our warmest congratulations. As the Court pleases.

BENNETT SC A/CJ : Thank you, Ms van der Plaat. Judge Andronos.

JUDGE ANDRONOS: Thank you, Chief Judge. Chief Judge, your Honours, distinguished guests, friends, colleagues and family, I too would like to begin by acknowledging the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Thank you, Mr Attorney and Ms van der Plaat for those very kind, far too kind, words. I am grateful for your making time to speak today and for your ability to find an angle in each story that plays to my benefit. While the stories mostly have at least a nodding acquaintance with the truth, I would remind everyone of the sage caveat from the Gershwins, expressed in Porgy and Bess. Just remember "it ain't necessarily so."

I would also like to thank my new colleagues on the Bench, who have already welcomed me with such warmth and kindness that it is almost a kind of homecoming to join this Court.

It has been an unlikely journey to arrive here. As you have heard, I was

RSB:SND

brought up in Dundas, the youngest son of a migrant family. My roots are in fact in two Greek communities, one in central Greece, the other in Egypt. My father, Anargyros Andronos, left Chrisso, a village near Delphi, as a young man, seeking a future as far away as possible from the occupation and civil war that had scarred his childhood.

My mother came to Australia as a teenager with her family from a Greek community in Port Said in Egypt. They too were outrunning the geopolitical changes of the mid-20th century. My maternal family's antecedents go back to various parts of Greece, including the tiny island of Kastellorizo, of which you may have heard. That makes me at least part Kazzi, and being Kazzi means I am probably related to everyone you know in Sydney who claims any Greek ancestry at all.

My parents met and married in Petersham and moved from there to Dundas, where they set down deep roots and lived pretty much forever after.

They had two sons. One became a popstar. The other did not.

As some of you may know, in fact as you all know, and thank you Mr Attorney for your condolences, my father died a few weeks ago. There was a time when I was at uni that I wanted to drop law and pursue a career as a historian, but he and my mother insisted that I stick with law. You can see who won that argument. He would certainly feel vindicated if he were here today.

My mother sadly cannot be here in person, but she is watching the ceremony on YouTube. I never thought I would ever be this person, but I can now look down the barrel of the camera and say "Hi mum".

I am delighted that my brother Perry and my niece Isabella can be here today. My other niece Fabia is watching on YouTube with her mum in Melbourne.

RSB:SND

I am deeply touched that so many members of my extended family and friends from within and outside the legal profession could be here.

I wish my father and my uncle and godfather, Peter Argy, who passed away last year, could be here to share in this moment. They both took a great interest in my career and I think they would have got a bigger thrill out of this than anyone.

For those of you who might not know, today is Diwali, one of the most significant festivals in the Hindu calendar, a festival that symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance. These are not inappropriate objectives for a judge. I am told that Diwali is a particularly auspicious day to start any new venture and that people often delay starting such ventures until Diwali for this reason.

When the Chief Judge asked me when I would like to start, I chose 24 October because I thought that might give me time for a bit of a break. In the events that have happened, as we say, I was completely wrong about that, but on the bright side it means I start at the Court on one of the most promising days of the year and can wish everyone a happy Diwali.

So happy Diwali everyone.

You have heard quite a bit today about my enthusiasm for music which runs through generations of my family and which I am overjoyed to say is shared by my wife Liz and my children Ben and Louisa. I may have peaked too early though. My most valuable musical achievement and in fact my enduring claim to fame at high school was achieved in year 8 when I became the only boy in the whole school who could play Stairway to Heaven. In those days it was not quite the cliché it later became, or if it was already we were not aware of it. But it was major cred and it operated for the rest of my career

RSB:SND

there as an anti-bullying force field.

Since then, as I have wound on down the road, I have found my reputation as a musician has been enhanced by the fact that I generally never let anyone hear me play. There were a few gigs at The Gaelic Club and in scratch bands, of which there is mercifully no recorded evidence. I accept that as a result of this ceremony my reputation may reach a second peak, which means I should probably stop playing altogether now. So if my colleagues hear what sounds like a guitar coming from my chambers, just ignore it, it is not what you think.

I have had several different roles over the course of my career in the law and if you include other jobs like loading for bands and washing dishes in a Mexican restaurant, I have had quite a lot.

After a couple of years as a paralegal, I had a happy and incredibly important stint as a tipstaff to Ray Loveday J, then of the Supreme Court, although most of his judicial career was here in this Court. He had a great sense of fairness and a mischievous sense of fun. The exposure to advocacy in his Honour's Court convinced me that it was the right career for me. Yes, mum and dad, I know you told me so, and eventually I made my way to the bar. I am delighted to still be in touch with Robin Covell, his Honour's associate, who is here today.

But before the bar I had a long career as a solicitor. As you have heard, I was a solicitor for ten years, first at Allen Allen & Hemsley and then Gilbert & Tobin. At Allens I worked for and alongside many fine lawyers, including now his Honour Justice Ball, Phillip Kerr and Jackie O'Brien. I had many colleagues there who became my colleagues again at the bar and some, like Kunc J and Richmond J and Alec Leopold SC, were colleagues on the

RSB:SND

11th floor as well.

I learnt a great deal at Allens. For one thing I learned in my IP practice how to spot a fake Gucci bamboo handbag. Another thing I learnt was that when a snack food company client sends you an enormous box of kettle chips, you become extremely popular every evening at about 6pm, whatever your baseline of popularity may have been. Pretty much the whole litigation group would gather outside my office every evening until the chips had all been consumed, together with whatever beers could be found.

Allens was also where I met and formed an enduring friendship with the first of the mentors whom I will mention today, Alec Leopold. At the time he was a wunderkind litigation partner. Alec introduced me to sushi, fine wine and, because I lived on his way home, the idea of having a running race home from work.

Anybody who knows Alec can picture this. We would race, I was not terribly competitive and eventually he started giving me a head start. Only once, as I was trying to avoid being caught up and I was staggering through Pyrmont like the hunted victim in the first reel in a slasher movie, I seriously considered catching a cab. One just happened to pull up beside me. I was sorely tempted, and if I had any cash on me on that day, I would have set a new course record and beaten Alec by 15 minutes.

But when it came time for me to go to the bar, Alec told me there was only one place I need consider and ultimately I was to re-join him on the 11th floor.

I was already thinking seriously about starting at the bar when I was offered a position at Gilbert & Tobin in 1995. I thought at the time a year or two in a different environment could not hurt and although I had not heard

RSB:SND

much about the firm, it seemed worth a go. I ended up staying much longer than I intended, for five years altogether, and accepted a partnership there in 1997.

On my very first day I spent the afternoon taking a statement from an art dealer at his own private gallery in a matter for the estate of the late Brett Whiteley.

As the afternoon gave way to a balmy evening, we drank a fine wine and got into a deep philosophical discussion about the nature of art and love and loss. It was an unbelievable start to a new job. Unfortunately, my notes were utterly incomprehensible.

Reviewing my notes the next day I had to call the witness again and, before I could say anything, he volunteered that he was sure had not said anything that would have been the slightest use and he will be happy to meet me again. Although he was obviously doing me a favour, I graciously agreed to meet him again. On the next occasion we met in the morning, in my office, the only beverage on offer was coffee. The matter eventually settled.

Another enduring memory I have of my time at G & T was the few weeks I spent working out of the offices of Sullivan & Cromwell, a leading New York firm. That was an exciting time. Working on Wall Street during the day and haunting the jazz clubs such as the Blue Note, Village Vanguard, Birdland and others in the evenings. It was the start of a lifelong obsession with New York City and the understated cool of its jazz musicians, including the late, great Thelonious Monk.

When I went to the bar in 2000 it was the achievement of a vocation long delayed. I regard it as the greatest stroke of professional good luck to have read on 11 Wentworth. The eleventh floor was my professional home for over

RSB:SND

22 years and I have never practiced as a barrister anywhere else. The floor is a friendly, stimulating and supportive place and I have made many deep and lasting friendships there.

In an earlier draft of this speech I tried to identify a few of the people whom I felt close to and ended up listing everyone on the floor. Now, while I cannot mention everyone, I must still acknowledge the friendship and support of my close friend Ian Pike SC.

I have also relied on many extraordinary juniors from the floor, who have drafted eloquent submissions and passed timely notes at the bar table that gave me either the question or the answer that I needed at that particular time. In particular, I must thank Simon Keizer for filling that role in many, many cases. Also Jonathan Burnett, Tom O'Brien and from off the floor, Penny Abdiel and Jonathan Clark. Great juniors all, it has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with each of you.

There are at last count 14 sitting judges who were appointed directly from the eleventh floor, including the Chief Justice and their Honours Kunc and Stevenson JJ from Supreme Court, all of whom I am honoured to say are here today. Mine is, in fact, the 46th judicial appointment directly from the eleventh floor in its history of just over 60 years and I am grateful to see so many of my colleagues from the eleventh floor here today, notwithstanding their own court commitments and busy practices. Thank you all.

Aside from the many outstanding barristers I have worked with, the eleventh floor has always had the most superb staff. If you have been to as many of these ceremonies as I have, you will be familiar with the name of Paul Daley, my former clerk, who was a legend of Phillip Street, and who has guided many barristers throughout their career. I was no exception. Zach



RSB:SND

Rymer has been my clerk for five years and he has been a great friend and supporter throughout that time. Anne Deighton, Mandy Allen and Jeremy Hestelow round out an outstanding team and I am grateful to each of them for their friendship and support.

I should also mention Melinda Morris, for many years an indispensable member of the eleventh floor team. The floor misses her still.

Angela Asquith has been my executive assistant twice. First briefly at Allens and then for the past 20 years on eleven. Angela knows more about my practice than I do. She could run it without me being there. She has been a wonderful support and I could not have managed my practice without her.

On a more musical note, no pun intended, I must confess that the staff of the eleventh floor have been part of an ongoing conspiracy, directed to keeping the actual number and make of guitars I own a secret from my wife and daughter, although that cat is well and truly out of the bag now. I should say, Mr Attorney, your number was approximately correct, but I can neither confirm nor deny that yours was the correct number. Occasionally a new guitar might arrive at chambers, its arrival treated with the utmost confidentiality by the staff. It was then my obligation to find a way to slip it into the house unseen. I could then pretend, of course, it had always been there. But the real shock, and this may shock several people here, is that the conspiracy extended further than that, involving a discreet trade in instruments undertaken between various members of the legal profession, including Judge Weber SC of this Court, the purchaser of a Maton Dreadnought of mine, and Judge Justin Smith SC, with whom I have been involved in ongoing discussions over time regarding the sale and purchase of various Fender guitars of his and mine. And if Justice Hammerschlag ever wants to part with

RSB:SND

his gorgeous sea foam green Fender Telecaster, please let me know.

I have already mentioned Alec Leopold, but I have been fortunate to have other mentors as well. As you have heard, I read with the great David Hammerschlag, now well known as the Chief Judge in Equity Justice Hammerschlag, who taught me many things, including the importance of clarity of thinking. When I would go to him with a problem that I had clearly overthought, he would often say to me “Just run it man”, so I often did, but I never had his laser like precision.

Bruce McClintock SC has also been a close friend and support. Years ago we ran a matter together in Perth, defending a hard hitting expose by A Current Affair on the bottled water industry. I was the solicitor and he was still a junior, and we spent a day driving around the countryside looking for the source of a particular brand of bottled water. I do not think we ever found the spring and I am not sure how it would have helped us if we had. But even then Bruce knew me well enough, when I was considering an offer of a permanent role at Channel 9, that he said to me “Kevin, you’re not that guy, just come to the bar already”. He is perhaps the most persuasive advocate I have seen I could not help but agree with him even when briefed against him.

Martin Einfeld KC was like a private tutor. As you have heard I spent many long, long hours in conference with Martin. And you have heard about the 19 hour conference which was conducted while we were preparing submissions for an expedited appeal. Martin’s room at 11 St James Hall was directly across Phillip Street from mine on 11 Wentworth, so he could see when I was in and when I was not. If he called at 10pm and I was still in chambers there was no pretending I had gone home, and if I had gone home there was no pretending the next day that I had still been at work and he just

RSB:SND

failed to reach me.

Justice Hammerschlag once described Martin to me as a winner, which I saw for myself when he led me in a succession of what appeared to be unwinnable cases, winning them all. He was a remarkable advocate and I wish him well in his deserved retirement.

Of course, barristers are all dependent on their instructing solicitors to provide the support and instructions that allow us to do what we do. In my career I have had many wonderfully able instructing solicitors. Time and the risk of overlooking someone do not permit me to acknowledge everyone, but I cannot let this occasion pass without mentioning Andrew Christopher of Webb Henderson, James Higby of Norton Rose Fulbright and Paul Bard, the eponym of his own firm. Excellent solicitors all, I am grateful to each of them for their continued support and contribution to often difficult and complex matters.

This year I have also had the honour of sitting as a part time senior member at NCAT, the interface of the legal system with parties in over 50,000 civil matters each year. The workload of that Tribunal is phenomenal. It was an incredibly rewarding experience where I came into contact with many dedicated and able Tribunal members who helped me to find my way, and I must particularly thank Greg Sarginson in this regard. The Tribunal does enormously valuable work and deserves greater recognition than it even currently receives for the work it does.

As you have heard my wife Liz and I started off as barristers in the same bar course intake in 2000, although I am duty bound to point that she was and obviously remains considerably younger than me. Liz was a very fine barrister and still has a razor sharp legal mind. Following the birth of Ben, our first child,

RSB:SND

she has chosen to devote her considerable ability to the study of language and translation, although, through me, she has maintained more of a connection to the law than she may have initially thought she was going to. She is an outstanding linguist and remains a formidable advocate. I have often wondered how I keep getting convinced that Liz has to spend a few weeks in France to keep up her idiomatic French in Provence or the Loire Valley. Still, I can say with absolute confidence that had she chosen to remain in legal practice it would be her rather than me we would be gathered to celebrate as a new judge of this Court, only we would have done so a few years ago. I owe it all to her.

Our children Ben and Louisa are priceless. Each of them is a shining star, a source of boundless pride and joy to me. Ben is already 100 times the musician I could ever be and Louisa shines with her languages and sparkling wit and turn of phrase. Each of them is growing into a smart, funny, caring and sensitive young adult. I could not be more proud.

But back to today. I am honoured and humbled and still not a little surprised by this appointment. This is a great Court, it does profoundly important work. I am mindful of the responsibility to maintain its reputation and to perform a critical function in the administration of justice in this State. It is no exaggeration to say that the work of this Court is to keep a promise of justice made to us all. I shall do my best to play my part in its work.

Thank you all for coming today.

BENNETT SC A/CJ : Thank you, judge.

I invite all of you to join us for morning tea in the adjoining room and the court will now adjourn.