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THE SUPREME COURT OF

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WELCOME TO THE HONOURABLE MASTER
RUSSELL

FULL BENCH

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT PERTH ON THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2024, AT 4.19 PM

QUINLAN CJ: The court sits this afternoon to welcome Master Sarah Russell as a member of the court. In doing so, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the court meets this afternoon, the Whadjuk People of the Noongar nation, and pay our respects to their elders, past and present. We warmly welcome members of Master Russell's family who are here present, her husband, Will, sister, Louise Rhodes, and nephew, Nathan, and her dear friend, Alison Burton, who has come from the United Kingdom. We also welcome from England, her Honour's sister, Sue Wetton, who is joining us via live stream, together with many other family members, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends, and all of the colleagues and friends gathered in court.

We also welcome many other distinguished guests here this afternoon, including their Honours from the Federal Court of Australia, Justices Katrina Banks-Smith, Craig Colvin and Michael Feutrill, her Honour Chief Judge Julie Wager, and other members of the District Court of Western Australia, Mr Ron Randall, Deputy Director General of Court and Tribunal Services, Mr Michael Celenza, Manager Superior Courts, Ms Kelly Martinelli, Executive Manager of the Supreme Court, Mr Craig Bydder SC, Solicitor General for Western Australia, Mr Robert Owen SC, Director of Public Prosecutions for Western Australia, Mr Martyn Plummer, Assistant Director of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, together with many past members of this and other courts.

Finally, I welcome those who will address the court this afternoon, the Honourable John Quigley MLA, Attorney General of Western Australia, Ms Paula Wilkinson, President of the Law Society of Western Australia, and Mr Brahma Dharmananda SC, President of the WA Bar Association. Master Russell is the 17th Master of this court, since the court, itself, was created in 1861 and the first woman to be permanently appointed to the office, a matter that has caused certain discussion in both judicial and legal circles, in light of the statutory title which her Honour now holds, to which I will return in a moment.

The office of Master of the Court is, as I have said, as old as the court, itself. Indeed, when this court was created in 1861, there were only two members of the court, Chief Justice Sir Archibald Burt, and the Master, Alfred Hawes Stone. Master Stone, who was the brother of Attorney General, George Stone, had already served as Registrar Clerk of the Civil Court for 29 years and served another nine years as Master. As Master, Alfred Stone had a

reputation for great honesty and experience in the law, something which Master Russell, having served with great distinction as a judge of the District Court, also brings to this court.

I'm sure, however, that Master Russell will not emulate another famous attribute of her inaugural predecessor. As Master, Alfred Stone was known to take every possible holiday he could. It was calculated, at one time, that he was unable to transact court business for 159 of the 260 work days in a year. The role of Master today, regrettably, no longer enables such a leisurely pace. Another important connection between Master Stone and Master Russell concerns Alfred Stone's other important contribution to the young Swan River Colony. In the very early days of the medium, Alfred Stone was known in the colony as Western Australia's first serious photographer, introducing that art form to this land before any other person.

It might reasonably, therefore, be said that Alfred Stone introduced photography to Western Australia. It's fitting then, that Will Russell, Master Russell's husband, joins the family of the court as an acclaimed and accomplished professional photographer. I mentioned earlier that some diffidence has been expressed in relation to the title of the office that Master Russell now holds. It has been remarked that the gendered aspect of the title is no longer befitting of a modern, diverse court in the 21st century, and there is something to be said for that critique, albeit that in acting positions, the role of Master of this court has previously been held and performed by a number of women.

In that regard, it is important that the court publicly recognises the enormous contribution that Acting Master Kate McDonald, has made to the performance of and, indeed, the definition of the role of Master, in the past 12 months, for which the people of Western Australia owe a great debt. But as it is, of course, the title Master is a legislative one, and one which the court must, duty-bound to execute the laws of Western Australia, obey. Any change to the title, Master, is, therefore, a matter for Parliament. In the meantime, however, perhaps we could look deeper into the meaning of the title which derives from the Latin "magister", which means "chief", "head" or "teacher", from which we get words like "magisterial", having or showing great authority.

Or better still, we might think of the title not as a noun but as a verb, namely, to acquire complete knowledge or skill in a subject, technique or art. That is how I

suggest we view the nature of this office. The person who has complete knowledge and skill in the process and procedures of the court that are necessary to bring all matters before it to a just resolution. It is a role and a skill that is akin to but distinct from those of a judge, and one which has a form of excellent in its own right. The capacity to cut through complexity, to find immediate solutions to time-pressed problems and to manage the business of the court in a way which best promotes its efficient and just resolution.

These are the qualities that Master Russell brings to this vital office of the court, developed over decades of practice in the law and civil litigation as a solicitor, as a barrister and as a judge of the District Court. In all of those diverse roles, Master, you have shown a great versatility to meet new challenges, a preparedness to improve the delivery of justice with a work ethic to match, and the collegiate attitude that is so vital to our work as a court. Master Russell, on behalf of the court including all of the judges, registrars and staff, can we say how pleased we are to have you join us in our work and to extend our warm welcome to you and Will to the family of the court.

As you continue your distinguished judicial career, you can do so assured of the support of all of the members of the court as we look forward to your collegiate support of us in return. Yes, Mr Attorney.

QUIGLEY, MR: Thank you, Chief Justice. May it please the court. I would like to commence by paying my respects to the Traditional Owners of the land upon which the court convenes this afternoon, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. I would also like to begin by recognising the many distinguished guests that have attended the ceremony this afternoon, who have been individually acknowledged by your Honour, the Chief Justice, and I think that it bears testimony to the high regard in which Master Russell is held by her former judicial colleagues in the District Court and, generally, throughout the courts in Western Australia.

It is my great privilege to appear today on behalf of the State of Western Australia, the government of Western Australia and all of the people of Western Australia who I represent here this afternoon, to welcome Master Sarah Russell to the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Master Russell, I join in welcoming your family and friends who

are here with us this afternoon, especially your husband, Will, who has been acknowledged by the Chief Justice, your sister Louise, your close friend Alison who is here from the UK and, looking at the cameras, I extend a warm welcome to your sister, Sue, your mother-in-law, Roseanne, and the many family members watching via live stream in the United Kingdom for this very important and happy occasion of your welcoming to the court, Master Russell. Master Russell, you've had a distinguished legal career in England and Western Australia, spanning more than 25 years.

You come to the Supreme Court of Western Australia from the District Court, where you have served as a judge on that court since 2020. You brought to judicial office wide experience as a barrister and solicitor, including a strong background in civil, commercial and corporate litigation. Master Russell, you were admitted to practice as a solicitor in England in 1998. In 2004, you were admitted in this State and continued to practise as solicitor at Mallesons Stephen Jaques and Clayton Utz until 2010.

You then joined Francis Burt Chambers and spent a decade at the Independent Bar before being appointed by the Government to the District Court. While at the Bar, you were a longstanding member of the Bar Council of the WA Bar Association. In addition, you contributed to the legal education as a coach in mediation and advocacy training and in sharing and presenting seminars. You also acted as a mentor and assisted the development of junior practitioners by providing guidance and advice.

The Master of the Supreme Court is critical to the effective management of the court's case load. In addition, it is in the Master's chambers that many junior practitioners have had their early and formative experiences of the Supreme Court advocacy. Master Russell, your wide experience and the high ability you have shown over the course of your career and your demonstrated support and concern for the development of junior practitioners makes you ideally suited to the office of the Master of the Supreme Court.

Your appointment also marks another important step forward in judicial diversity and representation of women in the law and not just diversification on gender, but in race and ethnic backgrounds and certainly, as I stand at the bar table and view the court today, it looks different than what it was a decade ago and we welcome you as the first female Master of this Court. Your appointment -

you're the first woman, as I said, and follow the Principal Registrar, Kate McDonald, who has given exceptional service both as Acting Master and as the Principal Registrar of this court.

Master Russell, your appointment is a testament to your hard work and dedication to the legal profession. Your experience, ability and concern for the legal profession and the community ideally suit you to your new role. Master Russell, on behalf of the State and the people of Western Australia, I congratulate you on your well-deserved appointment and wish you all the very best in your new role. May it please the court.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, Mr Attorney. Yes, Ms Wilkinson?

WILKINSON, MS: May it please the court. Thank you, your Honour. I would like to commence by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and on Society's behalf, I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. I also wish to recognise the distinguished guests welcomed here today and I especially welcome and congratulate members of your family, Master Russell, who are here today, present in court, and those who are attending by livestream in various locations, including England.

It is my privilege to appear today, representing the Law Society of Western Australia to welcome Master Russell to the bench of the Honourable Court and I'm honoured to be here to speak on behalf of the Law Society. Today, we are making history as we welcome you, Master Russell as the first woman to be appointed as the permanent Master of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Notably, this historical moment of your appointment has come close in time to the 100th anniversary in 2023 of women gaining the right to be lawyers in Western Australia.

At the outset, I need to thank your Honour - or rather, you, Master Russell, for meeting with me and talking to me about your life and the law so that I could be better informed to give this speech today. As we have heard, you are highly regarded and well-respected in the legal profession and you've had an outstanding career, noting that you were admitted to practice in England and Wales in 1998 and then in Australia in 2004.

Your Honour was born in the South Yorkshire city of Sheffield, the youngest of three daughters. You attended Highfields School in Matlock in the County of Derbyshire.

Matlock, for those who do not know it, is a beautiful county town in the south-east of the Peak District of England. You left school at the age of 17 and you were very keen to start work straight from school with a group of your friends. Your teachers did not support this decision.

They said, "No. You must stay on. You must do your A-levels and you must go to university," but you were determined to leave. Your first job was in a Matlock branch at what was then called the Midland Bank. The job at that bank was wonderful. You were given the opportunity to study and thus, you found yourself reading about law when studying for the Chartered Institute of Banking Exams. At this point, when reading about the law, you had a sudden thought.

Perhaps those teachers were right. This thought took you to your local public library for some research. You got out a very heavy book entitled 'Careers'. You put it on the table and you turned to L for law. And it sounds like that was a eureka moment for you. You carried out further research and you saw an alternative pathway to a career in the law, not through university but as a trainee legal executive.

I suspect the bank was left behind at that point and I don't know anything more about your teachers, but in a very small town like Matlock, they must have heard what happened. They must have been very pleased that you had seen the light. After eight years of work and study, you became a fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives and you were admitted to practice. You then attended the prescribed post-graduate legal course at Nottingham University.

You passed this course with distinction while also working full-time, an early sign of your formidable work ethic, I suspect, and became a solicitor, exempt from taking articles. Although this might sound like an unconventional pathway into the law, of course, her Honour, former Chief Justice Susan Kiefel of the High Court started her life in the law as a legal secretary. You were admitted as a solicitor at the Supreme Court of England and Wales in 1998, following which, your Honour worked as a solicitor in various places, including London.

You moved to Australia in 2003 and within a week, you had a job with Mallesons Stephen Jaques, as it was then known. So it came to pass, Master Russell, that you were admitted to practice in Western Australia in 2004. At

Mallesons, you worked in the commercial litigation team with luminaries such as Brahma Dharmananda, Elspeth Hensler and Michelle Dean and you practised primarily in commercial litigation, banking and insolvency.

You moved to Clayton Utz in 2006 and you stayed there until you joined the WA Bar Association in 2010. In 2012, your Honour obtained a Master of Commercial Law through Melbourne University. Your principal area of practice at the Bar was commercial litigation and construction engineering and domestic commercial arbitration. You worked in complex and demanding cases, including a four-month long Westgem trial which occurred in 2018.

You also appeared as co-counsel in Commonwealth criminal prosecutions and in relation to offences under the Criminal Code involving trust and tax issues and appeared as sole counsel in matters on behalf of the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Securities and Investment Commission. You became a highly accomplished leader in the legal profession as a long-standing and active member of the Bar Council of Western Australia.

Your Honour contributed to legal education as a coach in mediation and advocacy training and presented at seminars on behalf of the Law Society, Women Lawyers, the Piddington Society and other organisations. We are very grateful that you have been a member of the Law Society for more than 20 years and you have been a great advocate of one of the Society's four grand pillars, which is connecting with the community through your support of many of our educational and social events and we thank you very much for your support of the Law Society over the years.

You became a judge of the District Court of Western Australia in December 2020. At that time, you had 22 years of experience in commercial and corporate litigation across a variety of sectors and you bring a wealth of experience to this court. I contacted some of your peers and what I found is that you are very, very popular among them. Your colleagues helped with their reflections. I can do no better than to quote them in full, although I will only quote from two because Brahma Dharmananda says I talk for too long when I give these speeches. A former colleague said:

Sarah is known in the industry as a sharp thinker with great ability to methodically and carefully think through and solve complex issues, resolving them into the written form in the same careful, methodical,

clearly elucidated manner. She has a natural ability to understand complex human behaviour, being able to deploy the right mix of empathy and toughness all at once.

She operates with the greatest of respect for her colleagues, even in relation to the toughest and most impolite of opponents. She has been a great personal mentor but is also an incredible mentor to many young women in the profession. Known for her wise professional advice, she is generous with her time and spirit, and I've seen her to be an important source of support for many young women at key times in their careers.

Sarah has always been known for her tremendous work ethic but seems to always manage to find time for family and friends. She is the glue in many of her friendship circles, always making an effort to bring us all together even when busy. Family is a great source of support, joy, and happiness for her, and not once have I seen her be anything but a happy, joyous human when she is around her family and friends. Sarah is a great fan of all things fabulous, fabulous food, fabulous fashion, and fabulous champagne.

Another colleague says:

Sarah is one of the kindest, most thoughtful human beings. At the Bar she was known for her attention to detail, collegiality, and killer fashion sense. When you walk into a room that Sarah Russell is in, you can be assured of a warm reception, good company, and fabulous shoes. When I joined the Bar, in addition to being willing and available to act as a sounding board, Sarah went out of her way to introduce me to other barristers and potential instructors.

She genuinely cared about people and regularly organised drinks for the women barrister at a time there were only 20 or 30 of us at the Bar. Sarah is pragmatic. She does not suffer fools. Whether it be problematic behaviour or poor legal reasoning, Sarah will call it out in a fair but no-nonsense manner.

In closing, your Honour, on behalf of the Law Society and the wider legal profession of Western Australia, we warmly congratulate you on your appointment and wish you all the best in your new role in serving the community and the administration of justice. May it please the court.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, Ms Wilkinson. Mr Dharmananda, and I'm looking at that clock so make sure you don't go longer than Ms Wilkinson.

DHARMANANDA, MR: I can give that assurance. May I also acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet. It is my honour and privilege to welcome, on behalf of the WA Bar, Master Sarah Russell as a new Master of this Honourable Court. The learned Master is amply qualified to take on the pivotal role as Master of the Supreme Court. The Master's role is, in many respects, a vital role in the administration of justice by this court.

To take but a couple of examples, over more than 50 years now the Masters of the Court have dealt swiftly and properly with so many company law matters and disputed interlocutory applications. Over the same period, the Masters have case-managed umpteen cases, freeing up so much judicial time for the judges. Master Russell's work as a judge of the District Court means that the Master comes ready-made to hit the ground running in dealing with the demanding workload of a Master.

And given Master Russell's past commercial experience as a solicitor in more than one leading law firm and her work at the commercial Bar, the Master has much direct experience that will give her an immediate advantage. Master Russell started her legal career in England where, as has been mentioned, she trained over a course of a number of years. Master Russell also has a Master of Commercial Law from the University of Melbourne.

Adopting more than one of Aristotle's four causes or four explanations, I am responsible for Master Russell's move to Perth in 2003. At least, I am a formal or efficient cause. It was I who offered the Master a role as a solicitor in my team way back in 2003 when I was a member of Mallesons Stephen Jaques as KWM was then called. The Master and I worked on numerous cases together. I record again what I have said many times before: Sarah Russell was one of the best solicitors with whom I worked.

That view was shared by many people, and none other than Bret Walker SC. Bret Walker once commented that observations the Master had prepared in a complex Barnes v Addy case were the best observations he had ever seen from any instructor. The Master was very chuffed about this compliment. I know that the Master has dined out on this story more than once, and rightly so. Praise of this kind from the great Bret Walker is high praise.

Mr Walker, of course, has not self-confessedly given himself the title of The Great Bret Walker. It is the legal market that has done that, at least in far away places like Sydney. I am reminded of Trevor Noah's joke questioning how and why Great Britain self-titled herself great in a presumptuous way. Anyway, the Master hails from Great Britain but has treated Perth as home for more than 20 years now. The great State of Western Australia is glad you chose to migrate to Australia, Master.

In the preface to Ernst Gombrich's A Little History of the World, first published in German in 1936, Gombrich's granddaughter explains that the book was written at pace in little more than six weeks in 1935. It is hard to imagine how a history of the world could be researched and written so quickly. Of course, one need only remember the work of the former Master, Master Sanderson, to appreciate that feats of this kind are not impossible, given the right demeanour and style.

The WA Bar has every confidence that our new Master will more than comfortably meet the benchmark set by Master Sanderson. Gombrich's Little History has been much acclaimed and was described as brilliant, irresistible, a wonderful surprise. That description is apt. With alarming simplicity, Gombrich explains the beginnings of modern history in Egypt, talks of the development in Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Hammurabi's laws, the development of the alphabet by the Phoenicians, and the arrival of the Greeks, the Dorians, and the Ionians in what is now Greece.

Gombrich explains how the Persians could not defeat the Greeks and how much we owe to the Greeks in terms of philosophy, thought, and art. There's a line from the book that resonates and is perhaps true even now: the Greeks could do everything but live in peace with one another. Mark Twain is reputed to have said that history doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes. I digress, but with a point. In your new role, Master, you will need to know and do everything that makes the work of the court move forward.

There is little doubt, given your wide-ranging skill set and proven work ethic, you will be able to do everything that is required. There is also little doubt that those who appear before you, Master, will see that they will be able to resolve peacefully disputes with your help and judgment. You, after all, come from Great Britain and have so much modesty, empathy, and judgment. You have always been willing to help and participate to ensure the legal profession thrives.

When you served on Bar Council, you made an amazing and long-lasting contribution. The WA Bar would not be part of the Professional Standards Scheme and many young barristers would not have been taught the basic requirements for barristerial practice but for your contributions. Master, you enjoy good conversation, are a very great friend to those who are lucky to count you as a friend. You enjoy good food, fine champagne, and the odd glass of wine.

I hope your work as the Master will not be so time-consuming to deprive you of these things. I know that Will, your husband, will do his best to keep you grounded. On behalf of the WA Bar, may I again congratulate you, Master, on your appointment. The Bar looks forward very much to appearing before you to assist the furthering of the administration of justice. May it please the court.

QUINLAN CJ: Thank you, Mr Dharmananda. Master.

THE MASTER: Chief Justice, current and past members of this court and other courts, other distinguished guests, Mr Attorney, Ms Wilkinson, Mr Dharmananda, members of the Bar and legal profession, my family and friends, thank you all for taking the time to attend this special sitting of the court this afternoon. It means a great deal to me, particularly those overseas for whom it is either especially early or especially late or, for some, somewhere in between. I thank each of you whether you're here in person or virtually for the support that you have shown to me by attending today and also all those who have sent very kind and warm messages, notes, and well wishes.

I join in the acknowledgements of the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which the court sits today, the Whadjuk boodjar on the banks of the Derbarl Yerrigan. I pay my respects to their elders, past, present, and to emerging leaders and I extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples present. Chief Justice, thank you for your warm welcoming remarks and the hopefully helpful observations about the role of the Master and I will return to that later in my speech. There are certainly some people who have asked me, "What is a Master? What does the Master do?"

I thank you, Chief Justice, and all of the judges and the registrars of this court for your support, your warm welcome and generous assistance. I feel extremely welcome and I'm looking forward to serving as a member of this

court with each of you. I also acknowledge the wonderful support of Kelly Martinelli, the Executive Manager of the Court, and the many other managers and staff of the court who have provided invaluable assistance to me and made my transition to the court as seamless as possible.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Anne Hatten, Nicole Williams, Graham Kelly, and Emma Sheridan for their work arranging today's ceremony which is no mean feat as you can very well imagine, and all of those who have assisted with that, including Makenzee Earl and the technology team for arranging the livestream. Thank you also to my personal staff, my associates, Amelia squared; Amelia Price, and Amelia (Millie) McDermott. I'm very pleased to have you both on board for this new part of this new journey with me and I look forward to working with both of you. You've already in our first few days provided invaluable assistance to me and I'm very grateful. Thank you.

Mr Attorney, Ms Wilkinson, and Mr Dharmananda, thank you for your kind and generous words and your well wishes that you've each expressed personally and on behalf of those that you represent. Mr Attorney, it is an honour and a privilege to be appointed and to serve as Master of this court. I'm in no doubt that I've been entrusted with a great responsibility. I will endeavour to discharge it well and justify the trust and the confidence shown in me by you, the Government of Western Australia and all of those involved in my appointment.

I'm also under no illusions of the very high standards set by those who have preceded me in the role of Master of this court. The outstanding contribution of the former Master, the Honourable Craig Sanderson is well known to me and, of course, more widely. I still with all of that knowledge as so many have of the incredible work that Master Sanderson did for so many years, I still sat in awe as they were recounted and listened to his many achievements and his own war stories at his farewell sitting in June last year. I had no idea at that time that I would be the one seeking to fill those very large boots.

I'm honoured by your attendance today, Craig, and I thank you for your kind words of support and encouragement upon my appointment. It means a great deal. I join in the acknowledgements made by others of your outstanding contribution to this court and to the administration of justice in this state over your history making tenure as Master. I will do my best to fulfil the role to the high standards that you have set, though you need not worry

about me challenging your record of years of service. I will be well past the statutory retirement age before coming close to your 26 years of service, particularly given that I come to the role much later in my career than you did.

It is also highly unlikely in that time that I present any threat to what must be records of the number of judgments delivered and the number published in excess of 1,500 published judgments. Much has been said about me becoming the first woman appointed to the role of Master of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. I am, of course, very proud of that. However, whilst it is true that my appointment marks the first permanent appointment of a woman to the position of Master, a number of women have acted in the role before me and with distinction, including Justices Strk and Whitby and, most recently, Acting Master Kate McDonald.

I join in the acknowledgements of Acting Master McDonald's outstanding work and the significant contribution that she has made as Acting Master. I would also like to personally thank Kate for her very generous offers and actions of assistance in the lead-up to my appointment and since I have commenced in the role. Mr Attorney, I also acknowledge as others have before me, the very significant part that you have played during your almost seven years as Attorney General of Western Australia in increasing the diversity of the bench in this and other courts and tribunals in this state not only through the increased representation of women in judicial roles but, as has been referred to, cultural diversity and a much more diverse spread of that's representative more largely of the community through the appointments that have been made during your time as Attorney.

Ms Wilkinson, I've been a member of the Law Society, as you've said, since joining the legal profession in Western Australia and I've continued as a judicial member since my appointment as a judge and will continue to do so now as Master. The Society plays an important role in the profession. I congratulate you on your recent election as its President and I wish you, the counsel and staff of the Society, all the very best for a successful year ahead, continuing its good work. I also thank you personally for the time, care, and attention you have put into preparing your remarks today.

Mr Dharmananda, I have to say, I was a little worried about what you might say today. As you've outlined, I joined Mallesons Stephen Jaques, as it was then, in 2003, within a week or so of moving to Western Australia. I

practised as a law clerk until I did the required study and exams to be admitted as a legal practitioner in this jurisdiction. You then moved my admission as a legal practitioner and officer to this court almost 20 years ago now in 2004. You were always a very hard taskmaster, but one that I shall always be very grateful to. I have you to thank, Brahma, for my strong work ethic, my high professional standards and, I think, to a very large degree, my resilience.

You supported me in my early years as a lawyer in Perth and later after you and my dear friend and ex-Mallesons colleague Elspeth Hensler encouraged me to join the WA Bar. The Independent Bar plays a vital role in the administration of justice. The Western Australian Bar Association is a fine association and it's one that I am very pleased and privileged to have been a member of, and continue as a judicial member. I was also very fortunate to enjoy the support of many other fine senior and junior counsel and instructors during my time at the Bar. It was a privilege to serve on Bar Council and to do so with great leaders of the Bar, from whom I learned a great deal, and many of whom are also here today.

I'm delighted that Debbie Cole, Executive Officer of the WA Bar Association, and Karen Knox, her most able assistant, are here, who I had the pleasure of working closely with over my 10 years on Bar Council. Debbie and Karen, your roles are crucial to the work of the WA Bar Association. You work tirelessly and ensure that everything runs seamlessly always.

It also brings a smile to my face to see you here today, Joy. Thank you for being the wonderful, unflappable, efficient, no nonsense assistant every busy barrister needs, and supporting me during my time at the Bar. I said at my previous welcome I would miss you; I do.

Each of the speakers today, as is often the case on occasions such as this, have spoken of my achievements and successes during the years leading to this appointment. Success in any endeavour cannot be achieved single-handedly. I've learned this in all aspects of my personal and professional life. I would not be sitting here today and have been in a position to take up this appointment without the support and encouragement of so many others.

I have been extremely fortunate in my life. I've always known this, though I'm now more acutely aware of

just how fortunate, having served as a judge of the District Court of Western Australia for the last three years or so. Unlike many of those who have appeared before me in that capacity, I've had the advantage of an excellent education, a nurturing and loving family, and I have been supported and encouraged at each stage of my life and career by my immediate and wider family, and by professional colleagues, and many friends.

I was often told as a child, and as I got older, that if you work hard, believe in yourself and have confidence in your ability, you can achieve anything that you want to. Whilst there is no doubt truth in that, it is the support of others that helps and drives us to achieve. I'm the very fortunate beneficiary of an amazing support network. It is a wide one, and one that continues.

Time does not permit me to mention everyone who has supported and encouraged me, but I would like to acknowledge four that have, many of whom are here today, either in court or attending virtually through the livestream, or who will watch the recording at perhaps a more appropriate hour for them.

The encouragement and support I received started in my early years from my parents, David and Lorna, my sisters Louise and Sue, my aunts and uncles, and close family friends. I will defer saying anything more about them at this stage, particularly my wonderful late parents David and Lorna, until closer to the end, for fear that my emotions may get the better of me.

As you've heard, I started my working life as a banker after leaving school at 17. In hindsight, I'm not sure what I was thinking. Like many lawyers, numbers generally elude me. It was words and argument, not numbers or matters financial, that really interested me. Unsurprisingly, with that in mind, it turned out that banking was not for me. However, I have no regrets about my initial choices.

There are two great things that came out of my time at the bank. The first is it sparked my keen interest in the law, which I first studied as part of the Chartered Institute of Bankers qualifications, as you've heard. The second is the enduring friendship with my beautiful friend of more than 30 years, Alison Burton, who I worked alongside at the Matlock Branch of the Midland Bank as it was then - it's now HSBC - and who is like another sister to me. And to my sisters Louise, who I am delighted is here today, and Sue, who I know is with me every step of

the way, viewing on the livestream in my original hometown of Matlock in Derbyshire.

Alison was destined to be a banker, and has enjoyed a long and successful career ascending through the ranks to senior management; I was not. We were, however, destined to become and stay the greatest of friends. Alison, I am so thrilled that you are here to share this day with me, and with Will and Louise and my family, and that you were able to attend my swearing in earlier this week. Thank you for your friendship and support over so many years, and for making the journey to Perth this time, and on many other occasions.

I acknowledge and thank all that I have had the pleasure of working with and learning from, both in England and Australia over the last - I think it's now 30-plus years since I embarked on my career in the law. There are too many to mention all by name, and I am also conscious of Mr Dharmananda perhaps looking at his watch. I would like to mention a few; that's by no means a reflection that everyone I don't mention hasn't paid an enormous part in my life and the support that I've received.

I start with Peter Bellamy, now a retired district judge of the North Eastern Circuit in England, and his then partner Amina Somers, former partners of Irwin Mitchell in England, who I worked closely with as a solicitor in the late 1990s before moving to Perth in 2003. As you've heard, soon after arriving in Perth, I took up a position at Mallesons Stephen Jaques with then partner of that firm and later King & Wood Mallesons, or KWM - every now and again there's a name change - Brahma Dharmananda, and then senior associates, now justices, Larissa Strk and Michael Lundberg.

I'm grateful for the support and enduring friendships from my time at Mallesons. There are many, and I am delighted that many friends from my time at Mallesons are here today, either in person or virtually. Mandy, I hope the snow is now finally falling in Whistler. I also had the pleasure of working closely with many excellent lawyers at King & Wood Mallesons as counsel, including my good friends Michelle Dean and Juliana Jorissen, and also with James Wang and their teams.

I also spent over four years at Clayton Utz working with two of the greats: Paul Fitzpatrick and my dear late friend Cynthia Sargent. They were good years. Paul, I'm so pleased that you and others from Team Fitz are here

today. The work was fascinating. I learned a great deal from you, particularly in the field of competition law. Thank you for your trust and confidence in me, and for your understanding and encouragement when I decided to join the Bar.

Sadly, Cynthia is no longer with us. She was a shining light, a strong and truly inspirational woman, a great mentor and excellent role model to me and to many others. I am delighted that so many of my friends from Clayton Utz are here today, or have hopefully been able to tune in from afar.

It was also through my work at Clayton Utz with Dampier Bunbury Pipeline that I not only did great work but also became very good friends with Anthony Cribb and his wife Liesl, and also my dear friends Shelley and Daniel Kalms, who if they were not now viewing from Houston will hopefully tune in once the recording is available. During my time at the WA Bar and Francis Burt Chambers, I was privileged to work with some challenging and fascinating matters, to work with and learn from some amazing lawyers.

That applies to the senior counsel who led and mentored me, the junior counsel I was fortunate to share chambers life with, to work with and was opposed to and many fine instructors, many of whom are here today, including the Honourable Chief Justice Peter Quinlan, each of the justices of the Federal Court and several of my judicial colleagues on this bench and on the District Court, Joshua Thomson SC and Brahma and Kanaga Dharmananda SC, amongst many others, and interstate silks and numerous friends from all levels of Francis Burt Chambers. People often pick a level. I've been on a number of them. But regardless of the divide between floors, it was a wonderful time, a collegiate place and I have still so many friends from there.

As you've heard, before my appointment to this court, I was at the District Court of Western Australia. It was a great privilege to serve as a judge of the District Court, and I would like to take this opportunity to formally acknowledge the work of Chief Judge Julie Wager and all of the judges of the District Court and to thank each of you for your support and friendship during my time on the court. The work of the District Court is difficult. It is, at times, confronting, and it is by its nature fast paced. There is often little time in which to make very hard decisions or resolve complex issues, yet despite all

of those demands on their time, the judges always make time to check in on each other and to be available to assist their colleagues when called on.

Though at times challenging, particularly as I climbed the steep learning curve of criminal jury trials and sentencing coming from my predominantly commercial background, my time as a judge of the District Court has been extremely rewarding. I have no doubt that time will be invaluable to me in my continued service as a judicial officer, albeit in a very different capacity and returning to more familiar areas of law and practice. Thank you, Chief Judge, Senior Judge Stavrianou and all of my friends and former colleagues of the District Court for your collegiality and support and for attending in such large numbers today. It means a great deal.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge the excellent support that I received from my associates at the District Court, Amanda Deeks, Lucinda De Bellis and, most recently, Erin Lawrence and Emily Sawyer, and also, my ushers, Sikander Zaman and Lapo Bigazzi and all of the managers - Laura Sutton - and all of the staff of the District Court.

Outside of work, I have the protectors of my mental health. They are my running tribe, led by the amazing Sherree Rylands. I thank them for being there, sometimes even when I'm not, at 5.45 am every Friday and, often, early on a Sunday morning, to endure me chatting to them as we run around the river or through Kings Park. Thank you, Sherree, Nektaria and Jules for your friendship and being here today to represent our amazing group of strong and inspiring women.

I'm proud to share this occasion with my husband, Will; my sister, Louise; my nephew, Nathan; my friends, Alison, Michelle and David, Nic and Maria and so many other close friends that are here today. Nic, I thought it fitting that you should be seated in the press box, given your over 50 years service as a leading press photographer here and in the UK. Louise and Nathan, thank you both for being here today and thank you to all of my family viewing the proceedings from afar, my nieces and your families, my uncles, aunts and cousins, my mother-in-law, Roseanne, and sister-in-law, Jasmine.

Louise and Sue, my big sisters, my darling dusters, thank you both for your love and support, for always being there for me. You are both strong, beautiful women, as was our dear mum and our recently departed Aunty Betty. I'm so

proud that you are my sisters. I'm proud of all that each of you have achieved and the beautiful families that you have raised, Nathan, Nicole, Jessica and their beautiful children, six of my now 12 great nieces and nephews.

It's a matter of deep regret and sadness that my late parents, David and Lorna, are not here today. I have a picture of them in my pocket. I hope that they are enjoying their own broadcast of today's proceedings, together with my much loved and missed aunties, Judy and Betty. Mum and Dad, thank you for your love, your encouragement and support. I will continue to do what you both taught me: to work hard, to believe in myself, to have confidence in my ability and, also, to respect others, to listen to others' points of view, to be patient, kind and compassionate, to be fair and not to be too quick to judge, amongst so many other things.

Lastly, and certainly not least, my husband, Will. I will keep it short, not because of Mr Dharmananda's time limit, but because I know that you hate to be the centre of attention. You prefer to be the man behind the camera, shining the light and focusing on those around you. For those that do not know Will, he is, as has been referred to, an outstanding, talented photographer with particular skill in sports - as a sports photographer and, for many years, as a press photographer and photojournalist.

I'm so proud of all that you have achieved in your professional life, the relationships that you have built and how your work has grown from strength to strength since we moved here to Perth a little over 20 years ago. And you've done so despite all of the time and the sacrifices that you've made to support me. I would not have achieved all I have in my professional life without your unwavering love, support and encouragement. We've been together from almost the beginning of my legal journey. You've endured much in that time. You've been patient and understanding during many long hours of study, and later work, the many late nights and weekends worked. You keep the wheels turning. Will, you've always been there by my side, cheering me on and supporting me every step of the way. Thank you.

And, hopefully, Will, you now have a better understanding of the role of Master. I hope that you're not too disappointed to learn that I'm not a time lord, and it does not involve me travelling through time and space or regenerating from time to time. Thank you.

QUINLAN CJ: That concludes this evening's special sitting. The court will now adjourn.

AT 5.17 PM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED ACCORDINGLY

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