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SUPREME COURT OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**THE HONOURABLE CHIEF JUSTICE MURRELL
THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE ELKAIM
THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE MOSSOP
THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE LOUKAS-KARLSSON
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE McWILLIAM
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE REFSHAUGE
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE CROWE
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE BERMAN
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE BALLA
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE ROBINSON
THE HONOURABLE ACTING JUSTICE NORRISH**

CEREMONIAL SITTING

ON THE REITREMENT OF CHIEF JUSTICE HELEN MURRELL SC

CANBERRA

9.32 AM, FRIDAY, 4 MARCH 2022

MR SHANE RATTENBURY, Attorney-General, appeared.

MR ANDREW MULLER, President of the Bar Association of the ACT, appeared.

MS ELIZABETH CARROLL President of the Law Society of the ACT, appeared.

MURRELL CJ: Auntie Violet.

5 AUNTIE VIOLET SHERIDAN: Thank you, Chief Justice. It is my pleasure to be here this morning to perform this welcome to country for you on your retirement. It was my pleasure that I welcomed you here when you first came to the Bench. So it is really sad that you are leaving because I will miss your cheery face and your beautiful ray of sunshine.

10 I have really enjoyed and it is a pleasure to have you here on Ngunnawal land, and I have bought a present along and hope you accept. It is to remind you of your time here on Ngunnawal land. It was actually made by my son, Ritchie, so we want to present this to you and so you can remember your time on Ngunnawal land. It is a traditional clapsticks, specifically made for you, so I hope that it always reminds you of your time that you have spent here on
15 the land of the Ngunnawal people.

MURRELL CJ: Thank you so much.

20 AUNTIE VIOLET SHERIDAN: I would like to pay my respects to my elders, past, present and emerging, and extend that respect of these other Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander people here this morning. I would also like to acknowledge on the Bench our Attorney-General, Shane Rattenbury, other guests in the room.

25 In keeping with the general spirit of friendship and reconciliation, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all here this morning on behalf of the traditional owners, my people, the Ngunnawal people, and on behalf of my family and other Ngunnawal's families, welcome, and god bless you all, keep safe, because COVID is still here, and thank you so much for your time here.
30 God bless you, keep safe on your journey to your next destination, and good luck in your retirement. Thank you.

MURRELL CJ: Justice Elkaim.

35 ELKAIM J: Chief Justice, Justice Gageler, Attorney-General Mr Rattenbury, judicial officers, current and retired, practitioners, ladies and gentlemen, and in particular Paul Westwood and members of the Chief Justice's family. Thank you all for being here to farewell our Chief Justice. I, too, acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land. I pay my respects to
40 their elders, past, present and emerging.

45 The Chief Justice was sworn in on 28 October 2013. This means her Honour has been in power for 3,049 days. The Chief Justice came to this court from the District Court of New South Wales. Her move here was regarded as a great loss to that court. The Supreme Court in each state or territory is different because it must meet the specific needs of its location. Necessarily,

some Supreme Courts will have more judges than others because the client base is larger.

5 The type of work being done in each Supreme Court may also differ. For example, in New South Wales, there is a very large District Court which does almost all criminal jury trials and a good deal of civil work, but in the ACT there is no District Court, although the Magistrates' Court has a higher than normal jurisdiction, both in relation to criminal and civil matters, the breadth of the work done by the Supreme Court is larger than in most Australian Supreme Courts.

10 Every chief justice has views on the proper management of their court, and while the views of a chief justice may change over time, the court will always be a reflection of the current Chief Justice's attitudes and policies. Another major influence on a court will be the legal climate of the time. The workings of the court will be influenced by prevailing attitudes to such matters as case management. There was a time, for example, when adjournments would almost always be granted, provided a compensatory costs order could be made.

20 But then came along the High Court decision in Aon, and with it a seismic shift in the need to control the passage of a case from filing to hearing. Strange concepts such as a case should be heard within 12 months of being filed came into being. I have highlighted case management because almost every person I have spoken to has said that the Chief Justice's most important influence has been the introduction of an umbrella of case management that has transformed the court into the well-oiled bastion of legal efficiency that now exists.

25 Notwithstanding this widespread opinion, I personally think your Honour's leadership has been more or equally important in another area. This is the creation of an environment in which her fellow judges have been happy to work. In a small court, we are only five judges and associate judge, working cooperatively together is vital. I am not sure that I would describe my attitude as I drive into the car park as unbridled enthusiasm, but I have certainly been pleased to be here.

30 When I say here, at present I am, of course, referring to this wonderful court building. Although many persons, including a previous chief justice, are responsible for the new court, it was under this chief justice that we moved in and settled in. Overseeing this exercise was complicated but consistent with her Honour's overall case management approach. The move did not create any backlog and occurred as if with the waving of a judicial gavel. In addition, her Honour made the court fit for purpose. Our facilities are excellent. This has been borne out by our capacity to continue working through the COVID pandemic.

5 Since the departure of Justice Burns, who was cold so he went to the Northern Territory, I have had to act as Chief Justice from time to time when the real Chief Justice has been on leave. I thought it would be easy but it isn't. There are endless meetings. Each meeting requires learning new acronyms. There are observations, perhaps the odd complaint, applications for leave and so on from fellow judges which need to be dealt with. There are emails to respond to and letters to write.

10 The Chief Justice did all of these things with great efficiency, but more significantly, she did them in addition to her workload as a judge. There has never been an occasion when the Chief Justice said, 'I cannot do the case today because I have admin duties'. That attitude exemplifies leadership from the front. I may not have ever been late for work, but I have never arrived before the Chief Justice.

15 Yet another area in which the Chief Justice has had significant influence is the interaction of the Drug & Alcohol Court. Her Honour was very familiar with the workings of this type of court from her time in the District Court. A Drug & Alcohol Court's work is not only to reduce future criminal conduct by drug affected criminals, it has a more important role which is to allow compassion to enter the lives of people who, with few exceptions, have had the most awful upbringings that one can imagine. This compassion has also been a hallmark of Her Honour's approach to sentencing. Whenever a criticism of leniency has been made, an analysis of her Honour's reasons will not reveal leniency, but a desire to advance and enhance opportunities for rehabilitation.

20 There are many other areas in which her Honour has made her mark. They include encouraging diversity at the Bar and on the Bench, and the education of judges and lawyers. I am sure other speakers will canvass those areas. I am particularly concerned to hasten the way to morning tea, so I will end here by thanking the Chief Justice for her friendship, and on behalf of all the judges, for her companionship and leadership.

30 We all wish her Honour and Paul the very best for the future.

MURRELL CJ: Thank you, Justice Elkaim. Attorney-General.

40 MR RATTENBURY: Thank you, Chief Justice. Auntie Violet, thank you, as always, for your welcome to country. It is a very important part of this city that we acknowledge the traditional custodians in a long and continuing connection they have to this land, and it is a very beautiful gift that you presented to the Chief Justice, and it is a great mark of this city that she will leave the role with that wonderful gift.

45 Chief Justice, Chief Magistrate, Justice Gageler, members of the judiciary, members of the profession and colleagues, I am glad to be here with all of

you today to mark this important occasion. Today we farewell Chief Justice Murrell from her appointment as the Chief Justice of the ACT Supreme Court, concluding an impressive 25 year career as a judge.

5 It is not easy to fully detail her Honour's contribution to her presence on the court in a single speech, but I hope through the various speeches today that we will paint that full picture. Perhaps most commonly noted is the tight ship that her Honour has run during her tenure.

10 Indeed, in a speech which her Honour made at the other bookend in this journey, the ceremonial sitting to mark her Honour's appoint, clearly the efficiency of the court was front of mind in her remarks, and nobody could deny the effectiveness of that endeavour. Under her Honour's leadership, we have seen the Supreme Court be extremely effective and efficient in its
15 dealings, and for that the ACT Government owes her Honour a huge debt of gratitude.

I would like to note that this gratitude is not one in that efficiently running courts are a convenience like any other. Of course, efficiency in all things is
20 desirable, but particularly in our courtrooms where decisions with such profound impacts to people's lives are being considered, the timely administration of justice is a very direct interest to members of the community. To have the court operate both so conscientiously and with such reliability is of huge value to our community.

25 I have been very pleased that over the years of her Honour's leadership at the courts we have seen great development in therapeutic jurisprudence, and that those lessons in practicality and directness from her time at the New South Wales District Court have flowed through the ACT to our benefit. Her
30 Honour's commitment to therapeutic jurisprudence is evident through Chief Justice Murrell's work in supporting the establishment of the Drug & Alcohol Sentencing list, as Justice Elkaim noted, to better support the rehabilitation of serious offenders whose criminality is related to substance abuse.

35 Having observed the operation of a similar court in New Zealand, this is a program I was particularly interested to see succeed. Many conversations are had about the potential impact of therapeutic jurisprudence, but that amounts to little if we cannot effectively implement it on the ground, so to speak.

40 The list also embodies the idea of justice reinvestment, a policy to which myself and the government are deeply committed. The delivery of a justice reinvestment agenda requires us to focus the resources of the justice system towards rehabilitation, community development and prevention of future crime. It not only helps the individual build a better life, it makes our entire
45 communities safer. I thank the Chief Justice for her support in implementing this important initiative here in the Territory's courts.

5 In addition to efficiency, her Honour made it clear, upon taking on this role, about her love for the law as an instrument of change, and especially to improve the lives of people experiencing disadvantage. Her commitment to these values has been very clear. I hope, your Honour, that you have found the same fulfilment in these respects. We have been privileged in the ACT to have such a formidable Chief Justice these last eight years. The territory's first female chief justice has certainly earned all our admiration and thanks.

10 I would also like to acknowledge that the last couple of years have been particularly difficult with the impact of COVID-19 on the Canberra community, and while it has not been without its disruption, Chief Justice Murrell's leadership of the Supreme Court through these tough times has ensured the court continued to operate almost without interruption.

15 I also acknowledge the Chief Justice's longstanding involvement in and commitment to judicial education with the National Judicial College of Australia. A court is only as strong as its people, and I am sure we have all benefited from her Honour's contributions nationally to developing judges across the country.

20 I also thank the Chief Justice for her tireless advocacy to ensure the ACT judiciary is appropriately resourced to respond to the evolving needs of the Canberra community. I have appreciated your willingness to raise issues with me directly, to face challenges head on, and to be available to offer your advice and opinion.

30 I thank you, Chief Justice Murrell, for the undeniable mark you have left on the ACT Supreme Court which is all the better for having had you at the helm. It will be strange to know the court without your Honour's signature style, but I am sure we are all committed to continuing to build upon your myriad contributions.

35 The ACT owes you a significant debt of gratitude, and on behalf of the ACT Government and the broader community, I wish you well as you step beyond your time as leader of our court. Thank you.

MURRELL CJ: Thank you, Attorney-General. The President of the Bar Association, Mr Muller.

40 MR MULLER: Chief Justice, Justice Gageler, judges of the court, judicial officers, Attorney-General, Auntie Violet and other distinguished guests, I, too, would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands we are meeting on today, the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, and their elders past, present and emerging, who have never ceded custodianship, and have provided over 50,000 years of uninterrupted contribution to the rich culture of these lands and its people.

5 It is a great source of pride for the profession in the ACT that we count amongst our senior members, Magistrate Louise Taylor and Shane Drumgold SC, the director of public prosecution, who celebrate proud Aboriginal heritage. Indeed, as reported in its latest annual report, 5.4 per cent of the office of the DPP's staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, a pleasing upward trend that will no doubt continue to grow over the coming years.

10 Chief Justice, as I reflected on your exceptional career in the law, it struck me that it has been a tale of two cities. I imagined you beetling down the highway to Canberra in the spring of 2013, with Charles Dickens' closing words from that great novel ringing in your ears, 'It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done. It is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known'. Of course, it hasn't been a rest at all. Perhaps that is what comes next, and I'm not sure whether you would view the move to lead our Supreme Court as the best thing you have ever done, but I trust that it's right up there.

20 Before I come to the Canberra part of the tale, there are some aspects of your career in your first city of Sydney that I will reflect upon because they assist in observing some emerging themes that I respectfully wish to suggest stand out as hallmarks of your career in the law. Your Honour enrolled as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1977. In the context of your career as a whole, you spent a relatively short time in practice as a solicitor, but perhaps a formative four years, working at the Legal Aid Commission and the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor's Office.

30 You describe that period as the provision of legal services at the coal face. You have also spoken about the work providing an opportunity to change people's lives for the better. The courage to pursue change where you have seen it as necessary has become a striking aspect of your service. In 1981 you were called to the Bar in New South Wales. You practised as a barrister for some 15 years, and in that time developed a broad and balanced practice, acting both for prosecution and defence.

35 Your practice was much more than criminal work and included administrative law, environmental matters and common law inequity. Your Honour also spent two years as environment counsel for the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority Board, work that I understand you found particularly rewarding.

40 You were appointed senior counsel in New South Wales in 1995. Of 16 appointments in that year, you were the only woman. Indeed, you were only the ninth woman to be appointed senior counsel in the history of the Bar in New South Wales. That is striking when I reflect upon the fact that in 2021 there are 57 women silks at the New South Wales Bar, and seven of the 20

appointments in 2021 were women. In the ACT the only appointments in 2021 were women.

5 Your Honour became a judge of the District Court of New South Wales in 1996 and continued in that role for some 17 years. In that period, you served as an acting judge of the Land & Environment Court in New South Wales; you were President of the New South Wales Equal Opportunity Tribunal; Deputy President of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal in New South Wales; Deputy Chair of the New South Wales Medical Tribunal; Chair of the New South Wales Judicial Commission Sexual Assault Bench Book Committee; and a visiting fellow at the ANU College of law.

15 There were also some significant firsts in the Sydney period and we have already had mention this morning of your role in establishing the first Drug Court in New South Wales in which you were a senior judge between 1998 and 2003. You described that time as delivering a first for you, and that was the role you had in leading a multidisciplinary team, dealing with various stakeholders, and the ongoing involvement that court gave you with offenders as opposed to the one-off experiences that are more typical of the judicial role.

20 On a lighter note, your Honour may also have been the first judge to deliver a guilty verdict in a criminal matter in Coffs Harbour, only to then have the experience of the accused, so stunned by that verdict, to leap out of the dock, flee the court building and run away down the main street of the town with puffing court officers in chase.

25 Chief Justice, you arrived in Canberra in September 2013 with a wealth and breadth of legal experience that gave the profession in Canberra real hope for the future of the court, and you have delivered. I pause for a moment reflect on the thoughts of some members of the wider ACT community upon the announcement of your appointment, that is, as opposed to the legal community, your Honour, because here I am relying on RiotAct as my source. Deep South commented:

35 This was an interesting and unexpected appointment. Of course, nobody thought Penfold would be promoted, but Burns had some chance, and several Federal Court officers were rumoured to be in the running, with one of them thought to have been tapped a few weeks ago.

40 Taking a District Court judge from across the border for chief is surprising. However, Murrell seems very qualified given the job was always going to deal predominantly with criminal matters. The one uncertainty is whether she brings the desperately needed reform to the court's efficiency.

5 classes for the judges. I understand in some cases the judicial downward dog was a sight to behold. I am also told of an earlier time, on a working trip to Lord Howe Island your Honour sought to press gang some other judges into climbing Mount Gower, a challenging five-hour climb. None would join you and you completed the walk on your own. The Honourable Margaret Sidis observed that you conquered Mount Gower and you have not ceased conquering since. Your Honour has also been an adventurous traveller, an activity you have to return to in the coming years.

10 At that admissions ceremony in 2014, you also spoke to those young lawyers, particularly the young women lawyers, about changing that which you cannot accept, a willingness to tackle the difficult issues, and to push for change in relation to matters that you were unwilling to accept, has I think been a hallmark of your Honour's time in the ACT.

15 Chief Justice, throughout your career you have been a strong supporter and mentor of women at the Bar and in the profession generally, and that has continued in your time in the ACT, and the women members of our profession are all very quick to comment on the generosity with which you have given your time in supporting them and supporting their endeavours.

20 So your Honours, to sum up as best as I am able, your Honour has in these two chapters of an outstanding career demonstrated a passion for equality of opportunity, a passion to deliver change where it is called for, and a directness of communication that has served the legal and the wider community well. One senior counsel from Sydney with whom I spoke observed:

30 Chief Justice Murrell had the foresight to make changes that would deliver on the courts' objectives of quick, inexpensive and efficient litigation. She leaves the court as one that practitioners now aspire to appear before.

35 Chief Justice, on behalf of the Bar Association, I thank you for your service to the territory, and I wish you well in the next chapter of your life. I trust that it will provide you with a little more rest and a little more time to enjoy the family that you cherish. I understand your grandchildren are excited at the prospect of your Honour spending less time as chief justice and more time as their Henny, and it is my hope that you will very much enjoy the next chapter of your life and that you will not give up on pursuing change where it is called for.

45 MURRELL CJ: Thank you, Mr Muller. President of the Law Society, Ms Carroll.

MS CARROLL: Chief Justice, Justice Gageler, magistrates, members of the legal profession and members of the community, thank you to Auntie Violet

Sheridan for your welcome to country. I join with our previous speakers to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people on whose land we meet today. I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and also to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

5

It is a great privilege to be here today on behalf of the ACT legal profession to honour the service and contribution of Chief Justice Murrell. Professor Gabrielle Appleby and Associate Professor Heather Roberts have written extensively on the special qualities required of a chief justice, and I should say that Associate Professor Roberts is here today.

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In their publication, 'The Chief Justice under Relational and Institutional Pressure', they identified a set of qualities required in the role. These qualities include independence, accountability, transparency, efficiency and representativeness. Your Honour has personified these attributes throughout your judicial career.

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As I spoke with others in preparation for today, the words frankness and candour were a recurring theme. Your Honour's pivotal role in establishing many improvements in the administration of court processes have been referred to by others, such as the introduction of case management procedures, including court-based mediation of civil and criminal trials, and fundamentally changing the court's listing procedures.

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Interestingly last month, Appleby and Roberts offered an updated element required to be a successful chief justice. This new aspect consistent of an institutional sensitivity and reform mindset that allows them to respond and anticipate contemporary challenges to the court. This refers to the need to guide the court through unexpected challenges such as the COVID response.

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The ACT Supreme Court, under your Honour's leadership, has been an exemplar in this regard, rapidly pivoting to digital and remote in many aspects of its work, and the outstanding efforts of the court under your leadership in continuing to serve the community, and through the challenges of lockdown and restrictions, should be commended.

35

In support of your Honour's satisfaction of the factor of institutional sensitivity, I note that when one of the judicial officers in this court was required to undertake home quarantine due to COVID requirements, you arranged for a care parcel containing fresh pasta to be delivered. To me, this displays a level of institutional sensitivity above and beyond that imagined by Appleby and Roberts, especially as I understand this generous parcel was sufficient to supply six meals for the locked down household.

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Your Honour's COVID letter to the local legal profession is possibly more along the lines envisaged by our learned friends, and your show of support for the profession during the lockdown and ongoing COVID situation was

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much appreciated, and a demonstration of leadership in difficult times. A natural capacity to remain calm and respond to a crisis has perhaps been enhanced by your Honour's longstanding commitment to practising yoga, and such interests outside the law may also have assisted in avoiding a potential for moral fatigue which your Honour referred to in your recent speech for the commencement of the legal year. I hope the coming months provide you the opportunity to engage in those outside interests more fully.

In 25 years in judicial office, your Honour has provided an invaluable contribution to the administration of justice, to the law and to the community. On behalf of the ACT Law Society and the legal practitioners of the ACT, I wish you all the best for the future.

MURRELL CJ: Thank you, Ms Carroll.

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. I acknowledge that sovereignty over this land has never been ceded. Thank you, Auntie Violet, for your welcome, and for your wonderful gift. As you noted, only eight short years ago you welcomed me here to the territory and your presence today to perform my final welcome brings events full circle. Thank you.

Attorney-General, Justice Gageler and other judicial officers, members of the legal profession and other friends of the court, you honour me and the court by your presence today, particularly those who have travelled interstate. Many are of necessity attending remotely, and I would like to give a special shout out to my senior associate, Ross, who is attending from his hospital bed; one of my first associates, Anika, who is in isolation as of midnight last night; my first registrar, Annie Glover, who is contending with the Brisbane floods; and mediator extraordinaire, Margaret Sidis, who has been recently stranded on a newly formed island in the Hunter Valley.

I am also mindful that some who were here at the beginning of my tenure are not here today, and I'm thinking of my parents, Ken and Helen, but it is a consolation that my grandchildren are here. Attorney-General, Mr Muller and Ms Carroll, thank you for your very kind words, and Acting Chief Justice Elkaim, thank you for this unique occasion where you have remained largely serious.

I have been a lawyer for 44 years. It was by fortunate accident that I became a student of law, not of architecture, and that I went on to become a lawyer, rather than a journalist. In a third stroke of good luck, I have spent most of my legal career, 25 of the 44 years, practising law as a judge. In my time as a judge of this court, the period has reinforced something that I expressed when I was sworn in as Chief Justice, that judging is the most rewarding way in which to practise the law.

5 I think that I was a reasonable barrister and a fair sort of a judge, but it was really only in the autumn of my career in this role that I found my vocational stride. In this role, I have felt most extended and most comfortable. I am one of the lucky few who can say that my career has given me everything that I would have wished for if, in myopic adolescence, I could have had the wisdom of later years.

10 I came into this role at a time when, as the judges, the profession and the bureaucracy agreed, change was needed on many fronts. Changes were needed to improve court efficiency; resources were antiquated; the courthouse was inadequate for contemporary needs; and so was the IT. There was neither a civil nor a criminal mediation system. Governance was, at best, idiosyncratic, and at worst, just absent. There was distressingly little recognition that the judiciary was a separate arm of government. Rather, it was widely regarded as an eccentric outpost of the Justice and Community Services Directorate.

20 No one person, or group of people, can effect sustainable change. The changes that have occurred here have been the work of everyone present in court today and everyone who has been associated with the court over the past eight years. I would like to mention a few of my fellow travellers on that journey to change. No doubt, I will omit some important names and I apologise for those omissions.

25 Attorney-General, Simon Corbell, and successive JACS directors-general, enabled the court to resume control of its own affairs, progressed the funding of a new court building, and otherwise adequately resourced the court. They supported the critical decision to appoint a principal registrar, answerable to the heads of jurisdiction, rather than to the executive. I know that our current
30 Attorney-General is also committed to supporting and strengthening the judicial arm of government.

35 My principal registrars, Phillip Kellow and Amanda Nuttall. Together with the Chief Magistrate, to a governance vacuum, I think we have introduced process and transparency. My registrars, Annie Glover, Amanda Nuttall and Jayne Reece, if you want something done ask a busy person, but if you want something extraordinary done, ask a couple of busy women. How we relish those statistics, even if the old data system was so poor that you had to pull out the paper files and compile the statistics manually so that we could
40 brainstorm a creative solution.

45 The sheriff and her staff, the registry staff and the librarians, unsung and often unseen. Thank you for your tireless work that has often gone unthanked. The last two years have been particularly hard. Thank you for enabling justice to be delivered uninterrupted through this period. The late Cameron Lyons and his team worked consultatively to create a courthouse that is near perfect in the facilities that it provides. It also reflects and

nurtures the progressive mature justice system that it houses, and the construction project gave me an opportunity to realise my inner architect.

5 My colleagues, the judges. You are so smart and so dedicated. More importantly, you are courteous and compassionate. The DPP would say to a fault, but I disagree. You are collegial; you are funny; occasionally some of you are just odd. You listen but you do not hesitate to speak up when you differ. It is hard to imagine a more positive judicial culture than that of this court. We are not just colleagues. As Justice Elkaim said, we are friends.
10 The additional and acting judges have complemented the talent of the resident judges and brought greater depth to our jurisprudence. I must admit, as will be apparent today, that I raided my former court to recruit the best and brightest.

15 The Chief Magistrate and the magistrates, thank you for your collegiality. My associates and EA's, you are brilliant and together we have been a brilliant team. I couldn't have written the judgments, and I certainly couldn't have written speeches without your help. We worked hard but we also had fun.

20 Every year I felt doubtful and asked my current senior associate and the registrar, 'Do you think that so-and-so, my current junior associate, has what it takes to lead the court's team of associates as senior associate next year?'. Invariably they have responded in the affirmative. Invariably, they've been
25 right. I am in awe at the authority, initiative and empathy that you have shown as senior associates. Soon you will lead the legal profession. That is reassuring and a source of pride.

30 The legal profession. For us as judges, the gossiping habits acquired as advocates continue. Much as we once complained about judges, we now complain about counsel, 'I can't believe I've drawn X. I'll be here all week. If I've said it once, I've said it a dozen times, but they just can't understand the obvious point', and so on. But in the clear light of day, it must be conceded that most of you don't waste the court's time and who do get the point. You
35 demonstrate the qualities of the profession at its best, integrity, courage and efficiency. You have proposed creative ideas and fearlessly embraced change. Thank you for the way in which you have served as officers of the court.

40 As has been remarked, one of the most satisfying changes has been the increase in the number and seniority of women advocates in this jurisdiction. It was only three years ago that I lamented, perhaps before I retire, women will occupy the front Bar table, and now you have taken your seat at that table. The ACT is probably the only Australian jurisdiction in which women
45 are appropriately represented in all parts of the courtroom most of the time.

5 Another of my greatest pleasures was chairing the National Judicial College of Australia, with Lillian Lesueur as CEO, and input from judicial officers nationwide, innovate programs were developed, delivered, and governance was introduced and the NJCA forged strong connections with other judicial education bodies domestically and internationally.

10 I acknowledge the love and support of my family, my daughters, Meredith and Eleanor, my partner, Paul and my broader family. Finally, I thank the ACT community, an open and progressive community that eight years ago welcomed me to this jurisdiction and gifted me the opportunity to serve in this role.

The court will now adjourn.

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ADJOURNED

[10.17 am]