

Attorney-General pays tribute to Justice Rice

The Attorney-General, Daryl Manzie, has paid tribute to retiring Justice Phillip Rice.

Mr Manzie described Justice Rice's retirement as "sadly premature."

"He brought his experience, not least of which included a knowledge and understanding of the Territory and its people," Mr Manzie said.

"His Honour's first experience of the Territory was as a primary school boy in Alice Springs during the 1930s.

"His period in Alice Springs served to foster an appreciation of the difficulties that can be faced in remote area living.

University

"After attending Adelaide High School during the early 1940s, the future judge commenced his career in the legal field by obtaining employment as a clerk with a firm of solicitors and taking first year law at Adelaide University.

"The aspiring lawyer's duties were interrupted in 1944 when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy and spent the next two years serving in Australia and overseas.

"His Honour resumed his legal studies after demobilisation, graduated with a Bachelor of Laws and was admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court of South Australia in December 1950.

Home to Alice

"In 1951, His Honour returned to his acknowledged home town of Alice Springs where he was to practise for almost seven years.

"During that period, he frequently appeared as counsel for the defendant in a variety of cases ranging from

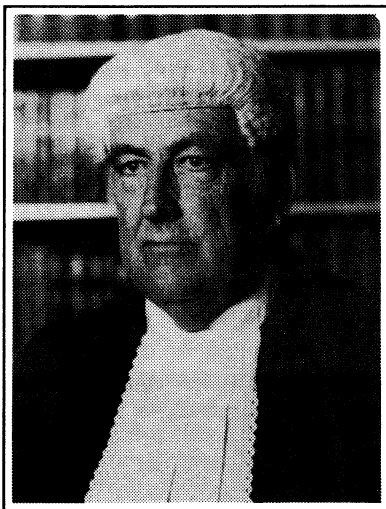
murder trials to mining disputes.

"In 1958 he was invited to join the Adelaide firm of Alderman Basil Clarke and Littlewood where, as he put it, the "rough edges were knocked off" him.

"So successful was that process that he later became senior partner in the firm.

"His Honour's appointment as a Queen's Counsel in October 1970 was soon followed by his decision to practise solely as a barrister specialising in criminal law.

"In December 1983, in clear recogni-



Justice Rice

tion of his legal capacities, His Honour was appointed as a judge of the District Court of South Australia.

"An interesting feature of the judge's career was his continued contact with, and various honorary appointments to, the Royal Australian Navy.

"These appointments included Judge Advocate at various naval courts martial from 1971, Deputy Judge Advocate General for the Navy from 1978, Judge Advocate General from October 1983 and later Commodore, the latter involving advice to the Chief of

Naval Staff on the propriety of all courts martial.

"Over the years, His Honour has also held a variety of appointments, including President of the South Australian Bar Association, Vice-President of the Australian Bar Association, Chairman of the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, Chairman of the Correctional Services Advisory Council and member of the Statutory Committee of the Law Society of South Australia.

"He also lectured in the law of evidence at the University of Adelaide from 1970 to 1973.

"More recently, His Honour held appointment as the Northern Territory Director of the Churchill Foundation.

Commitment

"His Honour's career can be described as an impressive illustration of his commitment to and abiding interest in the law.

"Moreover, his period on the bench established his reputation as an excellent criminal judge, a fact acknowledged by his peers.

"It is most unfortunate that the Northern Territory Supreme Court has lost the benefit of his legal expertise due to ill-health.

"Indeed, as the aggravation of His Honour's condition has forced his departure from this Territory which he so loved, the community as a whole has lost a valued member.

"On behalf of the government and the people of the Northern Territory, I bid farewell and extend my best wishes to His Honour and his family on their return to Adelaide.

"Their contribution to the Territory will be greatly missed."

Members endorsed his speech.