



Valedictory ceremony for the late the Hon Douglas Malcolm Campbell QC
Banco Court
Friday 22 August 2003, 9:15am

The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice

We join to commemorate the judicial career of our late colleague, the Honourable Douglas Malcolm Campbell QC, who died in Brisbane on 12 July 2003, aged 86 years. We at once again express our sincere sympathy to Mrs Cath Campbell and Mr Douglas Campbell, barrister-at-law, and thank them for their preparedness to be present here with us today.

All Judges of the court would wish to be associated with what I say this morning. I am asked particularly to mention the regret of a number of Judges and former Judges who cannot be present:: Justices Moynihan, Mackenzie and Fryberg, and former Justices Demack and Derrington, together with the Right Honourable Sir Harry Gibbs. I am very pleased to note the presence of a number of retired Judges of this court, Justice Callinan of the High Court and Judges of the Federal and Family Courts, as well as the Chief Judge and Judges of the District Court.

The authority of the judicial organ of government depends on public confidence in its work. That confidence is enhanced by the people's assurance of the continuity of the institution. Inaugurated 142 years ago on 7th August 1861, public respect for this court remains high. That is because of the people's conviction that the court is a reliable, enduring custodian of the rule of law. Of



Valedictory ceremony for the late the Hon Douglas Malcolm Campbell QC

Banco Court

Friday 22 August 2003, 9:15am

course its capacity to discharge that role has in turn been assured by the quality of its Judges. Douglas Malcolm Campbell exhibited those desirable qualities in strong measure. One means by which we indelibly mark the enduring nature of this institution is by acknowledging publicly the contribution of its distinguished members, not only upon retirement, but also upon their ultimate passing; and in the case of "DM" – as he was affectionately known – now as many as 18 years after his retirement on 4 August 1985.

Douglas Malcolm Campbell QC was appointed to the Supreme Court on 11 January 1965 at the age of 47 years, following a successful career at the bar, including eight years as senior counsel. I am confident others will speak of that period, including the former Judge's distinguished and much acclaimed achievements as defence counsel in the Japanese war crime trials. He was appointed, together with James Archibald Douglas QC, upon the pending departure from the court of Sir Roslyn Philp SPJ and Mr Justice Bernard Jeffries. They joined a bench of only 12 judges, one-half the present complement of the court. The then Justice Minister, Dr Delamothe, expressed the hope they would assist in overcoming a problem which no longer besets the court – a backlog of cases. I am sure they worked to meet his expectations.

Following his appointment to the Supreme Court, Mr Justice Campbell served as Central Judge, based in Rockhampton, for eight years, during which time he also played an active role in community affairs. The former Judge kindly participated in the Supreme Court Library's oral history programme in the year 2000. In his words:



Valedictory ceremony for the late the Hon Douglas Malcolm Campbell QC

Banco Court

Friday 22 August 2003, 9:15am

"Anthony Trollope, the English novelist, passed through Rockhampton at the turn of the 20th century. He described it as a city of sin, sweat and sorrow. That was not the Rockhampton I knew. It was certainly hot but air-conditioning made a big difference. The whole of Central Queensland was very much alive while we were there."

On his return to Brisbane in 1973, the Judge continued to serve here for the following 12 years. In addition to regular court duties, he served as President of the Land Appeal Court and constituted the Medical Assessment Tribunal.

His legally related work subsequent to retirement was as President of the Prisoners and Family Support Association and Chairman of an Electoral Commission charged with the complete redistribution of the electoral wards in Brisbane.

Our former judicial colleague served the Supreme Court and the people of Queensland with great distinction, and as he also observed in his contribution to the history programme, "it was a sad day for me, the day I closed the door on my chambers for the last time". It was the understandable regret of someone who knew he had made a fine contribution to the judicial government of this State, and had enjoyed making it.

We are honoured to salute a great Queensland Judge, which we do in full measure.