

Welcome ceremony for the Honourable Susan Brown
as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland
Banco Court
Friday, 10 February 2017, 9:15 am

This ceremony is to welcome Justice Brown to the Trial Division of this Court. Justice Brown was sworn in as a judge on 16 December last year, on the last day of term. That ceremony was attended by all the available judges and her partner Ms Worner and took place in an atmosphere of general delight. It is not strictly necessary therefore that the Commission appointing Justice Brown as a judge of the Supreme Court be read, but I will ask that it be done so that all present can hear it.

Would you read the Commission please, Madam Registrar.

Commission read.

On behalf of the Judges I congratulate Justice Brown on her appointment. In addition to the judges on the bench, Justice McMeekin joins us by video link from Rockhampton. Justices Henry and North are unavailable due to their court commitments, but the ceremony is being streamed to Townsville, Cairns and also Southport. Justices Fraser and Mullins are out of the jurisdiction, but all four judges unable to be present today wish to be associated with the sentiments expressed.

I note with pleasure among those present to welcome Justice Brown the Attorney-General, Ms D'Ath, the Shadow Attorney-General, Mr Ian Walker, judges of the Federal Court, Family Court and Federal Circuit Court, Chief Judge O'Brien and judges of the District Court, Chief Magistrate Rinaudo and other magistrates, the Deputy President of the

Industrial Court, the President and members of the Land Court and Tribunal members. I welcome too our retired colleagues, other distinguished guests, members of the profession and ladies and gentlemen.

There are a great number of apologies. I will mention only one in particular: that Chief Justice Kiefel has asked me to express her regret at not being able to attend this ceremony. Her Honour observes that she has followed Justice Brown's career with interest over a number of years.

And turning to some very important guests, it is a particular pleasure to note the presence of Justice Brown's partner, Ms Lisa Worner, whom we welcome to the Supreme Court community, other family members and family friends, including her Honour's father, Dr Christopher Brown and her brother, Mr Paul Brown.

Justice Brown fills the vacancy left by the Honourable Peter Lyons who retired in November. Because the appointment was just before the end of term, and because her Honour, in her obliging way, agreed to sit as an applications judge in the following vacation week, the swearing in took place, with the welcome ceremony deferred until now.

Justice Brown took degrees in Arts and Law, the latter with first class Honours from the University of Queensland, following those accomplishments with a scholarship to Cambridge from which she returned with a Master of Laws.

Her Honour was then admitted as a solicitor in 1992 and in 1998 went to the Bar, establishing a strong commercial practice. In 2011 she was appointed as Queen's Counsel. She's long been a stalwart of the Bar

Association Council and in 2015 became its first woman Vice President. The Bar Council's considerable loss is the Court's gain.

My experience of Justice Brown is of her as a profoundly intelligent and diligent practitioner and as a leader of the Bar. I know nothing of her private life and I will leave the amusing anecdotes to others. But I can share this insight: when I interviewed her for the much sought-after position of Supreme Court proedore, the judge with the responsibility for organising our social functions, her Honour astonished me with her knowledge of, and evident enthusiasm for, food and wine. So I look forward to good times ahead.

And of course, more seriously, I welcome on behalf of us all a colleague of great ability with a very endearing trait: a marked enthusiasm for hard work.