



Welcoming Ceremony for
the Honourable Justice Elizabeth Wilson and
the Honourable Justice Thomas Bradley
Friday 8 February 2019
Banco Court 9:15 am

**The Hon Catherine Holmes
Chief Justice**

We hold this ceremony today to welcome Justice Wilson and Justice Bradley as members of the Trial Division of this court. Both judges were sworn in in the presence of their colleagues on 3 December last year. I will ask the Registrar to read the commission appointing each as a Judge of the court, beginning with that for Justice Wilson.

Commissions read.

On behalf of the Judges I congratulate both new judges on their appointments. In addition to the Judges sitting on the bench Justices Henry and Crow are joining us by video link from Cairns and Rockhampton, respectively. Unfortunately, because of the flooding in Townsville, Justice North cannot join us, virtually or in reality but has asked to be associated with these remarks.

We are delighted to be joined, too, in congratulating Justices Wilson and Bradley by Justices Keane and Edelman of the High Court. The Chief Judge of the District Court has sent his apologies; he has been called

away suddenly by family matters, but the Judge Administrator and other judges of that Court are here. We welcome, too, judges of the Federal and Family Court and of the Federal Circuit Court; the Chief Magistrate and Magistrates; and Members of the Land Court. Many of the retired judges of this court are present.

At the bar table I acknowledge the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, Ms Treston, President of the Bar Association, and Mr Potts, President of the Law Society. In the wider audience we note with appreciation the attendance of Mr Janetzki, the Shadow Attorney-General; departmental officers; members of the academy; members of the profession; and, of course, members of the public.

The last group includes, in the overflow court, 20 members of the legal studies class at Clayfield College, where Justice Wilson undertook her secondary education. That school has the distinction of producing 66.6% of the Justices Wilson who have sat on this Court (Former Justice Margaret Wilson is among our distinguished guests today; should anyone be wondering, former Justice Alan Wilson is the non-qualifying 33 and a third per cent.)

I leave to last, but only to emphasize it, our particular welcome for the family and friends of our new judges. As to family Justice Wilson has present her husband, David Smith and their children Sybil and Betty, her three brothers and their partners and a large array of nieces and nephews. Justice Bradley has present his partner Matthew, some of his aunts and uncles, four out of his seven siblings and partners and another array of nieces and nephews.

Justice Wilson, you began your academic career with an honours degree in Arts from Griffith University. That was not surprising; you come from a well-known Brisbane family of architects, artists, landscape architects, writers, and documentary makers. Puzzlingly, you turned your back on all this creativity to become a lawyer; a little like running away to *leave* the circus.

But it's worked out not so badly. You did not need to look beyond the law, or indeed beyond the Banco Court, to find your life partner. You met your husband David there when he was associate to Chief Justice Macrossan, and attracted his attention with a little match-making help from then Crown Prosecutor Judge Clare, whose clerk you were.

You have practised principally in crime, appearing over the years in many difficult and high-profile cases, but have moved into other areas, including administrative and constitutional law. Your record of appearances as Counsel assisting and Counsel representing parties at Royal Commissions and Commissions of Inquiry must be one of the most extensive for counsel in this State. I know from my own experience of one of those Commissions your ability, your extraordinary work ethic and your calm and measured, if a little pessimistic, disposition.

Of particular note is your very substantial service to the profession as a member of the Bar Council, and for some years, as its treasurer; as a member of Law Council Committees; and as a member of the Supreme Court Library Committee. You've given a great deal of your time to advocacy training, including in PNG, and you've been a member of the Court of Appeal's pro bono committee, notably succeeding in having a murder conviction overturned.

Justice Wilson, you replace Justice Atkinson on this bench. Given the happy coincidence that a significant birthday for you fell about a week after your swearing-in, there's no reason you shouldn't emulate her Honour's sterling two decades of judicial service.

Justice Bradley, you have that exciting and attractive feature of being an additional judge. Given the expanding and increasingly complex workload of this court we are extremely grateful for, and at least to some extent relieved by, your appointment.

An interesting feature of your background is that many years ago you were a candidate for political office, running for a party which is not the party presently in government in Queensland. I mention this only because your elevation reflects a commendable non-partisan approach to judicial appointment which has not always been the case with Australian governments. It also reflects the entirely sensible recognition by this government, unlike some individual politicians, that judges' political leanings, and those of the government who appointed them, are entirely irrelevant to their performance of their judicial duties. We operate by uniform principles with results that are not designed to please governments of any persuasion, and so often don't.

Justice Bradley, you started your legal career as a solicitor and continued to advance in that role until deciding after a decade that your heart was so firmly set on litigation that the bar was the place for you. Your background is in commercial law, particularly in competition law and construction cases. You will no doubt sooner or later be pressed into service on this Court's Commercial List.

The consistent theme from people to whom I have spoken about you, apart from your obvious ability, is your unfailing courtesy to everyone you deal with. Like Justice Wilson, you have been heavily involved in service to the profession. You too have been a member of and treasurer to the Bar Council, and a valuable member of a Supreme Court Library Committee.

You also have a remarkable record of involvement in the Arts, many representatives of which are here today, as a Board or committee member and generous donor involved with, among other institutions and events, the Queensland Art Gallery, the Brisbane Writers' Festival, and the Brisbane Festival. I am a little anxious, in fact, that my cultural options in Brisbane are going to be seriously impaired by your appointment. But I should mention that you have not confined your contribution to the benefit of the likes of me. You have long been President of Access Arts, which runs visual and performance art workshops for different groups suffering disadvantage.

Another of your interests: I have mentioned on a previous occasion the role of Supreme Court provedore, the judge responsible for organising our social functions. It was between you and Justice Wilson who would attain this coveted position. Your fame as a connoisseur of food and wine has brought you success. Justice Wilson has accepted the disappointment with grace.

All of us on the court are delighted to welcome to this Bench, two talented hard-working lawyers with all the qualities that promise excellent judicial temperament. We welcome David, Sybil and Betty, and Matthew to the Court community.