

Chief Judge's Speech on Appointment of Senior Counsel 2016

On behalf of the judges of the District Court I welcome you to this ceremony and congratulate you upon your appointment as Senior Counsel. I also welcome the Clerks of the Floor and any family members who are here this morning.

The Honourable James Spigelman AC, during his time as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales regularly emphasised the significance of the longevity of our institutions for the administration of justice.

When you pause to think for a moment about this ceremony, as the state's new Senior Counsel you are extending a courtesy to the judges of this Court by taking your bows. The tradition of the appointment of silk dates back over 400 years. Whilst the name and method of appointment may have changed, the central role that you play in upholding the rule of law has in no way diminished.

On the other hand, the judges of the District Court are extending a courtesy to you by their presence this morning. The District Court was founded by the *District Courts Act*, 1858. Prior to that time, there were Courts of Quarter Sessions, but these courts were few in number and had no jurisdiction in civil matters. Shortly stated, the *District Courts Act* conferred jurisdiction to all personal actions not exceeding £200. The Act also extended the jurisdiction of the Courts of Quarter Sessions, under the Presidency of a District Court Judge as Chairmen. Since the Court's inception, judges have been administering justice for over 158 years.

This mutuality of respect recognises the strength of our legal profession and the quality and integrity of our judiciary.

Christopher O'Donnell SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1993, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial and criminal law.

Roger Marshall SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1994, you have made your reputation primarily in corporations law and equity.

Victor Kerr SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1995, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial law and equity.

Nicholas Chen SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1998, you have made your reputation primarily in construction law and negligence law.

Adam Casselden SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1998, you have made your reputation primarily in common law and corporations law.

David Kell SC, since your admission to the Bar in 1999, you have made your reputation primarily in administrative law and commercial law. Currently, you serve as the Crown Advocate for NSW.

Scott Goodman SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2001, you have made your reputation primarily in bankruptcy and construction law.

Kate Williams SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2001, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial law and trade practices.

Katherine Richardson SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2002, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial law and communications law.

Alexander Dawson SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2003, you have made your reputation primarily in defamation law and commercial law.

Jason Potts SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2003, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial law and equity.

Nicholas Owens SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2004, you have made your reputation primarily in commercial law and public law.

Kara Shead SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2005, you have made your reputation primarily in criminal law. Currently, you serve as the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions in NSW.

Doran Cook SC, since your admission to the Bar in 2005, you have made your reputation primarily in banking & finance and insolvency law.

Please permit to end this ceremony on a humorous note with an anecdote about Earl Rogers, a highly successful Californian lawyer who practised in the late 19th century. One day, a well-dressed gentleman came into his chambers and wanted to know how much Mr Rogers would charge to defend him for murder. Mr Rogers told him. The gentlemen sat down, then pulled out little bags from which he counted out the fee in gold. Then the gentleman rose and with a deep bow started to leave the chambers.

Mr Rogers said “hey, come back here! What’s all his? Where are you going?”

The gentleman replied “I am going to kill the man now, then I will be back.”

It goes to show that ethical considerations do not disappear as you become more successful.

I wish you every success in your leadership role at the Bar.

Please join us for morning tea.