



**ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT, MS REBECCA TRESTON QC,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE WELCOME CEREMONY FOR
HIS HONOUR CHIEF JUDGE BRIAN DEVEREAUX S.C.,
ON FRIDAY 21 AUGUST 2020**

May it please the Court.

On behalf of the Bar Association of Queensland, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Judge Devereaux on your Honour's appointment as Chief Judge of the District Court of Queensland.

May we extend particular welcome to your Honour's wife, Jacqueline, and your children, Cohen and Pip, as well as other members of your family who have been able to join us.

After graduating with a Bachelors of Arts and Laws from the University of Queensland, your Honour commenced your legal career at the Public Defender's Office as an interviewing officer.

At this time, you were at a crossroads – whether to pursue a career as a musician or a lawyer? Lawyering by day, you would moonlight as a musician at St Paul's Tavern and what was then known as Bonapartes Hotel by night. Many of your colleagues (some now judges and others attending today) would turn up every week to watch you crooning "Flame Trees", "Lean on Me" and even "Jump" – not the original Van Halen version of course, but the chilled Aztec Camera cover. You were the great multi-tasker (something that has never left you) with your guitar in hand and harmonica in mouth.

Setting an excellent work-life balance example, you continued for many years to combine music and the law. At one point you were playing at the Normanby Hotel, and in 1988, with your band, Spots on Your Tongue, you even released an EP titled "Looking for Humphrey". A collectors' edition, not even available on Spotify. Alas, we shall never know if Humphrey was found as the time had come for your Honour to face the crossroads and make a decision about your career.

In July 1988, your Honour was admitted as a barrister and practised at the private Bar in Halsbury Chambers for the following six years.

By 1994, your Honour was already recognised for your particular skill in criminal law and you were appointed as criminal counsel of the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia.

After your Honour's return to Queensland to take up appointment as counsel at Legal Aid Queensland, you were elevated to the position of Public Defender, a role you held for 10 years,

during which your Honour represented Queenslanders in high profile and challenging trials and appeals. In 2005, you were appointed silk.

A natural mentor, your advice lives on to shape the careers of your junior colleagues. When a member of the High Court's Bench asked you a particularly searching question in *Libke v the Queen*, while juniorled by Paul Smith, as his Honour then was, you paused to answer. The pause grew longer. And longer. Finally, you answered. At the conclusion of the hearing, your instructor, keen to learn the art of advocacy, asked you - why the long pause? You frankly acknowledged you were stumped for an answer. But you gave this advice which has never been forgotten – “Don't worry about long pauses – they never show up on the transcript so no-one will ever know”.

In 2008, your Honour was appointed to the District Court, initially as an acting judge, and receiving a permanent appointment a year later.

Your Honour has served for more than 12 years as a Judge of this Court.

In this time your Honour has come to be known as a thoughtful, reflective judge. Your Honour has perspective in its purest sense: a true understanding of the relative importance of things. A sense which enables your Honour to see the refracted light, some might say, through every prism, the light that comes through the cracks in everything. Through this, your Honour's judgments are imbued with your innate sense of humanity and intellectual rigour.

Your Honour's diligence whilst in judicial office has not passed unnoticed. When on circuit in regional areas, your Honour is determined to hear all of the matters on the list, being particularly concerned to not leave out anyone remanded in custody.

Of course, your Honour likes to reward yourself for this industry with a good quality sandwich and you have a knack for scoping out the best local sandwich haunts in town, whenever on circuit. For anyone interested, Emilie's café in Gympie is a real gem.

Known to give back to the profession, your Honour gave a paper on evidence at a Family Law Conference some years ago. With a lighthearted reflection on the trajectory of your Honour's life and career, your opening line was: “Last time I appeared before a crowd this big I wasn't wearing glasses, my hair wasn't grey, and I was holding a guitar.”

As our Attorney-General has identified, this appointment marks the next stage in your Honour's long record of serving the people of Queensland.

On behalf of the Bar, it is a privilege to extend sincere congratulations and best wishes on this well-deserved appointment. We assure your Honour of the ongoing support and confidence of the Bar.

May it please the Court.
