

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE  
NORTHERN TERRITORY  
OF AUSTRALIA  
AT DARWIN

**CEREMONIAL SITTING TO WELCOME THE HONOURABLE  
JUSTICE SONIA BROWNHILL**

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

COURT ROOM 1, FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 2:00 PM

**PRESIDING JUDGES:**

THE HON. CHIEF JUSTICE GRANT  
THE HON. JUSTICE SOUTHWOOD  
THE HON. JUSTICE KELLY  
THE HON. JUSTICE BLOKLAND  
THE HON. JUSTICE BARR  
THE HON. JUSTICE HILEY  
THE HON. JUSTICE SONIA BROWNHILL  
THE HON. ACTING JUSTICE RILEY  
THE HON. ACTING JUSTICE MILDREN  
THE HON. ASSOCIATE JUSTICE LUPPINO

**IN ATTENDANCE**

THE HON. SALLY THOMAS AC

Transcribed by:  
EPIQ

GRANT CJ: Yes, thank you, Madam Associate.

THE ASSOCIATE: A Ceremonial Sitting to welcome the Honourable Justice Sonia Brownhill upon presentation of her Commission as a Judge of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory.

GRANT CJ: Justice Brownhill, do you present your Commission?

BROWNHILL J: Chief Justice, I have the honour to announce that I received a Commission from her Honour the Administrator appointing me as a Judge of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory. I now present my Commission. I took the prescribed oath before her Honour the Administrator on Monday, 2 November 2020.

GRANT CJ: Yes, Madam Registrar, would you please read the Commission.

MADAM REGISTRAR: Commission to the Honourable Sonia Lee Brownhill. Know ye that, reposing full trust and confidence in your loyalty, learning, integrity and ability, I, Vicki Susan O'Halloran, Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia, acting with the advice of the Executive Council, under s 32(1) of the *Supreme Court Act*, do by this my commission appoint you Sonia Lee Brownhill, to be a Judge of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory of Australia from and including the second day of November in the year 2020, to have, hold, exercise and enjoy the said Office under and subject to the provisions of the *Supreme Court Act 1979* as amended from time to time with all rights, powers, privileges, advantages and jurisdiction thereto belonging or appertaining.

GRANT CJ: Thank you, Madam Registrar.

The Court welcomes and acknowledges the presence here this afternoon of her Honour the Administrator, Vicki O'Halloran AO; the Attorney-General, the Honourable Selena Uiho; the Shadow Attorney-General, Mr Gerard Maley; the Honourable Austin Asche AC, QC, former Administrator and Chief Justice of this Court; the Honourable Tom Pauling AO, QC, former Administrator and Solicitor-General; Commissioner Jamie Chalker, Commissioner of Police; Mr Greg Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer of the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice; Mr Peter Shoyer, Ombudsman and Information Commissioner; Ms Sally Sievers, Anti-Discrimination Commissioner; Mr Nikolai Chrstrup SC, Solicitor-General for the Northern Territory; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Judges of this Court I would now like to congratulate you, Justice Brownhill. You are a very welcome addition to this Bench and we all wish you the very best.

Given our long association I propose to break the custom of Chief Justices not saying more than welcome at ceremonial sittings of this nature. No doubt much is about to be said by the other speakers about your intellectual qualities and achievements. As will be clear from those remarks, yours is a most deserving appointment.

At the risk of causing you some embarrassment, your circumstances and your strength of character are similar in some ways to Chief Justice Susan Kiefel of the High Court. You both left school at a relatively early age before returning to study at a later time. You both excelled in that endeavour, and you both then went on to excel in a career in the law.

As far as you are concerned, your abilities and your potential were apparent from a very early stage in your legal career. When our former Chief Justice, Justice Riley, was at the Bar – which was a very long time ago now – he was briefed as senior counsel in a long-running matter that had a large coterie of instructing solicitors. He remarked to me one that day that although you were the most junior of those solicitors, you were by far the best of them.

As always, his Honour's judgment was impeccable. Of course, I would have enjoyed his Honour's frank assessment far more at the time had I not been one of those other solicitors.

Much has already been made about the fact that with your appointment there is an equal number of male and female permanent Judges on this Court. That is no doubt a cause for both comment and celebration, but that result is in no way a matter of design.

At a general level it is a reflection of the change in composition of the legal profession, and the overdue and necessary and continuing evolution in society towards gender equality.

At the specific level, however, your appointment is a reflection only of your professional expertise, intellectual abilities and demonstrated capacity for sustained hard work; and a reflection of your personal qualities of integrity, independence and sound temperament.

This Court is fortunate to have your skills to deploy in its work. Along with the other Judges of this Court, you will play a vital role in the administration of justice in the Northern Territory.

Welcome, very much, again.

Yes, Madam Attorney.

MS UIBO: May it please the court.

I acknowledge the Larrakia People, the traditional owners of this land in which this court sits and which we celebrate this momentous occasion. I pay my respects to the elders past, present and the future and emerging Larrakia leaders.

Your Honour, Justice Brownhill, I congratulate to you on your appointment as Justice of this Honourable Court and pass on my best wishes on this most richly

deserved of appointments. On occasions like these tradition demands an account of your Honour's life and career.

You joined this world the same year that James Brown released *I Got You (I Feel Good)* and Simon and Garfunkel gave us *The Sounds of Silence*. And maybe as a sign of things to come that you also saw the album from a fellow female trailblazer Aretha Franklin, *Soul Sister*.

Your Honour's connection with the Northern Territory has been one of pride and longevity, including attending Years 9 to 12 at Dripstone High School. As a product of public education myself, and as the former Education Minister of the Northern Territory, I know we are very proud of what Territory education can produce and you are an exemplary measure of that.

An illustrious career in the law was not a future that your Honour originally pursued. The 1998 enrolment form at the University of Western Australia ticked the box labelled, "Combined Degrees of Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Law". As I understand matters, the aim at the time was to deploy the degrees in the pursuit of practising as an accountant.

However, the glossy attraction of debits and credits, not to mention yearly depreciation schedules, soon faded as your Honour dived into the first law subjects into the second year of the degrees. The attraction to law and, particularly, rule of law, was immediate and profound. Your Honour had found her calling.

The University of Western Australia was not prepared to simply let your Honour complete your studies as any other student might do so. They recognised a star when they saw one. In a pattern that was going to be repeated throughout your career, the powers that were at the institution said: "We need her."

Your Honour was therefore chosen as the Research Assistant to Professor Francis Auburn at the Law School in 1993. The learned professor was fully aware that your Honour's talents would be best utilised in complex and weighty subjects rather than some dry question of procedure. Hence you were tasked with analysing the interactions between the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Antarctic Treaty, the fruits of which work resulted in the publication of a paper by the Professor.

Multitasking falling naturally to your Honour. That was also the year that you successfully completed both university degrees. Articles of Clerkship were then obtained with Mallesons Stephen Jaques in Perth, where your Honour also spent your first year as a solicitor following your admission in 1995 to practise in, not only the Supreme Court of Western Australia, but also the Federal Court and the High Court.

However, one can only stay away from the Northern Territory for so long, and the next two years saw you in Darwin as both a research assistant for the Centre of South East Asian Law at what was then the Northern Territory University, and now

Charles Darwin University, and as a lecturer at the Faculty of Business teaching the Commercial Practice Unit.

Following a two-year stint in Queensland in the Continuing Legal Education Department of the Queensland Law Society, your Honour then returned, again, back to the Territory. This time, fortunately for us, permanently, to pursue a career in law – a career which has proven an envy to us all.

The starting point was as a solicitor and then senior solicitor in the Litigation Division of the Solicitor for the Northern Territory, followed by a shift to the Aboriginal Land Division where your Honour was going to spend the next five years or so.

The work included not only acting as instructing solicitor in the trial of many seminal native title cases in the High Court and the Federal Court, but also in negotiating the resolution of native title claims and drafting complex Aboriginal Land Use agreements and providing legal advice to the Territory Government.

Your Honour had appearances on country which provided an otherwise rare opportunity to enjoy some of the remotest and the least seen parts of the Northern Territory, which we all love. Most legal practitioners would be more than happy with a career that did not rise above that level. However, your Honour was just getting started.

It was during this time that your Honour's acumen and natural affinity to the law drew the attention of the then Solicitor-General for the Northern Territory, Tom Pauling AO, QC. After having worked with your Honour only a few matters, he said: "We need her." Something familiar.

As night follows day, your Honour then started at the Solicitor-General's Chambers in June 2002, first as senior lawyer before moving to the much-coveted position of Crown Counsel in 2006. There were countless appearances in the High Court, the Northern Territory Court of Appeal and the Full Court of the Federal Court. There are far too many to list on this particular occasion. Likewise, the regular flow of written opinions on constitutional law, statutory construction and administrative law kept the lawyers at the Solicitor for the Northern Territory on their toes indeed.

I must mention a few of the defining constitutional cases from your time as Crown Counsel. They include the *Wurridjal* case, which concerned the validity of Commonwealth acts undertaken in the intervention. Together with the Chief Justice, your Honour overturned prior High Court authority which held the Commonwealth could compulsorily acquire property in the Territory without compensation. They also include the *Emerson* case, which secured the validity of criminal property forfeiture legislation, and the landmark *Work Choices* case, which subsequently re-wrote the law on the Corporations power.

Tom Pauling was very much to become a mentor for you during these years. However, I am reliably informed that exchange of knowledge and ideas on the street of legal wisdom was far from one-way traffic.

The Chief Justice, Michael Grant QC, took over as Solicitor-General in September 2007. His Honour's journey to that position had seen him working at the Solicitor for the Northern Territory in the early parts of his career, followed by a move to the private Bar at William Forster Chambers, where he took silk the year before and he replaced Tom Pauling.

It could be a coincidence, or it could be the result of learned advice, or maybe we will never know, but I submit that the evidence is capable of supporting the inference that the Solicitor-General, in late 2010, if not much earlier, formed the view that: "We need her". And so it was in February 2011, your Honour Justice Brownhill, too, made the move to the private Bar at William Forster Chambers, and in September 2015 your Honour, too, took silk.

Your Honour was only the third woman in the Territory's history to receive this acknowledgement, the others before you being her Honour Justice Judith Kelly and Raelene Webb QC.

And then, lo and behold, a year later, in June 2016, the then Attorney-General announced the fifth Solicitor-General for the Northern Territory would be none other than Sonia Brownhill SC, and the first female appointment to that position.

You attended to your tasks in that role with the utmost dedication and rigour, whilst at all times keeping an unwavering eye on the rule of law. My predecessor, the Honourable Natasha Fyles, MLA has asked me to pass on her deepest gratitude for your excellent advice, hard work and dedication during her time holding the portfolio as Attorney-General.

It will come as no surprise to anyone here that your Honour has always been held in the highest regard by members of the judiciary. Your Honour racked up more than 20 High Court appearances as junior counsel before even becoming the Solicitor-General of the Northern Territory, and was involved in prominent Federal Court native title cases including the Darwin Native Title Claim, the Blue Mud Bay Native Title Claim and the Jabiru Native Title Claim.

During your time at the private Bar your Honour continued to appear for the Territory in significant constitutional matters, most notably the *Paperless Arrest* case concerning the application of Ch 3 of the *Constitution* to the Territory judiciary.

Further, in your capacity as the second law officer of the Territory, the notable High Court cases in which you appeared included the Timber Creek Compensation Claim, which was the first case in Australia to determine compensation for the extinguishment of native title; *Work Health Authority v Outback Ballooning Pty Ltd* concerning repugnancy of Territory and Commonwealth laws; and *Prior v Mole* in respect to criminal law and procedure.

True to form, and consistent with what had now become par for the course, when it came to appoint the next judge of this Honourable Court, there was only ever

going to be one answer: "We need her". The appointment marks the first time that a superior court in Australia has achieved gender balance, now that your Honour has joined Justices Kelly and Blokland on the Bench. It has been a long time in the making, but we are all proud of that achievement.

Your Honour harbours all necessary traits of character, learning, temperament and personality to discharge your duties as a Judge with distinction.

It is my hope that at the same time you will continue to nurture your personal interests, including still rising at 4:30 am to work out, regularly practising your yoga and looking after your recently adopted puppy. I have no doubt that you will continue to apply yourself in the service of law, and that you will do the right thing to all manner of people according to the law without fear, favour, affection or ill-will.

Enjoy the advantage of being in the driver's seat. You are no longer required to argue about what is the law. Your Honour will now simply be declaring it.

The Northern Territory is so much richer for your Honour's appointment.

May it please the Court.

GRANT CJ: Thank you for those words, Madam Attorney.

I should just say that I think Justice Brownhill is the fourth woman in the Northern Territory appointed silk. Suzan Cox QC almost fell out of her chair when you said the third, but no doubt she will remonstrate with your second law officer after this.

Yes, Mr President of the Bar Association?

MR CRAWLEY SC: May it please the court.

Your Honour Justice Brownhill, I first met your Honour when I joined William Forster Chambers in 2012, so we don't have a long personal history. My first memory of your Honour was, in fact, your office furniture. At the time I was determining how I should furnish my offices and I went around to see what everyone had and everyone had different shades and grains of timber furniture except her Honour, and your Honour had gone exclusively white. That was pretty memorable to me, and to me it sums up your Honour as pragmatic, efficient, unpretentious and individual, and nothing in my involvement with your Honour since that date has changed those initial impressions I had.

In preparing this address, I sought the assistance of colleagues who have known you for far longer and far better than I. I am reliably informed that it was in this Court that you had your baptism of fire as an advocate before the Court of Appeal in a case involving the proceeds of crime. I'm sure your Honour well remembers that.

You had advanced the proposition that the Court had no power to intervene, even to prevent an abuse of power. The court adjourned, and over lunch your leader reminded you that the Crown is a model litigant, that the courts are an arm of government, and the submissions should be withdrawn. This you did to the great approval of the Court of Appeal, with the then Chief Justice remarking on your baptism.

You have appeared in the High Court as the learned Attorney-General said on many occasions, both with the then Solicitor-General and his successor, the current Chief Justice, and more frequently on your own account with notable success. I am told there were upwards of 50 appearances as counsel and instructing solicitor, including an occasion when you were so great with child the Registry staff were having bets on when the baby might arrive. A check-up at a Canberra hospital sparked rumours that the baby had, in fact, arrived.

Your Honour was a relatively quiet member of Chambers, apart from lunchtimes, when the use of a blender caused sounds to reverberate through the entire building. Your Honour is a reasonably private person. From snatches of conversations during Chambers' weekly lunches, I am aware that you often spent your weekends undertaking hands-on renovations of your shack at Dundee Beach, including casting your own concrete benchtops. I was aware that one of your sons had a skill at rugby and a similar skill at injuring his knee while playing rugby. It is only recently that I discovered your Honour has a passion and flare for growing orchids, and that you have bought some land in the wilds of Tasmania. The purchase of that land was conducted on the internet, and it was only much later that you were able to visit Tasmania where, to your profound relief, you discovered the land actually existed.

When your Honour was appointed senior counsel in 2015, there was a subtle but appreciable change. Although you still remained quiet, it was a quiet confidence. You were more inclined to express opinions with assurance, and those opinions were received with attention and respect, even at the lunch table.

It was on your appointment as Solicitor-General in 2016 when you were truly transformed. You developed a true presence and style. People noticed you. My wife wants the name of your personal trainer. The transition to the Solicitor-General was not without some hiccups. Your Honour is well known for her generous facial cues, shall we say. One of your early assignments as Solicitor-General was to be involved in the Royal Commission on youth detention. Those proceedings were streamed live. Your facial expressions while listening to some of the questions by other counsel had our clerk of Chambers laughing out loud.

That your Honour ultimately would progress to appointment to the Supreme Court, should you wish to do so, was self-evident. Moreover, the odds of the Territory seeing its first female Chief Justice in the foreseeable future now must be considered to be significantly shortened.

On behalf of the Northern Territory Bar Association, I congratulate your Honour on your appointment. It is well deserved. The members of my Association look



forward to plying their trade before you in the years to come, hopefully without receiving as many generous facial cues from your Honour.

The Chief Justice has previously described your Honour as an excellent lawyer; the lawyer who most reminds him of himself. I have no doubt in future, people will say, “She’s a judge, and a good judge too”.

May it please the Court.

GRANT CJ: Yes, thank you, Mr President. I’m not sure I said those two things in the same sentence, but I’m nothing if not self-referential.

Yes, Madam President of the Law Society.

MS SAVVAS: I would like to acknowledge the Larrakia People as the traditional owners of the land on which this Court sits. I pay my respects to elders past and present, and to emerging community leaders.

It is my very great privilege to be here on behalf of the Law Society and our local profession to welcome your Honour to this Court. Your Honour, I had the pleasure of reading your profile before the publication of the Society’s book *Mandatory Reading* in 2018. And I recall being particularly inspired by your determination to succeed and your apparently fearless approach to new experiences. You clearly come to this Court with a number of qualities that make your Honour exceptionally suitable for this appointment. You have been described by your former colleagues as having a great legal mind with a great passion for your work.

I am also told that you have a good sense of humour and I suspect that your good humour will ease this journey. You have had a distinguished legal career, appearing as both junior and lead counsel in superior courts and have excelled in your role as the Solicitor-General. No doubt it was that excellence that brought you to the attention of the Attorney-General.

The Society had the pleasure of working with you in your capacity as the Statutory Supervisor, and we take this opportunity to thank you for your advice and assistance in the oversight of our disciplinary processes.

Your Honour was the first female Solicitor-General in the history of the Territory, and your appointment as a Judge in this Court results, as we’ve heard, in another first: the first Supreme Court in Australia to have a gender-equal bench. Many have praised your appointment to the Bench as another step towards gender equality in the Territory. And the Society is, of course, pleased that gender diversity is clearly reflected in this judiciary.

However, your Honour, you are here because of your hard work and your commitment to the law. Your Honour has shown a firm commitment to the Territory and the practise of the law, with a demonstrated understanding and adherence to the

highest professional standards. There is no doubt that those who appear before you will be treated with fairness, equality and respect.

You said once that your mentors imparted the wisdom of encouragement, and that the belief and support of people whose judgement you admire is impossible to ignore and compels you to do extraordinary things you wouldn't have otherwise dreamt of doing. I congratulate you on your extraordinary achievements and look forward to your contribution to the administration of justice in the Territory.

May it please the Court.

GRANT CJ: Yes, thank you, Madam President.

Justice Brownhill, do you wish to respond?

BROWNHILL J: Thank you, your Honour.

Your Honour the Administrator, ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming to celebrate with me on this occasion. Thank you to the Attorney-General and the Presidents of the Bar Association and the Law Society for your kind words. I am aware of the effort it takes to make a human being sound worthy of appointment to this Court. Yours has been considerable and I'm grateful.

This occasion has led me to asking myself how did I get here, and I've identified two significant factors. Firstly, sheer good fortune and, secondly, the efforts and influences of others. There are so many people who have taken an interest in the progression of my career over the years, often when I was meandering about blindly, unaware that careers can and should progress.

A number of those people are located alongside me, and frankly, I'm startled to find myself sitting amongst my elders, mentors and supporters. My fellow Judges have all provided me with inspiration and encouragement up to this point, and I'm counting on that continuing into my appointment.

I would like to mention some people in particular who have made me more than I otherwise would be. I first worked with Acting Justice Riley, the former Chief Justice of this Court, when his Honour was the silk and Justice Southwood was the junior counsel briefed by the Solicitor for the Northern Territory in a test case concerning cattle before Justice Kearney in 1999.

I was drawn from my safe den in the Native Title Unit in the Solicitor for the Northern Territory and given the role of junior instructing solicitor. I had absolutely no idea what I was in for. It was a hard-fought case. Michael Maurice QC was on the other side. The statement of claim was 127 pages long and there remained 12 separate causes of action at the trial, which went for almost 7 weeks. But that case really piqued my interest in the rigours of litigation. I think Justice Riley felt sorry for me, because one of my tasks during meetings with counsel at which High Court authorities were discussed, was to wait for Justice Southwood to fire off from the top

of his head the volume of the CLR's in which a case was recorded, and then I had to run and find the actual volume.

Justice Riley has been an ongoing source of confidence in my capabilities and sage career advice. Justice Southwood too has been a supporter, but that might now change, given what I just said.

It was from the Native Title unit that I first worked with my original mentor and dear friend, Tom Pauling AO, QC, when he was the Solicitor-General. As a very junior lawyer I had the ridiculous good fortune to instruct Tom, Graham Nicholson and Raelene Webb, QC in three seminal native title cases, which were *Fejo*, *Yarmirr* and *Ward*. They were then being heard in the Federal Court and I managed to hang on to them all the way into the High Court.

It was for *Fejo*, that Anita Kneebone and I pushed the court trolley, loaded with lever-arch folders, through the streets of Brisbane where the court was sitting. And I am thrilled that she is here today. Those cases are examples of the amazingly high quality of work available to young lawyers practising in the Territory. So I urge all young lawyers to think about that before rushing off down south to further your careers.

In 2002, the Department allowed me to move to the Solicitor-General's Chambers and work in a role that, as you have heard, slowly morphed into me taking the position of Crown counsel in 2006. And in the five years after that move, I was lucky enough to instruct or junior Tom Pauling in the High Court nine times. Which meant that I got to observe first hand his engaging conversational persuasion of the High Court, something I never managed to master.

Tom also patiently tried to teach me the skill of looking at the big picture. I once drafted a complex and erudite advice about earthworks and embankments for railway tracks. I concluded that only some of the dirt used was "land" for the purposes of stamp duty. The lawyers in the room should appreciate how ludicrous that was. But rather than banging his head on his desk, Tom kindly suggested that such impracticality was probably not what the legislature intended.

Tom's support, encouragement and friendship is the bedrock on which my legal career is based, and I am so grateful to have had him and his lovely handbag, Tessa, to be there for me.

Again, it was through being in the right place at the right time that I was part of the furniture in the Solicitor-General's Chambers when Tom retired and his Honour, the Chief Justice, was appointed as Solicitor-General. In the four years I remained in Chambers, and thereafter, I was able to observe, learn from and marvel at the way his Honour thought and worked. This, of course, did leave me to curse my own inadequacies: the lack of a photographic memory; an inability to innately understand complex legal theory; and an inability to work 48 hours straight without sleeping. But it was only through his Honour's gentle nudging that I tumbled out of the Northern Territory government nest in 2011, and thudded to the ground of the independent

Bar. And it was only through his Honour's reinforcement of the idea of career planning that a seed was planted in my mind that maybe one day, if all the planets aligned in some wildly improbable way, I might become the Solicitor-General.

I mention also former Federal Court Justice, John Mansfield. He was a supporter of mine. Even though it was before him that I objected to a question my opponent was about to ask, because obviously I can read minds. And his Honour simply said patiently, "Well, Ms Brownhill, let's see what the question is first, shall we?"

I look back on my time at the Bar so fondly, even though I probably worked harder, and for longer, than at any other time in my life. The collegiate camaraderie and support of all of my William Forster Chambers mates made it manageable, and even fun. I am so happy that my Chambers neighbour, Nikolai Christrup SC, is now the Solicitor-General. A well-deserved appointment. When I did become the Solicitor-General, I managed to score the invaluable assistance of Chad Jacobi, whose brain and good humour got us through what was the most difficult brief I ever had; and the invaluable assistance of Trevor Moses and Lachlan Peattie, whose brains and good humour got us through many difficult issues across the past four and half years, including a global pandemic.

I also had the comfort of knowing that I could call on my colleagues, the other Solicitors-General, for advice or counsel if required. And I am honoured that the former Solicitor-General for Queensland, Peter Dunning QC, is here today. For the vast majority of my time as Solicitor-General, the Honourable Natasha Fyles MLA was the Attorney-General. And she was, if I may say so, the kind of Attorney that Solicitors-General hope for. She was determined to do the right thing in her role, including following my advice.

And I see here today so many people who I have worked with over the past 23 years. So many of you have provided me with the assistance I needed to do my job, for which I am very grateful. I know you will continue to assist me – and it follows – the Court – into the future.

It is, of course, difficult to put into words, especially without tearing up – which I have promised myself I will not do, but I might – to put into words my gratitude for the unfailing love and support of my family. My sons, Sam and Jack, endured the significant work-induced absences of their mother with no complaint and no apparent ill-effects. They remain my greatest achievements, and I could not be more proud of them. My mum, Kay, and her life partner, Mary-Anne, were my first inspiration of strong women. And are the original source of my own strength. My dad, John, and his life partner, Suzanne, have taught me that it is as important to relax as it is to strive. My brother, Matt, is quite simply the best brother in the world, and with his fiancé, Mel, their love and support is endless.

My reference to my family includes my friends. I am so happy to have some of my neighbours here today, the McIntyres, who for over a decade have made our street a wonderful place to live. And to have here some of my oldest friends, who

knew me when I was a tearaway teenager with an attitude and unknown future. In particular, I have my two best friends, Kathy with a 'K' and Cathy with a 'C', who I met in Year 9 at Dripstone High and who have stuck by me through everything, with the glue being oversharing and laughter.

I also wish to acknowledge the support of my former husband, Neil, who tragically took his own life almost a year ago.

It is indisputable that without my family's love, I would not be here.

I know that with all of the incredible support that I have talked about today comes very high expectations of me as a Judge of this Honourable Court. I will strive to meet those expectations and to pay back the faith in me shown by that support, and by the presence of you all here today. Thank you.

GRANT CJ: Thank you, Justice Brownhill.

Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the formal part of the proceedings, but the Judges of the Court invite everybody here to join us for refreshments in the court foyer at the close of proceedings.

The Court will now adjourn.

ADJOURNED 2:37 PM INDEFINITELY