

## **JUSTICE P A BERGIN**

On 6 March 2009, Justice P A Bergin was appointed Chief Judge in Equity of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, an office which may be traced almost 170 years to the Primary Judge in Equity established under the *Administration of Justice Act 1840* (4 Vic No 22).

Justice Bergin's appointment followed 10 years and five days of distinguished service as a judge of the Supreme Court. For six years of that period, she was the List Judge of the Commercial List and the Technology and Construction List, administering and controlling the busiest commercial court in the country.

In addition to her traditional duties as a judge in the Equity Division, her Honour also sat on the Court of Appeal and the Court of Criminal Appeal and in the Common Law Division; a recognition of the legal dexterity which she brought to the Bench.

Her Honour has served as an Acting Editor of the *Australian Law Journal* (see (2006) 80 ALJ 487 (Current Issues), 504 (Recent Cases); (2008) 82 ALJ 507 (Current Issues), 521 (Recent Cases)).

Following a relatively brief career in the teaching profession, her Honour turned to the Law, studying at Macquarie University whilst working as an associate initially to Judge Peter Leslie and subsequently to Judge Des Ward QC of the District Court.

After graduating in law in 1981, her Honour entered practice as a solicitor with Stephen Jaques & Stephen, a predecessor firm to Malleson Stephen Jaques, and remained with that firm until her call to the Bar on 10 February 1984.

For the next 15 years she established a practice which is rarely seen today. Her Honour was equally proficient in conducting equity, commercial, criminal, defamation and industrial cases, Royal Commissions and coronial inquiries. One of her more challenging and successful briefs was as counsel assisting Justice Wood in the Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service. On 29 October 1998, her Honour was appointed Senior Counsel.

During her time at the Bar her Honour served on the Bar Council of the New South Wales Bar Association for eight years.

Her Honour was appointed to the Supreme Court on 1 March 1999 (see (1999) 73 ALJ 410).

Justice Bergin's contributions beyond the law have been numerous and varied. She was the foundation Chairperson of the Cancer Institute (New South Wales), the Chairperson of the New South Wales Cancer Council, a Member of the Council of the Children's Hospital at Westmead and a Member of the

Board of State Records Authority of New South Wales. In addition, she has served as Chairperson and Member of the Visiting Committee (now Faculty Advisory Committee) to the Faculty of Law Wollongong University and as a Member of the Legal Qualifications Committee of the Legal Practitioners Admission Board.

Her Honour has taken part in international judicial exchanges including as part of a delegation of Australian judges to Japan in July 2006 (see (2006) 80 ALJ 487); at the forum, Mediation in Hong Kong: The Way Forward, presented jointly by the Judiciary of Hong Kong, the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law and others at the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre in December 2007 (see (2008) 82 ALJ 196); at the inaugural Judicial Seminar on Commercial Litigation in Sydney in April 2008 co-presented by the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the High Court of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (see (2008) 82 ALJ 359); and in April 2009, as part of an international group of judges presenting a seminar on Construction Law to judges of the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dubai.

Her Honour's interests outside the law are also numerous and varied. They are all intellectual. They include golf.