Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5526

Bryant, Diana

(1947 -)

Born	19471013, Perth Western Australia Australia
Occupation	Barrister, Judge, Lawyer, Magistrate, Queen's Counsel, Solicitor

Summary

The Honourable Diana Bryant is an Australian jurist. She was appointed Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia on 5 July 2004. Before this, she was the inaugural Chief Federal Magistrate of the Federal Magistrates Court of Australia (now the Federal Circuit Court of Australia) from 2000-2004.

Her Honour's appointment to the bench followed many years practising in family law in both Perth and Victoria. In Perth, she was a partner with the firm Phillips Fox; in Melbourne she was a founding member of Chancery Chambers. Known to be 'a brilliant lawyer', with an 'innate sense of justice and fairness,' her time as a barrister was marked by her preparedness to pursue both on behalf of her clients even at her own cost.

Her Honour has long been committed to advocating on behalf of women in the legal profession, having been a founding member of the Women Lawyers Association of Western Australia. She is currently Patron of Australian Women Lawyers and a committee member of The Australian Association of Women Judges.

Born into a family of legal professionals (her mother was a lawyer, as was her grandfather), Her Honour has witnessed considerable change across the course of her professional life, with regards to the status of women in the legal profession. In a 2016 address at the Australian Women Lawyers conference, she noted, '[a]although there are further mountains to climb for women lawyers, the progress is encouraging, 'suggesting that one of the most 'encouraging signs' was greater acceptance of the need for 'different work policies and practices which do not impede the path to success.'

Diana Bryant was interviewed by Nikki Henningham for the Trailblazing Women and the Law Oral History Project. For details of the interview see the National Library of AustraliaCATALOGUE RECORD.

Details

A more detailed essay about Her Honour's career is in development.

Published resources

Newspaper Article
Cool head leaps into legal hot seat, Shiel, Fergus and Munro, Ian, 2004,
http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/06/25/1088144974550.html

Conference Paper
A View from the top of the hill: A retrospective by an activist woman lawyer, Bryant, Diana, 2016,
http://www.australianwomenlawyers.com.au/uploads/publications/Diana_Bryant_-_AWL2016_Keynote_Speech.pdf

Resource Section
Law, Kerwin, Hollie and Rubenstein, Kim, 2014,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0624b.htm

Site Exhibition
Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection
Diana Bryant interviewed by Nikki Henningham in the Trailblazing women and the law oral history project

Author Details
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