

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person

Entry ID: AWE5744

Wolfe, Patricia (Patsy)

Occupation Barrister, Chief Judge, Commissioner, Judge, Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

Her Honour Patricia (Patsy) Wolfe served as Chief Judge of the District Court of Queensland between 1999 and 2014. She was the first woman to be appointed to the role. In 2014 she received the Order of Australia for her 'distinguished service to the judiciary, to the law through legal education reform and as a mentor and role model for women'.

Patsy Wolfe came to law as a mature age student and mother, after first pursuing careers in medicine and journalism. She graduated LLB with honours from the University of Queensland in 1978 and was admitted to the Bar the same year. In 1979, she joined the Faculty of Law as a senior tutor and then went on to complete a Masters Degree in 1983. While senior tutor, she met Margaret White and Quentin Bryce and formed supportive and enduring friendships with them both.

Before being appointed to the District Court in 1995, Wolfe served as Deputy Commissioner of the Fitzgerald Inquiry Into Official Corruption (1988-89) and as a part-time Commissioner on the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1993-95).

She is well remembered for her forthright comments made when she was chair of the Queensland Women's Consultative Committee in 1992. When challenged as to why Queensland women needed such a committee, when there was no equivalent body for men, her response was direct and uncompromising. Men already had a powerful organisation, she said. 'It's called Cabinet, where men outnumber women sixteen to two...That's why we need council as a direct line to the Premier.'

Events

1978 - 1978

1983 - 1983

2014 - 2014

2003 - 2003

2003 - 2003

1999 - 2014

1999 - 2014

1995 - 2014

1993 - 1995

1988 - 1989

1983 - 1995

1981 - 1982

1978 - 1980

1990 - 1990

1978 - 1978

1999 - 2002

1992 - 1997

1992 - 1994

1991 - 1997

1989 - 2003

1986 - 1999

1974 - 1974

Published resources

Book Section

Patricia Wolfe, Gregory, Helen, 2005

Site Exhibition

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

Resource Section

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

Author Details

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