



THE HON. JUSTICE CAROLYN SIMPSON AO

Next Tuesday, 12 March 2024, will mark the final sitting of the Hon. Justice Carolyn Simpson AO as a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Prior to the hearing that morning, the President of the Bar Association, Dr Ruth Higgins SC and a Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, Ms Helen Roberts SC, will address the Court in a short sitting at 9.15am

Taking into account her service as an Acting Judge of Appeal since 2018, Justice Simpson will retire as the third longest serving judge in the Supreme Court's 200 year history – a remarkable contribution by any measure. She was only the second woman ever appointed to the Court, following the Hon. Justice Jane Mathews AO, and the first woman to be appointed straight from the Bar.

Justice Simpson's career is notable in particular for her expertise in the criminal law. Before her elevation to the Court of Appeal, she served in the Common Law Division of the Court from 1994 as well as sitting regularly on the Court of Criminal Appeal where she delivered leading judgments over more than three decades. She has participated in approximately 1300 criminal appeals and her judgments have been followed throughout the country.

In 1999, together with Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New Wales and the Hon. Virginia Bell AC, Justice Simpson formed part of what is believed to be the first all-female appellate bench in the Common Law world.

Justice Simpson is universally respected for her mastery of the common law and criminal law, the wisdom of her judgments and the elegance of her written work. Apart from her formidable legal skills and judicial excellence, she has been a wonderful colleague to many, many judges, an inspiration to younger female lawyers in particular and someone known to and admired by all for her essential decency, dry humour, great humility and robust common sense.

On behalf of the judiciary of New South Wales, I wish her well in her retirement and acknowledge her exceptional contribution to the administration of justice in this State.

Andrew Bell
Chief Justice of New South Wales

8 March 2024