

**ADDRESS AT THE WELCOME TO THE HONOURABLE  
JUSTICE PAUL ANASTASSIOU, JUDGE OF THE  
FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA  
IN THE FEDERAL COURT AT MELBOURNE,  
ON FRIDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2018 AT 4.30 PM  
IN COURT ONE  
BY WENDY HARRIS QC,  
DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE VICTORIAN BAR**

**Opening, appearance and acknowledgement**

May it please the Court.

I appear on behalf of the Australian Bar Association and the Victorian Bar to congratulate Your Honour on your appointment to this Court.

I also acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we meet, the Peoples of the Kulin Nation, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

Your Honour's appointment to this court has been greeted with much joy and admiration among your friends and colleagues and is a testament to your dedication to your chosen profession, and your skills as an advocate.

Your Honour arrived in Australia in 1967 as a “10 pound Pom”, the son of a British mother, Eileen, who is present in Court, and a Greek father, George, who met in England during the War.

Your Honour grew up in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne, excelling at Sunshine West High School, achieving the highest marks of any student at the school in your final year. This led to you undertaking an Arts/Law degree at the University of Melbourne in 1978.

You were admitted to practice in 1985 having secured Articles at Phillips Fox & Masel (now DLA Piper). It was in 1987 that you came to the Bar, and there began what has been an extraordinary 30 year career.

Your Honour read with the late Peter Hayes, QC. At his best, Hayes was a brilliant advocate; one of the best of his generation, and had a particular genius for the forensic quest. However he could also be unpredictable.

You were briefed with him often in your early years at the Bar, in a series of high profile, complex cases. The work was challenging – as was, on occasion, working with Hayes himself. But perhaps these experiences helped develop one of your defining traits as a barrister; your

Honour was simply never intimidated by anyone or anything – other than the prospect of flight turbulence.

By way of example, you were briefed with Hayes in a Sydney trial when you had been at the Bar only a short time. One day, part way through the trial, Hayes unexpectedly flew back to Melbourne, declining to take any further part in the case. Rather than seeking an adjournment, as any other junior – particularly with your then modest experience – would have done, you chose to continue the trial, cross examining the remaining witnesses and closing the case.

This courage and fearlessness – albeit always coupled with dignity and sensitivity – are traits that Your Honour has continued to display throughout your career. In more recent times, you took over the brief as lead counsel in a very large, complex matter at the last minute; a matter of weeks prior to the date set down for a trial that was scheduled to last many months. Although the trial ended up being adjourned for several weeks, Your Honour was perfectly prepared to proceed as scheduled, despite the very limited amount of time you had to prepare and get across an enormous volume of material.

Your Honour established yourself very early as an expert in complex commercial litigation, including many leading cases interstate. This was no doubt as a result of your hard work and diligence, but also because of your significant intellect and natural talent as an advocate. Your Honour's presence in Court was commanding and extremely persuasive; you had a quiet authority which had judges and onlookers alike hanging on each word. You were a master of the Courtroom.

It was not long into Your Honour's career at the Bar that you were briefed in the '*Bond Brewing*' appeal, described by The Full Court of the Victorian Court of Appeal as involving "*the most momentous ex parte order ever made by an Australian Court*". In that case, you acted for the respondent banks and served as junior to the legendary SEK Hulme QC, Ray Finkelstein QC and John Karkar QC. Even in this stellar company, you proved yourself to be invaluable. John Waters (formerly of Malleson Stephen Jaques, now retired), your instructor in this matter, describes Your Honour as worldly with a multi-faceted view of legal problems and utterly professional.

Your Honour also appeared in the – dare I say it – notorious case of *Olympic Airways v Alysandratos*, in which a large roadshow comprising judge, counsel and

solicitors travelled to Greece to take evidence on commission, and which culminated in one of the more unusual apprehended bias applications ever seen in the Victorian Supreme Court. But that is probably a story for another day.

Your Honour went on to build a commercial practice founded on large and complex cases in the financial and securities sector, particularly recovery and insolvency matters. In the wake of the GFC, you acted for numerous secured lenders in matters connected with forestry, horticultural, film and other managed investment schemes.

Your Honour was appointed Silk in 2002.

As a QC, Your Honour carved out an excellent reputation for acting in class actions; of note you acted for the Victorian Department of Sustainability & the Environment (as it then was) and the Country Fire Authority in the Black Saturday Kilmore Fire class action and the DSE, again, in the Black Saturday Murrindindi class action. The former case went for a year and a half before it settled, prior to judgment.

Your Honour's extraordinary contribution to the profession also deserves special attention. It would be hard to find

another who has done more for the Bar, than Your Honour. This is driven by your steadfast belief in the College of the Bar; a unique institution which depends upon current members being prepared to invest their time and resource for the benefit of future generations of Barristers. This you have done, in your low-key, dedicated way, since the beginning of your career.

It was in 1993 that Your Honour was first appointed as a Director of Barristers Chambers Limited, and you have served as Chairman, not once but twice; from 2003 – 2008 and again in 2017. If there is a more thankless task than the role of Chairman of BCL, I don't know what it is. But Your Honour has both times embraced the task, and you have done so because you recognise the vital importance of BCL to the college of the Bar, as the single most important factor in eliminating barriers to entry. Under your leadership, by 2008 the Company had managed significant changes whilst maintaining a steadily improving financial position, culminating in the repayment of all debt. Your Honour's commitment to the affairs of BCL and the services it provides to members of the Bar was unwavering.

Your Honour has been elected to and served on the Victorian Bar Council no less than 5 times since 2008 and

has been appointed to many Committees; too many to mention. Notably you have been a frequent appointment to, and indeed Deputy Chairman and Chairman, of the Audit & Finance Committee; no doubt in recognition of your strong financial acumen – a talent regarded as rare amongst your peers.

It was as President of the Victorian Bar in 2016 that an impressive body of work was completed including the development of a new Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 to shape the future work of the Bar Council, the complete redevelopment of the Victorian Bar website, and the planning and execution of the inaugural Junior Bar Conference.

As President, Your Honour was a champion for diversity and inclusion within the profession. At your Honour's initiative, a student engagement event was convened at the City of Hume to promote diversity. The then Victorian Chief Justice, the Honourable Marilyn Warren AC, and the Honourable Justice Gordon of the High Court, spoke to over 200 City of Hume secondary students about a career in the law and at the Bar. Other barristers reflecting the diversity of the Bar attended and spent time with students, many of whom would never have dreamed of law as a possible career before that day. The object, driven by

Your Honour, was to encourage those from non-traditional backgrounds to consider a career as a barrister and, more broadly, to empower them not to place limitations on their ambition. It was an example of Your Honour's commitment both to the Bar and to diversity in its fullest sense.

Your Honour has had five readers and been a mentor to many more Junior Barristers. You are described as quietly spoken, articulate and very generous with your time, your expertise and your vast intellect. It was a pleasure to be briefed as Your Honour's junior because you were always respectful of a junior's views and input, but also gave many opportunities to learn by taking witnesses and making oral submissions. This is a reflection of one of your Honour's key traits; an extraordinary generosity which permeates all aspects of your professional and personal existence.

In the wide consultation which takes place in preparation for a speech of this kind, one of the most consistent themes that has been repeated about Your Honour was your quiet and unwavering support for women at the Bar.

When doing a brief together, Your Honour invited one of your juniors and her family to join your family for a

weekend at your property in Hepburn so you could discuss the case in a “civilised” manner; in front of the fire. To facilitate this, you went so far as to have a ‘baby cam’ installed in the house. When the same matter was subsequently called into Court for a directions hearing on short notice, and your junior was at school pick-up, you happily went along in her place.

One junior recalls attempting to return a brief to Your Honour as she was about to go on maternity leave. Your Honour refused to allow her to return the brief, keeping her involved in the matter and picking up the slack, allowing her to make a smooth transition back to work from maternity leave, safe in the knowledge that she had work to return to.

My personal experience of working with your Honour reflects the same experience: family comes first, and everything else will work itself out (generally because your Honour makes sure it does so).

Your humanity is perhaps your defining characteristic. It is not reserved for juniors but is also extended to your clients. You acted for 3 retired Directors who were being joined as defendants in the ‘Oz Minerals’ class action litigation. Your Honour is described as displaying

tremendous empathy for the personal toll that the matter was taking on these individuals, with their wellbeing your primary concern.

Your Honour is passionate about many things, some of which might be somewhat disrespectfully described as “boy’s toys”: powerful cars, powerful motorbikes and boats among them. Indeed, your introduction to the Federal Court complex has already hit a couple of bumps in the road (if you will) as a result of these passions of yours. Your Honour’s faithful Mercedes has recently been spied in your allocated parking space in the Federal Court car park. It is the size of a small armoured personnel carrier, which makes it hard to miss. However, **any** hope of anonymity vanished when this “Stuttgart Behemoth” failed to start only days ago. This required the assistance of not one, but two tow trucks.

Your Honour then decided to use your 1200cc touring motorcycle as replacement transport. A fine idea – but for the fact that it was so loud that when it was driven into the Judges’ section of the Federal Court underground car park, it set off the Alarm System.

Your Honour is also a somewhat impulsive buyer, with a house on the Greek Island of Lefkada, that you spied on a

late night internet trawl, being one of your more recent purchases. You and your extraordinary wife, Sandra, are both very warm and generous hosts, and the Mediterranean bolt hole allows your Honour to indulge your enthusiasm for cooking Greek cuisine – and drinking Greek wine...

Another of Your Honour's purchases was a comely floating vessel which rejoices in the name of "Sandra Philomena"; no doubt this purchase played a part in giving rise to your affectionate nickname "Aristotle".

Your Honour's passion for soccer is lived vicariously through your very talented son, Alex. I understand that you are up to version 27 of a draft contract in preparation for when Alex is signed to play for Manchester United; no pressure! One unkind correspondent suggested that Alex's sporting prowess is obviously more attributable to your wife Sandra, than to Your Honour.

To Your Honour, your family is first and it is everything. It is wonderful that your cousin, Eliana Paschialides, a senior Litigation Partner with an Athens Law Firm, has been able to be here in Court today.

Your wife Sandra and your 3 children, Zoe, Nicholas and Alex, who are also here, have been the bedrock on which your career has been founded. The tragic death of your first wife, Annette, when your daughter Zoe was very young, brought Sandra into your life and Your Honour could not have wished for a better partner to support your remarkable career at the Bar.

I join with your friends and colleagues in congratulating you on this appointment.

On behalf of the Victorian Bar, I wish Your Honour joy in your appointment and long, satisfying, and distinguished service as a Judge of this Court.

May it please the Court.