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THE SUPREME COURT OF

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

FAREWELL TO MASTER SANDERSON

FULL BENCH

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT PERTH ON MONDAY, 26 JUNE 2023, AT 4.16 PM

**QUINLAN CJ:** The court sits this afternoon to mark the retirement and to celebrate the contribution made by Master Craig Sanderson to the work of this court, to the administration of justice, and to the people of Western Australia as a member of the court for over 26 years. In doing so, we acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the court sits, the Whadjuk People of the Noongar Nation, and pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging. We also thank the good people of Mirvac for flooding the David Malcolm Justice Centre and ensuring that we can have this farewell in this beautiful courtroom.

We would like to particularly welcome Master Sanderson's family who are here with us present, his wife, Jan, their daughter, Amy, and her husband, Ryan, daughter, Eliza, and her husband, Charles, daughter, Anna, and her partner, Adam, daughter, Sophie, and her husband, William, son, Harry Sanderson, grandson, Aiden, sister, Carol White, and her husband, Philip, and brother-in-law, Peter Woodland, and his wife, Robyn.

We also welcome the many other distinguished guests here present: the Honourable Malcolm McCusker AC CVO KC, former Governor of Western Australia, the Honourable Robert French AC, former Chief Justice of Australia, her Honour Julie Wager, Chief Judge of the District Court, and many judges of the District Court, his Honour Judge Hylton Quail, President of the Children's Court. We also welcome Justices Banks-Smith, Jackson and Feutrill of the Federal Court, Mr Robert Owen, Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Alan Sefton SC, State Counsel, Mr Michael Celenza, Director of Higher Courts, and Ms Kelly Martinelli, Executive Manager of the Supreme Court, many other distinguished guests, including many past members of this and other courts. We particularly welcome those who will address the court this afternoon, the Honourable John Quigley MLA, Attorney-General of Western Australia, Mr Ante Golem, President of the Law Society of Western Australia, and Mr Brahma Dharmananda SC, President of the WA Bar Association.

Craig Sanderson was appointed as a member of this court in November 1996. Master Sanderson has been a member of the court for over 26 years. He has shared this bench with more than 65 judges and masters of the court. From the Honourable Geoffrey Kennedy AO, who was appointed in 1982, to the Honourable Stephen Lemonis, who joins us for the first time on the bench today. It is, by any measure, a massive contribution to the administration of justice in Western Australia.

As far as I was able to determine, there are only three members of the court who have served longer than Master Sanderson. They were Sir Albert Wolff, Sir Lawrence Jackson, and Sir Robert McMillan who served as judges of the court for 31, 29, and 28 years, respectively. Each of those judges, however, served as Chief Justice, which probably says something as to the pampered and easy life of a Chief Justice. You otherwise rank as the longest serving member of the court in its 126-year history.

That long service is demonstrated by your prodigious output over the past 26 years. It is impossible to make an accurate estimate of how many judgments Master Sanderson had delivered over those two and a-half decades, if, for no other reason, than your period of service exceeds that of the court's reliable compilation of statistics. You are, for example, the last member of the court to have delivered a judgment before the age of media neutral citations. We can confidently state, however, that your output, Master, runs into more than 1,500 published judgments still available on the internet and many more thousands that have not been published, but have nevertheless steered the course of the administration of justice in this State.

You will be remembered and, for many years, for three particularly conspicuous qualities. First, a practical appreciation of the demands of justice and the importance of justice being dispensed quickly, decisively and clearly. Secondly, for an equanimity in the face of a massive workload no matter what the provocation. It was commented to me just today by a colleague that they had never known you to be rude, impatient or short with counsel or solicitors appearing before you. If counsel or a solicitor appearing before you required correction for a submission that ought not have been put or a position too inflexibly maintained, that correction was always delivered with a wry smile or a laconic retort. And, finally, you will be remembered for your wonderful turn of phrase and evocative written judgments delivered when the occasion permitted, and it was appropriate to do so.

While it can be said with confidence that very few of us can claim a readership beyond the limits of this great State of Western Australia, you, Master, were the exception. More than once your fans on the east coast of Australia have regaled me with the popularity of your prose to which, in the interest of generosity, I've left to the speakers at the bar table to mine for the purposes of their addresses today. These three qualities you have displayed, however, must be understood as of a piece with your commitment to the efficient and effective

administration of justice in every case and with the business of the court.

An early experience of my own with that commitment might illustrate the point. A little over 20 years ago, I was briefed to be led by Ken Martin QC, as his Honour then was, in a large negligence claim brought by dozens of farmers whose properties were damaged by a wildfire that commenced in the tip of the local shire. The case had required many months of preparation, and I spent time taking statements from dozens of witnesses, often on the back of tractors in between work on harvests. It was a huge undertaking.

When the morning of the trial came on a Monday, we received word that the judge who had been listed to hear the trial had taken ill and would not be able to sit. We were told that the trial had to be adjourned. I recall in a panicked state saying to my leader "that like a huge ocean liner this case was going to be very difficult to stop and turn around and that if it didn't get heard now, we were unlikely to get it moving again". A solution was found. Chief Justice Malcolm, pursuant to Order 60 Rule 1(2), directed that the action be heard by Master Sanderson and so without so much as an hour's delay in coming up to speed, the trial proceeded as planned and continued over a number of weeks with both lay and complex expert evidence.

At the end of the trial, judgment was reserved, we thought, for many months. Less than three weeks later, the parties were advised that the Master would be delivering judgment and so before the ink was able to dry on counsel's fee notes, judgment was entered for the plaintiffs. Characteristically it commenced like this:

The Great Fire of London broke out in the early hours of the morning of 2 September 1666. The London Gazette of 3 September had no difficulty in placing the origins of the fire in a bakery in Pudding Lane near New Fish Street. On 15 December 1997 a fire broke out in the Shire of Brookton. Unlike the Great Fire of London, the origins of the Brookton-Pingelly bushfire are not the subject of general agreement.

Even more characteristically, the reasons for decision in that case were 31 pages long, three weeks and 31 pages. An appeal to the Full Court was dismissed and an application for special leave to the High Court was ultimately refused. It was characteristic of the work of Master Craig Sanderson in disposing of the work of the court efficiently,

effectively, correctly and in the interests of justice. The Master leaves the court having made an enormous contribution to this court and to the people of Western Australia. I understand he is going to take up a room at Fourth Floor Chambers where no doubt he will be able to assist members of those chambers with bringing that practical efficiency and just attention to the practice of the law with whatever endeavours he undertakes.

But can I make one suggestion for the future, however. If at some point in the coming weeks or months, someone calls you up and suggests that perhaps you might get involved in the administration of football in this State, I recommend that you politely decline. Master Sanderson, on behalf of all of the members of the court with whom you have served, we thank you and we wish you, Jan and your whole family all the best in the next phase of your life and for your service to the people of Western Australia. Yes, Mr Attorney.

**QUIGLEY, MR:** May it please the court and thank you, Chief Justice. I would like to begin by acknowledging the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, upon whose lands this court convenes this afternoon for this wonderful celebration of the retirement of Master Sanderson. I would also like to acknowledge the many distinguished guests present in the court this afternoon which you, Chief Justice, have individually named. I shan't repeat them all by name but we acknowledge and welcome them this afternoon as we do the family of Master Sanderson who attend with much pleasure and pride this afternoon to witness this ceremonial farewell for Master Sanderson.

It is indeed my personal pleasure and honour to appear here today on behalf of the State of Western Australia, the Government of Western Australia and the people of Western Australia to celebrate and to farewell the Honourable Master Craig Sanderson, to thank him sincerely for the work he has done for this court and on behalf of the people of Western Australia and to acknowledge the outstanding contribution that this work has made to this court, to the administration of justice and to the people of Western Australia for a period, as you have noted, Chief Justice, for over 26 years.

Master Sanderson, your dedication to the community of Western Australia and to public service has been a significant theme throughout all of your career, even prior to you joining the Supreme Court. If we go back to your university days, as I recall, you were there elected as the treasurer of the Law School's Blackstone Society.

Subsequently when you joined the profession after you were admitted you held a number of senior positions within the profession, including treasurer and vice president of the Law Society of Western Australia.

As noted by the Honourable Chief Justice, you joined this court at a comparatively young age to fill one of the most important and demanding roles that exists in this court. The role of Master requires penetrating insight and swift judgments on many diverse matters. It requires a patient temperament to deal with practitioners of all levels of experience. It also requires someone who is willing to take responsibility for ensuring that the many matters in the list are dealt with expeditiously. You have always exhibited grace and good humour in your role as Master. I'm confident this would take a degree of effort in the face of some of the submissions which I'm sure have been tried out upon you from time to time. I was never one of those counsel that had that opportunity of appearing before you.

It would also require a strong sense of humility where the Court of Appeal has taken a different view from you occasionally on appeal. Very often the Court of Appeal would have reached a different conclusion after having had the luxury of the court and the president having the matter trialled before them on appeal for a matter of days which by necessity you could only consider but for a few minutes. You leave the position of Master as the longest serving member of the Supreme Court.

The sheer length of your service makes it impossible to highlight every milestone and achievement throughout that period. In the position of the Master of the court you have had the distinction of presiding over hearings of many high-profile matters. The Chief Justice has invited me to mine but a couple of those matters. One of those, of course, was the Bell litigation and it was your decision in that case which effectively ended the most expensive and longest running set of civil litigation in Western Australia's history. In that case you pondered whether it was necessary, and I quote:

To drive a wooden stake through the company's heart or failing that, to move the files to a secure facility in Roswell marked "never to be opened".

You settled for approving an application to discontinue the case with no costs awarded, thereby ending more than 25 years of litigation, remarking:

It remained for me to give this and other companies in the group a decent burial.

The second matter, of course, that I shall call to mind is the dispute between neighbouring families, in one of Perth's wealthiest suburbs, over a wall that you described as a sliver of land, hardly wide enough to accommodate a punnet of petunias. The boundary dilemma was resolved by you but not before you concluded your judgment by reciting the words of the great American poet Robert Frost who said - and you quoted:

Good fences make good neighbours.

And you ultimately concluded in this case:

There is no doubt about the quality of the fences.

Today marks a milestone in a most remarkable career of service to the law and to the community. Master Sanderson, your length of service to the Supreme Court and to the people of Western Australia is a testament to your dedication to the legal profession and to the rule of law. The court is losing a wealth of experience and expertise that has served the people of Western Australia very well for over a quarter of a century. You retire from this court today having made a long, large and lasting contribution.

I offer my personal best wishes and on behalf of the Government and the people of Western Australia, I sincerely thank you for your service. You truly are a great Western Australian, and I thank you for your ongoing service to the State and wish you and your family a most happy future. May it please the court.

**QUINLAN CJ:** Thank you, Mr Attorney. Yes, Mr Golem.

**GOLEM, MR:** May it please the court, it is my privilege to appear today representing the Law Society of Western Australia, and to farewell and pay tribute to Master Craig Sanderson. May I welcome and congratulate the members of your Honour's family and acknowledge the friends and colleagues, distinguished guests and members of the judiciary present here today. The Law Society joins in acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk People of the Noongar Nation, and on the society's behalf, I pay my respects to their elders, past and present.

As has been outlined, your Honour graduated from the University of Western Australia in 1975 and was admitted to the Supreme Court the following year. In 1978, you left Australia to work in London, and upon your Honour's return in 1981, you became a founding partner of the firm, Pullinger Sanderson and Workman. Your Honour then joined the bar in 1988, and as we've heard already this afternoon, was appointed a Master of the Supreme Court in 1996.

When you accepted the role, you referred to the particular appeal of the practical edge that it brought, and you reflected that it brought together the way that the law and commerce work together in combination, something of particular interest to you. At the time of your appointment, the then Attorney-General, Peter Foss, stated as follows:

I have no doubt that given Master Sanderson's well-deserved reputation in the legal profession and his wide experience in several facets of the law, he will carry out his duties as Master with great distinction.

Today, 26 years later, we can agree that Master Sanderson has certainly exceeded that prediction and carried out your duties with the greatest distinction. On 30 June when you retire from this court, there will be a feeling of gratitude in multiple ways. Firstly, the profession's gratitude towards the way that you have served this court as Master, but also, as you have referred to, the gratitude that you have to the members of the profession in the way that they have supported you in your term as Master of this court.

Most recently, the Law Society was fortunate to interview you as part of our June edition of Brief where you recorded many sentiments and reflections over the last 26 years. And I will use the last part of what I have to say this afternoon to refer to many of those comments. The article referred to many of your great qualities, your hardworking nature, your humility, and your great sense of humour, some of which we've heard referred to in the judgments that the Attorney-General has referred to this afternoon.

When you started at the court, you were about a generation younger than most of the judges that you joined. You said that you felt like the new kid on the block, but you noted that everyone was extremely kind to you without exception, and that they were supportive in encouraging you in every way, so much so that you felt that you owed each of them an enormous debt. You recall that the judges were

terrific to work with and they made you feel very welcome as the newest member of the court.

When you were asked to describe your role as Master, you referred to the need to deal with things in an expeditious way. You explained:

The way I see it, it's almost a clearing house for the work of the court. That said, the corporations work and, perhaps, insolvency stands apart.

And many of us have benefited from that clearing house approach. We've come along to Master's chambers and often had our first appearance before you at some point or other in our legal careers. Your Honour has always enjoyed the aspect of your role and has commented as follows:

The other thing that I see in the feature of the position that I've held is the range of counsel that I've had the opportunity to see appear before me, from the law graduate appearing for the first time to get an adjournment to some of the best counsel in the land between many fascinating matters that have come before me over the last 26 years, to watch the techniques of good counsel and to see younger practitioners develop more often to the bar and then to take silk. I've been here so long. I've seen the whole process over the years, and it has been fascinating, really quite fascinating.

Counsel appearing before you could always count on a number of things: a decision-maker without ego, a keen eye for the issues at hand, and a determination to deal with matters as practically as possible. It was always a pleasure with your Honour's great sense of humour to appear before you in the many ways that we've heard mentioned this afternoon. Your Honour has always carried out a formidable workload, as the Chief Justice has mentioned, and people have expressed their gratitude for the wealth of work that you have completed in your time at the court. It indeed begs the question as to whether one person will be sufficient to take over from the work that you have done in all of your time at the court. Despite your Honour's huge workload, you have always managed a life-work balance which you will no doubt continue to refine as you leave the court.

In concluding this afternoon, I will quote from Rebecca Lee, Immediate Past President's interview with you where she said:

Today, the legal profession is saying farewell to a quiet, dedicated and self-effacing member of the court. His enthusiasm for the role and the work is infectious. How can it not be when over 26 years, Master Sanderson has positively said that he has enjoyed the work immensely, especially all of the variety that he has had the pleasure of seeing.

When asked what your final words to the profession should be as Master, you said as follows:

To say how grateful I am to the profession for the way they've coped with my personal style, for the work that each and every one of them has put in to make sure that they presented the case to the best of their ability and in the way that makes my life easier.

As far as that personal style is concerned, it is one that the profession would clearly miss. On behalf of the Law Society, I'm delighted to congratulate Master Sanderson on a long and successful judicial career, and with sincere thanks and appreciation on the society's behalf and its members wish you and your family all the very best as you take your next steps together. May it please the court.

**QUINLAN CJ:** Thank you, Mr Golem. Yes, Mr Dharmananda.

**DHARMANANDA, MR:** May it please the court. May I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. On behalf of the WA Bar, it is my distinct honour and privilege to address the court at this farewell sitting for the Honourable Master Craig Sanderson. It is personally very pleasing, despite the unfortunate circumstances, to be able to appear here in court number 1 knowing that I should be able to get through more than a sentence or two before being interrupted by a perceptive question from the bench. Master Sanderson was appointed  
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**QUINLAN CJ:** Don't be too sure, Mr - - -

**DHARMANANDA, MR:** Master Sanderson was appointed to the court on 14 November 1996 when the Honourable Peter Foss QC was the Attorney-General. As has already been said, Master Sanderson has well-served the administration of justice for more than 26 years. The Honourable Peter Foss served as Attorney-General for five years and 57 days. The Honourable John Quigley has already served as Attorney-General for more than six years. But by any measure, Master Sanderson's contribution is a formidable record that will likely withstand the test of time.

To take an example, if Justice - the Honourable Justice Edelman goes the distance and retires at 70, he would have served as a judge of - or a justice in three courts for 33 years, just a few more years than Master Sanderson has already served despite Justice Edelman's acclaimed precocity. Master Sanderson has been a quiet achiever but, equally, has been a quieter but equally tenacious achiever. My search of the Supreme Court judgment website reveals that Master Sanderson has delivered 1,543 written judgments. That is a massive contribution to justice.

Master Sanderson's first written judgment was delivered on 18 December 1996, Cluteus, number 102 and Fraser, library number 960723. It was a case under section 110 of the Evidence Act about whether Mr Brian Newell could give evidence from Long Bay Jail in New South Wales by video. The Master held he should. Master Sanderson has had a wonderful career in the law, having worked in London in the 1970s, being the founding partner of Pullinger Sanderson and Workman in 1980, and practising at the independent bar for nearly 10 years before being appointed as the Master.

I'm told reliably that Master Sanderson has five children, no particular hobbies but likes gardening, and from information I received he says he has a broad range of vices, commenting that it's best not to be too specific. I shall return to the Master's wonderful sense of humour. But first, Master Sanderson's contribution should be put in historical context. When Master Sanderson started practice in 1976, Master Gordon Staples was the Master, who between 1967 and 1990 managed the practice and procedure of the court with an iron fist.

Master Paul Seaman was appointed as the second master in 1983 and was replaced by Master White in 1988. Masters Ng, Bredmeyer, Adams and Newnes were appointed in 1988, 1990, 1992 and 2003. Master Sanderson served alongside Masters Ng, Bredmeyer and Newnes for different periods. In those days, court numbers 9, 5 and 8 were the hubs of activity with lists of around 20 matters for each milestone. As time moved forward case management became the focus, the obligation of conferral was enforced, and the work of the court changed with many directions being made in judges' chambers without the need for an appearance.

But throughout that process Master Sanderson has carried a monumental workload, keeping control of a wide array of matters, ranging from matters of practice and

procedure, wills and estates, to complex company matters. More than once, Master Sanderson has exercised the plenary power given by Section 44(7) (a) of the Corporations Act with clarity and flair, undaunted by the complexity of the cases, always seeking to mete out justice fairly and quickly. Without Master Sanderson's unrelenting ability to get on with it, I suspect that one would have needed two or three more masters or judges to cope with the sheer volume of work. Such is the propensity of Master Sanderson's ability to work quickly to meet the demands of justice.

Master Sanderson's work has kept the wheels of justice turning throughout the last two and a half decades that the WA economy has grown and grown. In *The Wealth of Nations*, first published in 1776, Adam Smith, the so-called father of economics, explained how self-interest is compatible with a good society. As is well-known, Smith explained how the economy grows in the interest of all when people seek to maximise personal value and how society is guided by what he termed "the invisible hand". In this court the "invisible hand" that has guided the progress of so many cases, whether big or small, has been the unfailing and continuous contribution of Master Sanderson. Neither the WA economy, nor the court would have progressed as well without the Master's perpetual and outstanding contribution, may I say with the greatest of respect.

May I return to the Master's sense of humour. Master Sanderson has developed his own particular style of judgment writing. There are too many examples to rehearse here, but may I give a few. In *Giumelli v Giumelli* in 2003, the Master started his judgment by quoting Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* that happy families are the same, but each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. In *Mead v Lemon* [2015], in a 19-year-old woman's claim for financial provision from her deceased fathers' estate, the Master rehearsed the daughter's evidence that she planned to marry her boyfriend and have four children and added:

Of course, it is possible after one child she might reconsider. Most sensible people do.

In *Bell Group UK Holdings*, which has already been mentioned, [2020] the Master said in his reasons that his reasons were not so much a judgment as a requiem. He said:

Thousands of people worked on this case. Most have put this experience behind them and moved on; many, shattered by the experience, have retired; more than a few have gone mad. Now, the guns have fallen silent. The smell of cordite, gun powder and napalm no longer

fills the air. The dead and wounded have been removed from the battlefield. The victors have divided the spoils and departed.

The Master ended his judgment with a single word "Amen". The catchwords in *Thompson v Sutherland* [2023] include:

Proper construction of 'homemade' will - turns on own unfortunate facts.

May I say, Master, your contribution has been breathtakingly brilliant and incapable of summation. To quote from Cole Porter's song of 1934 "you're the top, you're the Colosseum, you're the top. You're a melody from a symphony by Strauss, a Shakespeare sonnet. You're the top". On behalf of the WA Bar, may I wish you all the best in your retirement and thank you again for your remarkable contribution to the ends of justice. May it please the court.

**QUINLAN CJ:** Thank you, Mr Dharmananda. Master Sanderson.

**THE MASTER:** Well, first, Chief Justice, Mr Attorney, Mr President of the Law Society, Mr Dharmananda, thank you for those kind words. I will start just with two observations. The first is that at his farewell, my old friend Judge Fenbury remarked that people say nice things about you when you retire and they tell the truth when you die, which indicates I'm not dead yet. The second thing is that the Chief Justice was - and in fact all the speakers have been very discreet about the - my record before the appeal courts. I think that it would be fair to say that there have been more successful appeals against my decisions than any other individual in the common law world.

And in fact, in the old days of the Full Court - before the Court of Appeal, there was one month where I was 0 and 5 for the month. Now, I regard that as outstanding. It always seemed to me that the move to replace the Full Court with the Court of Appeal was designed to undo the work that the Full Court had rendered on my judgments. Unfortunately, it appears not to have worked terribly well. It is remarkable to think back on 26 years. Sir Winston Churchill said at the end of the Second World War that he wasn't sure whether his time as Prime Minister had passed in a flash or taken a lifetime, and I'm in much the same position. I'm just not sure where the last 26 years have gone. The court that I joined was a very different court to the one that exists today.

Just before my appointment, the Honourable Christine Wheeler KC had been appointed as a judge of this court. She was the first woman to be appointed, and apart from being a delightful person, she was an outstanding judge, and the fact that now the court is moving towards parity of men and women I think demonstrates how far we've come in 26 years and the court is all the better for it. I was almost a generation younger than David Malcolm, Geoff Kennedy and others, but I was - as I said in that interview with Ms Lee - I was treated extremely well. That said, on the day that I was welcomed to the court, David Ipp, who was then a judge of the court, said he couldn't understand why anyone would want to be Master, he thought I was an idiot to take the position and he just hoped that he had no confidence that I wouldn't stuff it up. David was always forthright.

But that apart, throughout the time that I've been on this court, I have been treated extremely well by all my colleagues. It has been interesting to watch the passing parade of judges. I didn't know there had been 65, but it has been interesting to watch the passing parade. There have been some outstanding judges - and I include every member of the court at the moment in that description, of course - and there have been some not so outstanding judges, but what has been consistent is the way in which they have been - everyone has been so friendly, so considerate. I'm sure from time to time they despaired of this loose cannon who was writing judgments that they thought were perhaps not quite as they should be, but it has never affected the relationship, and I'm extremely grateful, not only to my colleagues here today but to everyone that I've worked with over the years.

The work of the court has changed significantly over time, but it still is the case that the way in which the court works, particularly the General Division, is straightforward, that is to say you prepare for the case, you hear the submissions, and you write a judgment. In the General Division, no one can do it for you. You have to do it yourself, and it can be quite a lonely existence. In fact, I think it's fair to say that in the General Division, the only thing that really brings us together and unites us is that we have a common enemy in the Court of Appeal.

But it hasn't all been plain sailing. When the former Chief Justice joined the court, it was made plain to me that I wouldn't be appointed a judge, and the former Chief Justice didn't think I was up to it. We disagreed about that, as you might - but be that as it may, there I was not

so much out in the cold but safely packed away in the deep freeze. So I didn't quite know what to do. I sulked for a while, and then I gave some consideration to resigning.

But eventually I decided that what I would attempt to do is turn the office of Master into something that it hadn't been in the past, was never intended to be, and may or may not be in the future, and that had three elements to it. The first was I decided that I would take on anything that came my way whether it was referred directly under the procedures of the court or whether the listing office couldn't find somebody else to do it, and that I would list matters in a prompt manner; not rushed but prompt. Anything that was urgent would be accommodated, and no matter how much work there was, I would do it.

The second element was that I would produce judgments that were short, to the point, and preferably turn the matter around within 14 days. The last six months haven't quite measured up to that standard. But for the previous 20-odd years, it was certainly my aim to do just that. The third element was to try and ensure that it was substance over form, so to get matters completed as quickly and expeditiously as possible, in the interests of the parties, without incurring unnecessary costs and without unnecessary delay.

The key to all of that was to do my own listings, which I did. The consequence of that was that I became completely isolated within the court. I effectively became a court within a court. In fact, there's individuals in the administration of the Supreme Court who have been here for 10 or 15 years and never laid eyes on me. But it worked far better than I thought it would as a system, mainly because it was embraced by the profession and it has provided me with a wonderful experience in the law.

Wide variety of cases, wide variety of counsel, as has been noted, always interesting, and the chance to see counsel develop from, as Mr Golem said, their first appearance through to their practice as a silk has been a real privilege and it's something that has been a highlight of my time on the court. I wouldn't suggest that this system was, in any way, part of a grand scheme of reforming practice of law. In fact, I'm not sure that anyone had a clue that I was doing it. But I was left alone and, really, you can't ask for much more than that.

So that brings me to a series of thankyou's, and can I say at the start, and I will repeat at the end, that I run the risk of missing some individuals out, for which I

apologise. But there are so many people who have given me so much assistance over the years, and I really must thank them for their efforts. I will start with the administration of the court. Over the years, there has been many administrators of this court, but the present administrator, Ms Kelly Martinelli, I think, is as good as any and better than most. She does a remarkable job of administering the court. It runs very smoothly. And although I don't necessarily have a great deal of contact with the administration, they always are ready to assist if I need any help. So my thanks to everyone over the years who has contributed.

I must pay special tribute to Laurie Scidone. I'm not sure whether Laurie is here today, but Laurie - I'm not sure what Laurie does, actually, but he's one of those individuals who, no matter how bad things are, Laurie's life is always worse, and at times that can be really comforting. Can I thank the registrars of the court. They have carried a load that has been gradually increasing over the years. They do such a terrific job, and I'm not sure at times that their contribution is fully appreciated. It has made my life so much easier to have such a group of confident, competent, hardworking individuals. To my personal staff, the ushers that I've had over the years, I started out with the late Dave Cossin, then Mark Panatides, Yvonne Wilson, and finished up with Denise Pavlinovich and Trevor Hite. They've all made my life so much easier, they've managed to put up with my idiosyncratic work habits, and I thank them for their service.

Now, moving to my associates. Whatever other skills I may possess, the ability to delegate is one thing that I've honed over the years, and so the associates that I've had have carried more workload than most. My first associate was Murray Sparkman, who had been the late John Adams' associate. John had died in office and I replaced him. Murray and John had been very close. Murray was an ex-RAAF staff sergeant and John had been part of the RAAF reserve.

Murray was none too impressed when this wet-behind-the-years 43-year old rolled up to replace his friend. Murray, I think, took the view that his job description required that he be rude to everyone, and he fulfilled that job description to the letter. He was just rude to everyone without exception - Chief Justice down. And after I had been here about six months, he said to me one day - he said, "Do you know? You're getting more and more like John Adams." And he realised when it was too late that it was a compliment, and Murray didn't do compliments. And

then he said, "Well, of course, you will never be as good as John Adams."

After Murray succumbed to illness, my associate was Ann Brown. Ann had started here working as a receptionist, and she had been Master Ng's associate for some time. And she knew everything there was to know about the court. She could appear gruff, but, in fact, she had a heart of gold, and she was so efficient and so dedicated to the job that she really made my life very easy. We got on extremely well together, and I'm forever grateful to her for her efforts. Ann did have a son whose name was Craig, and towards the end, I think Ann used to get us confused because I was - copped a dressing down from time to time for things I'm pretty sure I hadn't done. But eventually Ann found the job a bit much and she job-shared for a while with Ms Pauline Evans.

Pauline had worked as a school librarian, and she had somewhat different temperament to Ann, so solicitors quickly realised which week was best to ring up with an inquiry. Eventually, the job got too much for Ann, as I said, and my next associate was Deenie Gumina. Deenie had worked here for some time, and she arrived just at a time when the workload was exploding. And, really, for all of the time that she was my associate, she did the work of two people. She was absolutely superb. Nothing was too much trouble, and she was always consistent in keeping the work flowing. She never let anything stand idly by. She was just outstanding.

She could be - Deenie could be a bit touchy. I walked past one day when she was on the phone to a young graduate who had rung up to ask where the David Malcolm Justice Centre was. What Deenie said to that young graduate probably persuaded he or she to give up the law and take up crocodile wrestling or something. Deenie actually had on her desk three foam rubber balls. They're called stress balls, I think. The idea is at moments of tension, you take these balls and you squeeze them. Deenie had three of them. One of them had written on it "Lavan", one of them had written on it "Bennett & Co", and the other one was marked "Others". Two of those balls were worn out. Yes, I don't have to tell you which two.

Eventually, Deenie found that a change was necessary, and I was fortunate enough to have as an associate Cassie Bevan. Cassie was one of those people who had worked here for 10 years and had never laid eyes on me, but she was prepared to take a punt, and she was truly a superb associate, calm, quiet, efficient, and we had developed

into a good working team. Things were just perfect, and she was poached out from underneath me, and the person who did the poaching was Justice Whitby, who was on her way to the District Court.

Now, if it wasn't for the fact that Justice Whitby is the nicest person I've ever met, I would have been upset. And it has to be said, if I was given the choice of working for Justice Whitby or me, I know where I (indistinct) And it's perhaps that things turn a full circle that Justice Whitby is here now and Cassie Bevan is here too, and it's great to bump into her from - or it has been great to bump into her from time to time.

After Cassie departed in those unfortunate circumstances, I had to have an associate for a relatively short period of time, and up till then, I always had associates who were career public servants, but I was persuaded by Jamie Freestone to take on a graduate, Michaela McGurdy, and I had real reservations about that because I just didn't think it was necessarily the job for a law graduate. Jamie was right; I was wrong. Michaela was terrific. She was on top of the work; she was considerate. It always bothered me slightly that I was old enough to be her grandfather, but we got on famously, and she has moved on to greener pastures, and I'm sure that she will turn out to be an outstanding solicitor.

Towards the end I had two research assistants who worked with me from time to time, Alicia Harries and Tahnece Maslin. They both contributed enormously. All of the people that I've worked with as my personal staff have been prepared to put up with me. At times, I'm sure they despaired that the way that I work would ever get the work done, but they never really said much. Well, Deenie did from time to time. The others were a bit more circumspect. But I owe them enormous debt of gratitude. It has made life here so much more pleasant. They are the individuals that I did see from day to day, and it's they who really provided my life in this court.

I should also then come to my family, to my marvellous sister, to whom I owe so much, and her husband, Phil. I don't owe him so much, but - to my brother-in-law Pete and his wife Robyn, they've always been such firm friends. And to my family. I think it's fair to say that the five children throughout my time in the court have never for a moment taken me seriously. And their partners, if it's possible, have been even more irrelevant. But that has been important because it has kept me sane, and it has kept

me focused. I haven't been able to get too far ahead of myself, and the fact that they're all here at the moment is marvellous and when we get together it's just a lot of fun. I owe them a great debt of gratitude and they have my love always.

And to my wife Jan, I couldn't have achieved anything without her. She has been with me the whole journey. She has been marvellous. I don't know how she has done it really. She has had her own professional life. She has run the family and she has done so many other things into the bargain. It has been remarkable, and as I say, I owe her everything. I can't tell you how much she has had to put up with but if asked she will tell you how much. Allow plenty of time.

Now, I also want to just pay - to thank those who have spoken today. Mr Attorney, your kind words, I appreciate them. As has been noted, I was appointed when the Honourable Peter Foss KC was the Attorney General, so I have a soft spot for him. But really, your understanding of the court system and your willingness to ensure that it's well-resourced have been - demonstrated a true understanding of the way the court system works and I thank you very much for your comments.

Mr Golem, thank you. You were - the Law Society plays a huge role. The profession in this State is in fine condition from what I've seen of it and the Law Society has played a big part in that. Mr Dharmananda, the Bar has been of enormous assistance to me. The way I work is that - the way I have worked, is that the first thing I do when I see a - cases go to the submissions, look at who has drafted those submissions and if they have been drafted by a member of the Bar, I breathe a little easier because I know that the submissions will be of the highest quality. The Bar in this State is in very good condition. It can hold its own with some of the best - with the best in the land.

So there it is, it comes to an end after all these years and as I said, if I have omitted to thank anyone, my apologies. I wasn't intending to be any way offensive. The question is what I do now. I did for a time think of becoming a social media influencer. But then my wife pointed out that every man of my age is already grumpy so there was limited scope for that. So as the Chief Justice has remarked, I will join Fourth Floor Chambers. I hope to remain involved with the profession which has given me so much over so many years and has provided me with a career

which I have thoroughly enjoyed. So thank you all and  
goodbye.

**QUINLAN CJ:** Master Sanderson, I'm so sorry that it has  
taken 26 years for you to find out, with four days to go,  
that what Laurie Scidone does is ration pens and other  
precious morsels of stationery. The court will now  
adjourn.

AT 5.14 PM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED INDEFINITELY

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