



**ADDRESS OF MR THOMAS SULLIVAN QC, ON THE OCCASION OF A VALEDICTORY  
CEREMONY FOR HIS HONOUR JUDGE DOUGLAS JOHN MCGILL QC  
AT THE SUPREME COURT OF QUEENSLAND  
ON TUESDAY, 10 DECEMBER 2019**

May it please the court.

It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the Bar Association of Queensland on the occasion of a valedictory ceremony for Your Honour Judge McGill QC. I extend particular welcome to your wife, Denise, and your daughter, Alison who have been able to join us here today. May I pass on the apologies of the President, Ms Treston QC who is unable to be here today and who sends her sincere best wishes.

Your Honour, it has been some 23 years since this court, your family, and members of the profession celebrated your appointment to the bench. Much was said of your Honour's impressive CV and long list of desirable qualities that made you eminently fit for office. Today, we mark the end of that journey, and acknowledge and thank you, for your outstanding commitment to the service of the law and the community.

Others have spoken about Your Honour's academic achievements and professional career, which I will not repeat.

At your Honour's swearing in in 1996, the then Solicitor-General, now Justice Keane, spoke on behalf of the Premier and Government of the day. The then Solicitor-General made some observations which are worth recalling because, unsurprisingly, they reveal what turns out to have been a precise prediction about the career as a Judge that you were about to embark upon.

Your appointment was described as "an outstanding appointment" and that Your Honour "brings to the bench deep learning in the law, an iron independence of mind, and energetic passions for justice and experience of more than 20 years in a wide variety of litigation."

On behalf of the Bar, may I say that a reflection of Your Honour's career on the Bench demonstrates the accuracy of each of those matters – an extraordinary accomplishment given your 23-year career as a Judge.

Your Honour's intellect, skill, sense of justice and fairness will be missed.

Outside the courtroom, Your Honour contributed significantly to the development of the legal profession. Since 1999, Your Honour has been a member of the Rules Committee which supervises the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules, and other matters of procedure in state courts. In 2001, you were awarded a Centenary Medal for your work on the Rules Committee.

Your Honour has proven to be a great acquisition to the court, and in every sense of the word, a fine Judge.

It is said by those who know you well, that you are a family man, a man of the law and an avid train spotter, in no particular order.

Your sense of humour and devotion to your family is well known. For years, your Honour has been responsible for the civil law update to Judges of the District Court at the Court's annual conference. Somehow, Your Honour has managed to weave into that updated photographs of family holidays which depict the particular legal proposition that you are addressing the Court on. The sharing of your holiday family snaps will be missed at these conferences.

Your enthusiasm for trains, equity and the law of roundabouts is also well known. Your love for trains is a passion you have held for decades – so much so that your status as a world leading train spotter was mentioned at Your Honour's swearing in. A very patient bride tells a story about how your Honour was the camera man at her wedding years ago. The camera shot showed the bride arriving at the church. Your Honour panned the camera around the check out the scenery which included, as it turns out, some distant trains. By the time your Honour remembered to pan away from the trains and back to the bride, she was already inside the church and the shot was lost forever.

Your Honour's deep learning and understanding of equity is well known.

Your fascination with the law of roundabouts, I am told, is more recent and arose following a case where Your Honour was called upon to write an extensive judgment on the law. As with all Your Honour's judgments, it was an insightful and detailed exploration of the law.

I am told (reliably) that Your Honour's favourite places to sit and contemplate and think about equity are where trains and roundabouts are in close proximity to each other.

The Bar Association of Queensland and its members thank you sincerely for your service to the court and the community. We extend to you, your wife Denise, and your family the very best wishes for the future.

May it please the court.