

2009

Introduction

In 2009 the WA Lee Equity Lecture was delivered by Justice Patrick Keane who at the time of delivering the lecture was Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Australia. The subject of his lecture was addressed to 'Equity: The Conscience of Equity'. Subsequent to delivering the lecture, Keane was appointed a justice of the High Court of Australia on 20 November 2012 effective on the retirement of Heydon J on 1 March 2013. Keane commenced his judicial career in 2005 when he was appointed a Judge of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of the Supreme Court of Queensland. On 10 February 2010 it was announced that he would be appointed the next Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Australia. He took up that role on 22 March 2010.

Before the commencement of his judicial career, Keane was admitted as a solicitor and barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1976. He commenced practice as a barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland. During 1978 and 1979 he was a part-time lecturer at the University of Queensland. After 11 years of practice at the bar Keane took silk in 1988. In 1992 he was appointed Solicitor-General for the State of Queensland, a position he held until his appointment as a Judge of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of the Supreme Court of Queensland. During 1990-1992 he was the Deputy Chairman of the Queensland Law Reform Commission. Keane has published a number of articles and advocated better quality drafting. He has also voiced criticisms of the volume and complexity of federal laws.

Keane was born in Brisbane and received his primary schooling at St Columba's Convent School. He undertook his high school education at St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane where he was school captain and dux of 1969, winning an open scholarship in the Queensland Senior Public Examinations. He went on to study at the University of Queensland where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1973 and later a Bachelor of Laws graduating with first-class honours and a university medal in 1976. Keane also worked as a law clerk at Roberts & Kane Solicitors while undertaking his university studies. He later worked for Feez Ruthning (now Allens Linklaters).

Keane undertook further studies in law at the University of Oxford and read for a Bachelor of Civil Law at Magdalen College. He was awarded the Degree of Bachelor of Civil Law in 1977 with first class honours as well as the Vinerian Prize for the best performance in the examination for the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law. He then returned to Australia.

The lecture delivered by Keane provides a useful contrast to the lecture delivered the previous year by Justice Michael Kirby. At the outset, Keane makes it clear that he intends to introduce a note of 'scepticism' regarding Kirby's lecture by suggesting that it does not involve the adoption of a blinkered view when seeing the differences between fundamental equitable principles and the rules of common law as standing in the way

This is a preview. Not all pages are shown.