



This issue of *Bar News* has, as its focus, the practice of criminal law and I am indebted to Keith Chapple SC and Chris O'Donnell – my two longest standing colleagues on the *Bar News* committee – for driving this special issue to completion. They have corralled a galaxy of talent from the criminal law bar, complemented by contributions from the attorney general, the chief judge in Common Law and the Commonwealth director of public prosecutions. The directive was for pithy articles (with the usual concession for the venerable Barker QC) on designated topics, and the resulting smorgasbord will not disappoint.

I very much hope that the range of contributions will appeal to and interest not only the criminal law bar, but all members and readers. The practice of criminal law is demanding, requiring not only great forensic skill and a mastery of the laws of evidence and criminal procedure, but also the ability to

appear before both judge and jury alike. One further attribute that I came to appreciate when preparing this issue is that criminal law barristers are vastly superior at honouring deadlines than their colleagues on the civil side. I thank all contributors very much for their timely and excellent contributions.

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Also featured in this issue are the speeches delivered on the occasion of the two great ceremonial sittings marking the retirement of Chief Justice Spigelman AC and the appointment of Tom Bathurst QC as his successor. Both were marvellous occasions; neither was a case of 'standing room only' as even the standing room was fully occupied. The packed attendances were a just tribute to the immense contribution of the outgoing chief justice to the law and the public, the intellectual and cultural life of the nation and, in the new chief justice's case, a mark of the profession's strongest approbation, esteem and good wishes. Chief Justice Spigelman's Sir Maurice Byers lecture on the topic of 'Truth and the Law' is also published in this issue.

Justice Dyson Heydon's eulogy in honour and memory of his good friend and colleague, Roddy Meagher QC, is fully reproduced, together with a series

of memorable photos of a man, to use his Honour's words 'of vivid, rich, complex and magnificent personality'. At the time of going to press, news of the death of another former leading member of the bar, Alec Shand QC, had just come to hand. Tributes in memory of his notable career as an advocate

will appear in the next issue of *Bar News*.

For those requiring light-hearted satirical relief, in this issue Bullfry celebrates his inclusion in a leading broadsheet's list of prominent barristers, only to discover that his 'category' is prominent for all the wrong reasons. There are also reviews of two excellent new books, both published by the Federation Press: AJ Brown's *Michael Kirby: Paradoxes and Principles* and Mark Leeming's *Resolving Conflicts of Laws* (which has nothing to do with private international law but is a splendid work nevertheless).

Good reading.

Andrew Bell SC
Editor