

2002

## Introduction

In 2002 the Honourable William Gummow AC delivered the WA Lee Equity Lecture on the topic 'Equity – Too Successful?'. He was then a justice of the High Court of Australia having been appointed to that court in April 1995. He retired from the High Court on 8 October 2012 and has since been appointed to the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong as a non-permanent judge from another common law jurisdiction. Following his retirement he has also been appointed as a professor at the Sydney Law School where he gives guest lectures. His judicial career began when he was appointed in 1986 to the Federal Court of Australia.

Gummow completed his secondary education at Sydney Grammar School and then went on to study Arts and Law at the University of Sydney where he graduated with first class honours in Arts as well as Law. He subsequently completed a Master of Laws with first class honours. He was admitted as a solicitor in 1966 and practiced as a solicitor with the law firm Allen Allen and Hemsley and became a partner of the firm in 1969. He had a diverse practice that included banking laws, trusts and revenue law, intellectual property litigation, commercial transactions and some constitutional law.

In 1976 Gummow was called to the New South Wales Bar. His practice at the bar included equity, commercial law as well as taxation and intellectual property matters. His practice also included large constitutional issues and in several cases he appeared as a junior to the then Commonwealth Solicitor-General Maurice Byers. In 1986 he was appointed a Queen's Counsel.

During his years as a legal practitioner, Gummow also taught at the Faculty of Law at the University of Sydney from the time of his graduation until his appointment as a judge. He lectured in equity from 1970 to 1995. Gummow, together with fellow leading practitioners RP Meagher and JRF Leane, co-authored and published in 1975 their first edition of *Equity: Doctrines and Remedies*. That work is now in its fourth edition and it is well established across all common law jurisdictions as the leading treatise on equity. Gummow was also invited by the University of Cambridge to deliver the Clarendon Law Lectures. These lectures were subsequently published by Oxford University Press in 1999 under the title *Change and Continuity: Statute, Equity and Federalism*. In commenting on legal education Gummow has stressed the importance of statutes and legal history as areas that receive too little attention in Australian law schools. He has also advocated the need for students to be exposed to the practice of law through the involvement of practitioners in legal education.

As a judge, Gummow is particularly noted for his contribution to intellectual property law and equity. He is the author of or participant in numerous leading judgments in intellectual property law. His judgments are characterised by careful attention to statutory language and context as well as a thorough and scholarly examination of

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