

# Swearing-in Ceremony of Dr Kristina Stern SC as NSW Supreme Court Judge



**Naomi Wootten**

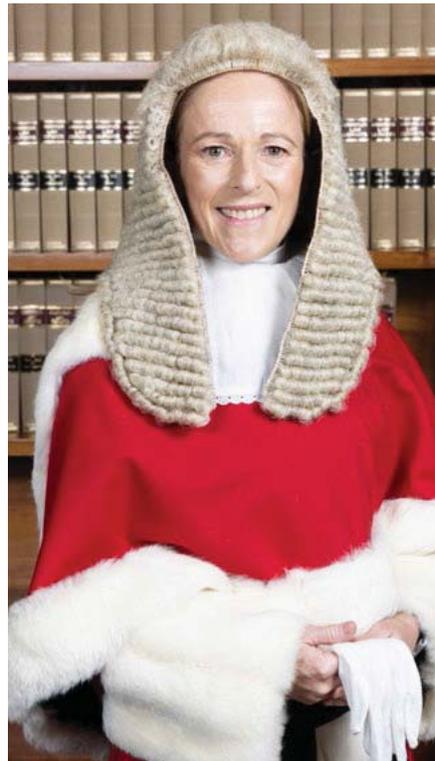
Sixth Floor Selborne/Wentworth Chambers

On 8 June 2023, Dr Kristina Stern SC was sworn in as a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and as a judge of appeal. Prior to her appointment, her Honour practised from the Sixth Floor Selborne Wentworth Chambers for nearly 17 years, and before that at the London Bar for ten years.

Her Honour grew up in Melbourne, Victoria to parents of Jewish/German origin who were displaced during World War II, and who subsequently met in Australia. Both her parents were doctors, her mother being one of the few women in her year at university, and who worked full-time while raising three young children. Her Honour is youngest of three siblings, with an elder brother who is also a lawyer, and elder sister who is a doctor.

Her Honour recalls wanting to be a lawyer, having enjoyed the use of language and debating at school. Her Honour was educated at Presbyterian Ladies College and then Lauriston Girls' School. Her Honour subsequently completed a Bachelor of Laws with First Class Honours, and Bachelor of Arts (majoring in English and History) at the University of Melbourne in 1987, living at Ormond College for the first three years of her studies.

In 1988, her Honour commenced practice at Arthur Robinson & Hedderwicks (now Allens) as an articled clerk. In mid-1989 her Honour moved to England to commence a Masters of Law at Cambridge University, transferring to a PhD which she completed



in 1992. During her PhD her Honour spent time at the American Civil Liberties Union, and then at Chicago Law School researching economic analysis of law.

Her Honour moved from Cambridge to London in 1992 and commenced lecturing in law at Kings College London from 1992 to 1996, also teaching part-time at University College London for one year. Her Honour commenced as a pupil at 39 Essex Chambers (London) in 1996, at which time her first child Hannah was three months old. Her Honour practised from 39 Essex Chambers for ten years, during which time she appeared, both led and unled, in the House of Lords and Court of Appeal of England and Wales. Of note, her Honour appeared as junior counsel for the British Government in the *Hutton Inquiry*, led by (then) Jonathon Sumption QC and for many years was on the Treasury Panel.

Her Honour moved to the Sydney Bar in 2006, commencing at Sixth Floor Selborne Wentworth Chambers, and recalls with fondness the assistance her Honour was given by Justice John Sackar in obtaining chambers in Sydney. Her Honour was appointed Senior Counsel for the State of New South Wales in 2011. Throughout her time at the bar, her Honour maintained a wide practice, mainly in commercial, administrative and constitutional law, as well as appearing in inquests and inquiries, frequently as counsel assisting. Of note, her Honour appeared for Wright Prospecting Pty Ltd for a number of years in the *Mount Bruce Mining* and *Hope Downs* litigation, and as counsel-assisting in many high profile inquiries, including that into the death of Australian cricketer Phillip Hughes.

Her Honour was also Chair of the Inquests and Inquiries Committee of the NSW Bar Association, served as a member of the Climate Change and *Bar News* Committees, and was (briefly) a member of the Takeovers Panel. Her Honour is also widely published as a contributing author and editor of numerous edited texts, as well as authoring various academic articles in the fields of administrative and medical law. Her Honour has contributed to the professional development of generations of young lawyers through mentoring programs run by the University of New South Wales and the Bar Association, as well as informally for the many junior counsel briefed with her throughout her time as Senior Counsel.

Outside her professional achievements, her Honour has many and varied interests, from competing in triathlons and half-marathons (in Chicago, London, Peterborough, the Isle of Skye and Bristol), to horse-riding trips in Kosciusko National Park, ocean swimming at Bronte and hiking in the UK, France and Tasmania. Her Honour enjoys travel, reading and theatre. Her Honour credits her success to her family, including her husband Matt and four children Hannah, Grace, Felix and Amy. **BN**