

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person

**Entry ID:** AWE5744

## Wolfe, Patricia (Patsy)

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**Occupation** Barrister, Chief Judge, Commissioner, Judge, Lawyer, Solicitor

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### Summary

Her Honour Patricia (Patsy) Wolfe served as Chief Judge of the District Court of Queensland between 1999 and 2014. She was the first woman to be appointed to the role. In 2014 she received the Order of Australia for her 'distinguished service to the judiciary, to the law through legal education reform and as a mentor and role model for women'.

Patsy Wolfe came to law as a mature age student and mother, after first pursuing careers in medicine and journalism. She graduated LLB with honours from the University of Queensland in 1978 and was admitted to the Bar the same year. In 1979, she joined the Faculty of Law as a senior tutor and then went on to complete a Masters Degree in 1983. While senior tutor, she met Margaret White and Quentin Bryce and formed supportive and enduring friendships with them both.

Before being appointed to the District Court in 1995, Wolfe served as Deputy Commissioner of the Fitzgerald Inquiry Into Official Corruption (1988-89) and as a part-time Commissioner on the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1993-95).

She is well remembered for her forthright comments made when she was chair of the Queensland Women's Consultative Committee in 1992. When challenged as to why Queensland women needed such a committee, when there was no equivalent body for men, her response was direct and uncompromising. Men already had a powerful organisation, she said. 'It's called Cabinet, where men outnumber women sixteen to two...That's why we need council as a direct line to the Premier.'

## Events

**1978 - 1978**

**1983 - 1983**

**2014 - 2014**

**2003 - 2003**

**2003 - 2003**

**1999 - 2014**

**1999 - 2014**

**1995 - 2014**

**1993 - 1995**

**1988 - 1989**

**1983 - 1995**

**1981 - 1982**

**1978 - 1980**

**1990 - 1990**

**1978 - 1978**

**1999 - 2002**

**1992 - 1997**

**1992 - 1994**

**1991 - 1997**

**1989 - 2003**

**1986 - 1999**

**1974 - 1974**

## Published resources

### **Book Section**

Patricia Wolfe, Gregory, Helen, 2005

### **Site Exhibition**

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers>

### **Resource Section**

Law, Kerwin, Hollie and Rubenstein, Kim, 2014,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0624b.htm>

### **Author Details**

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**Created** 15 June 2016  
**Last modified** 31 October 2016