

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE5433

## Murrell, Helen Gay

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**Nationality** Australian

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**Occupation** Barrister, Judge, Lawyer, Senior Counsel, Solicitor

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### Summary

Helen Gay Murrell was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Supreme Court on 28 October 2013, thus becoming the ACT's first female Supreme Court Chief Justice.

Murrell was first enrolled as a solicitor in 1977, working in the then Commonwealth Crown Solicitor's Office and the New South Wales (NSW) Legal Aid Commission. She was called to the NSW Bar in 1981, appointed silk in 1995, and has practised across criminal law, administrative law, environmental law, common law and equity.

In 1996, Judge Murrell was appointed a NSW District Court Judge in 1996. She is former president of the NSW Equal Opportunity Tribunal and set up the first NSW Drug Court in 1998

### Details

Her Honour, Chief Justice Helen Murrell, attended the University of New South Wales, from which she graduated in 1976 with Bachelor Arts/Bachelor Laws degree. In 1981 her Honour attended the University of Sydney and obtained a Diploma of Criminology.

Her Honour was admitted as a solicitor to the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1977. From 1977 to 1981 her Honour practised at the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor's Office and NSW Legal Aid Commission. From 1981 to 1996 Her Honour practised as a Barrister in criminal law, administrative law, environmental law, common law and equity. From 1994 to 1996 her Honour was the first Environmental Counsel for the NSW Environment Protection Authority. In 1995 her Honour was appointed Senior Counsel in New South Wales.

From 1996 to 2013 her Honour was a Judge of the District Court of New South Wales. In 1996 her Honour was also an Acting Judge in the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales. From 1997 to 1999 her Honour was President of the Equal Opportunity Tribunal of New South Wales and then Deputy President of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal of New South Wales, Head of the Equal Opportunity Division.

From 1998 to 2003 her Honour was the first Senior Judge of the Drug Court of New South Wales. In 1999 her Honour was a member of the United Nations Expert Working Group on Drug Courts, Vienna. From 2005 to 2013 her Honour was Deputy Chairperson of the New South Wales Medical Tribunal.

Her Honour has had a longstanding involvement in judicial education and is currently active within the National Judicial College of Australia (NJCA).

Her Honour was appointed Honorary Air Commodore of No 28 (City of Canberra) Squadron in April 2014.

## Published resources

### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Article

Introducing the ACT's first female Supreme Court Chief Justice, Inman, Michael, 2013,  
<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/introducing-the-acts-first-female-supreme-court-chief-justice-20130912-2t1r1.html>

### Site Exhibition

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

### Author Details

Her Honour Helen Murrell

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## Digital resources



**Title:** Helen Murrell

**Type:** Image

**Date:** 3 May, 2023