



## HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Public Information Officer

2 October, 2003

### HIGH COURT CENTENARY

The High Court of Australia celebrates its centenary on Monday with a special ceremonial sitting in the Banco Court in the Victorian Supreme Court Building. The High Court continued to use the Supreme Court until a separate building opened nearby in 1928. (This building was later used by the Federal Court and currently provides extra accommodation for the Victorian Supreme Court.) In Sydney the High Court occupied part of the Darlinghurst Court until it moved into designated premises next door in 1923. The High Court moved to its present home in Canberra in 1980. The Court still regularly conducts business in Sydney and Melbourne, and travels to other state capitals on circuit.

On Monday, the Court revisits its origins. After 1903, the Court expanded its number of members from three to five and then to its current size of seven Justices. On Monday the Bench, designed for three judges, will accommodate seven. Governor-General Michael Jeffery will take the position, at the front of the upstairs gallery, occupied by his predecessor Baron Tennyson a century ago. Just as was the case then, guests will include leading political and legal figures.

Monday's ceremony begins at 10.15am and will run for approximately an hour. Chief Justice Murray Gleeson will invite Prime Minister John Howard to speak on behalf of the Commonwealth and Victorian Attorney-General Rob Hulls to speak on behalf of the States and Territories. The Chief Justice will then call upon Law Council of Australia president Bob Gotterson QC and Australian Bar Association president Tony Glynn SC to speak. He will then respond to the previous speakers. The four guest speakers will be seated at the Bar Table, with federal Attorney-General Daryl Williams QC and Solicitor-General David Bennett QC.

The ceremony will be broadcast live on ABC Television and photographed by pool photographers. Due to space restrictions, other media cannot be accommodated in the Banco Court. The ceremony will be shown on video screens in Courts 2 and 3 for members of the public, the legal profession and the media.

The Chief Justice will deliver the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration's Centenary Oration at the same venue on Friday, October 3, at 5.30pm.

A major legal conference to mark the High Court's centenary will be held next Friday and Saturday, October 10 and 11, at the Hyatt Hotel Canberra. The conference will open at the Hyatt on Thursday evening, followed by a cocktail function in the High Court's Great Hall.

For further information about centenary events, contact public information officer Fiona Hamilton on (02) 6270 6998 or 0414 476 503. Both speeches by the Chief Justice can be supplied on a strictly embargoed basis.