



New Judges

The Honourable Madam Justice Pamela Kirkpatrick

Pamela Ann Kirkpatrick received a telephone call from Kim Campbell, the Minister of Justice, on Thursday afternoon, November 26, 1992, to offer her an appointment as a Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia sitting at New Westminster. Pamela was sworn in the next day and began her new judicial career the following Monday, November 30, 1992. A welcoming ceremony was held for Justice Kirkpatrick in the Heritage Court Room of the New Westminster Court House on Tuesday morning, December 15, 1992. Judge Kirkpatrick is the first Master of the Supreme Court to be appointed to the Supreme Court bench.

Pamela was born in Vancouver and took most of her schooling in the Greater Vancouver area. She graduated from Magee High School in Vancouver and went on to the University of British Columbia where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree with honours in International Relations in 1971. She was the recipient of many awards and bursaries, both at school and at university.

In that same year of 1971, Pamela followed her husband-to-be, David Kirkpatrick, to Toronto where he was studying for his Ph.D. in Computer Science at the University of Toronto. Her pursuit was successful and they were married in 1972. Pamela entered the Masters program of the Department of Political Economy of the University of Toronto but after a year in that program, decided to change course and go to law school. She entered first year law at the University of Toronto. Her law school studies were interrupted when Pamela and David went to Ithaca, New York, for a year where David taught at Cornell University. They returned to Vancouver so that David could accept a teaching position at Simon Fraser University and Pamela entered second year law school at U.B.C. She graduated from the University of British Columbia law school with a LL.B. on June 2, 1977.

Pamela articulated in 1977 and 1978 to Bob Sewell of the firm that was then called Shrum, Liddle and Heberton and which is now part of McCarthy Tétrault. She was called to the bar of British Columbia on July 10, 1978 and stayed with the firm as an associate working in the litigation department.

Pamela was the first female lawyer at Shrum, Liddle and Heberton to combine successfully the dual careers of legal practice and motherhood. The firm provided her with a great deal of latitude and flexibility to enable her to have children and spend time with them in their early years and at the same time return to part-time practice to continue her career as a lawyer. Pam and David have three delightful children: Anna, age 12; Emily, age 10; and Gordon, age 8.

Pamela's legal practice was heavily accented towards Chambers practice. For a while she did a lot of foreclosure work and related matters. She became such an expert in Chambers that on the odd occasion the presiding Judge asked her as a friend of the Court for her views on difficult questions. Over time she began to practise more and more in the area of wills and estates.

Pamela was always a very hard working and well liked lawyer at her firm. She is bright, knowledgeable, practical and completely dedicated. Best of all, she has a great sense of humour.

In 1989, the Attorney General's Ministry decided to establish the new position of Master. Pamela was one of more than three hundred lawyers who made an application. She was chosen as one of the first ten Masters to be appointed in the Province and became a Master at Vancouver in November, 1989. By all reports Pamela carried out her duties of Master in an exemplary fashion. She worked hard and was always well prepared. As a Master she exhibited the qualities of care, concern, understanding and fairness that are so important for a member of the judiciary. Many of the lawyers who appeared before her are going to miss her as a Master.

All the friends and colleagues at the bar of Madam Justice Kirkpatrick are extremely pleased with her appointment and they all believe that she will make a terrific judge and be a great credit to the Court.



The Honourable Justice
Stephen James Shabbits

Stephen James Shabbits was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of British Columbia on November 27th, 1992. Mr. Justice Shabbits was a leader of the Nanaimo Bar for a number of years having served as Benchers from 1986 to 1989. He took silk in 1990.

Jim was born on August 15th, 1943, in Saskatchewan. He attended public schools in Yorkton and earned degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Saskatchewan, the latter in 1965. He then articulated in Yorkton to J.D. Milliken, Esq. (now Milliken, J. of the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench) and subsequently practised law for four years with the firm of Hill, Milliken in Regina.

During his sojourn in Regina, Jim met and married Gloria. They came west in 1970, where Jim was a sole practitioner in Port Alberni until 1974 when he moved to Nanaimo to join the firm of Heath Hutchinson & Taylor.

Jim has always been a quiet guy who gets things done, frequently with amazing speed. He has also the knack of getting to the essence of things and counsel who appear before him are going to become aware that he has anticipated many of the things they are about to say.

Jim's recreational life has been family-orientated and he and Gloria take quiet pride in the early promise shown by their son Michael and daughter Megan.