

Early Life and Family Roots

The **Honourable Michael John Murray AM QC** (1942–2020) was born into a family with deep-rooted civic values in the Perth Hills of Western Australia. He grew up on Old York Road in the semi-rural suburb of **Greenmount**.

His formative years were heavily influenced by his father, who served as the **President of the Shire of Mundaring** from 1964 to 1968, instilling a legacy of local public service. Michael attended **Greenmount Primary School** and **Midland Junction High School** before transferring to **Governor Stirling Senior High School**. His natural leadership skills emerged early; he was elected **Head Prefect** during his final year. After high school, he pursued higher education at the [University of Western Australia](#), graduating with a Bachelor of Laws in **1964**.

A Meteoric Professional Rise (1965–1990)

Murray was articled to the Crown Solicitor and officially **admitted to legal practice in 1965**. He quickly established a reputation for high competence, razor-sharp intellect, and absolute courtesy in the courtroom.

- **Prosecutorial Career:** In 1973, he was appointed a **Crown Prosecutor**. In his early 30s, he became the state's youngest-ever **Chief Crown Prosecutor**, handling Western Australia's most high-profile and complex criminal trials.
- **The Murray Review:** Appointed **Crown Counsel in 1980**, he was tasked with a landmark, comprehensive review of the *Criminal Code of Western Australia*. His systemic recommendations drastically modernised the state's outdated laws, particularly rewriting code surrounding sexual offences.
- **Silk and Leadership:** He was appointed **Queen's Counsel (QC) in 1984**. Proving his broad respect across the legal aisle, he was elected **President of the Law Society of Western Australia in 1988**—making history as the very first Crown law officer to lead the organisation.

Judicial Career and Philosophy (1990–2012)

In 1990, Murray was appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. He served on the bench for **22 years**, making him one of the state's longest serving and most formidable jurists. Around 2001, he rose to become the **Senior Puisne Judge**. He frequently stepped into the role of Acting Chief Justice or State Administrator.

On the bench, Justice Murray was highly regarded for his balanced, compassionate, and human approach to sentencing. He was a sharp, vocal opponent of mandatory sentencing frameworks, strongly asserting that strict minimum templates stripped judges of their vital discretionary powers and risked systemic injustices. He officially retired from the Supreme Court bench in **January 2012**.

Public Service and Integrity Watchdog (2012–2020)

Retirement did not slow his public contributions. His peerless reputation for institutional integrity led to further prominent statutory appointments:

- **CCC Inspector:** In January 2013, the WA Government appointed him as the **Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC)**. He used this powerful oversight role to robustly investigate misconduct allegations within the watchdog itself, authoring critical operational reports.
- **Community Portfolios:** He served as the long-term **Chair of the Supervised Release Review Board**, navigating the delicate complexities of juvenile parole. Passionate about heritage, he also stepped up as **Chair of the National Trust of Australia (WA)**.
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Academic Legacy and Enduring Honours

Justice Murray believed deeply in mentoring young lawyers and correcting systemic legal shortages.

- **Murdoch University Law School:** He was an instrumental architect in founding [Murdoch University's Law School](#) to expand local legal opportunities. He served as its **Deputy Chancellor** (1993–1998) and a long-time Senate member. Murdoch University awarded him an **Honorary Doctorate of Laws** in 1999, and he later taught as an Adjunct Professor.
- **State Recognition:** He was appointed a **Member of the Order of Australia (AM)** for his immense service to legal education, the judiciary, and the WA community.
- **Posthumous Memorials:** Following his passing at age 78 in **July 2020**, Murdoch University formally named its law library the [Michael Murray Law Library](#). Additionally, [Murray Chambers](#) was established in Perth to carry on his legacy of professional excellence and active mentorship.

Personal Life

Behind his towering professional stature, Michael Murray was a dedicated family man. He shared a long, supportive marriage with his wife, **Dale Murray**. Together they raised three children: **Timothy, Christopher, and Abigail**. He was a proud grandfather to six grandchildren (**Sarah, Ben, Emma, Isaac, Max, and Zachary**), preserving a tight-knit family unit alongside a lifetime of demanding public duties.

If you would like to explore specific parts of his history further, please let me know: