

Scutts scores 50 and then declares



Truman Hoyle veteran David Scutts has notched up 50 years at the firm, a rarity in today's dog-eat-dog legal market.

Scutts joined what was then PG Truman & Co fresh out of school in 1956 as an articled clerk, before being admitted as a lawyer in 1961 with the firm becoming PG Truman Stocker & Scutts. He became an equity partner of the firm after founder Percy Truman's death in the mid 1970's, increasingly specialising in property transactions. In 1988 the firm took on its current name of Truman Hoyle.

He will retire from his present position as chairman of partners at the end of this financial year, continuing as a consultant on a part-time basis for the next 12 months.

"The reason I chose law was because my father used to know Percy Truman, as they bowled together at Petersham Bowling Club," Scutts said. "One day I went with my dad to the bowls club and Percy asked me what I wanted to do when I left school. I had no idea and he offered me a job, and I've been at the firm ever since then."

During his 50 years in the profession, Scutts nominates the growth of the size of firms and increased pressure placed upon lawyers as the most significant changes.

"When I started out most firms were small in size, with the norm being only two or three lawyers," he said. "It was a lot more relaxed, with conveyancing work the bread and butter of all firms, and you personally knew most clients. We would even play cricket in the hallways on occasions."

"The trend towards mega-firms and specialist boutiques started about 20 years ago, and there are now so many lawyers in Sydney and at the big firms, you are expected to work increasingly long hours."

Scutts will move to the north coast with his wife Carmen when he retires. He also plans to write a book about his experiences in the legal profession titled: From articled clerk to chairman.