

Ross Tyndall McKeand Di McKeand

Ross McKeand (right) was born in Sydney on 25 June 1945. He completed his secondary schooling at Sydney Technical High School and having deferred his National Service attended Sydney University graduating as a Bachelor of Laws in 1968, being admitted as a Solicitor in November 1968. Ross was employed as a solicitor with R. J. Pettiford Solicitors prior to entering the Army. Unusually for a New South Welshman Ross commenced his Army service with the first intake in 1969 at 2 RTB Puckapunyal on 29 January 1969. Ross joined Class 1/69 at Scheyville on 14 February. Graduating on 17 July, Ross was allocated to the Australian Army Legal Corps and posted as a Legal Officer to Directorate of Legal Services, Army Headquarters as a Temporary Captain followed by a short time at Headquarters Eastern Command on 22 December until 3 February 1970 when was posted to 6 Task Force in HQ Southern Queensland Area, again as a Legal Officer.

On 13 May Ross was then posted to HQ Australian Forces Vietnam as a Legal Officer for a few days before being posted to HQ 1 ALSG Vung Tau. He appeared in many courts martial including an appearance as assistant prosecutor in a double murder trial. Having extended his National Service by a few months, Ross returned to Australia on 12 May 1971 and shortly after was discharged. Post National Service Ross continued working in the legal field. After 4 years working with a large London solicitor he was admitted to the NSW bar in 1979 and appointed a senior counsel in 2003. His principal Areas of Practice were building and construction law, commercial, equity and related aspects in trade practices, real property and industrial law, corporation's law; professional negligence (other than medical) and criminal law. His other professional appointments were as a Mediator and an Adjudicator for the Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act (NSW).

Ross joined the Army Reserve in September 1977 and served as a Legal Officer at Headquarters, 2nd Military District, Headquarters Field Force Command and Director of Army Legal Services. He was appointed as a Judge Advocate and a Defence Force Magistrate in 1988. He retired on 1 March 1990 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. 12

During his post-NS years Ross forged a distinguished civilian career as a solicitor and became a barrister after he was admitted to the NSW Bar on 9th February 1979. He was appointed senior counsel on 1 October 2003. His legal career was stellar, forming a most unusual mix of military and civilian law, achieving excellence in both areas. Ross was tragically killed on 26 March 2019 in a motorcycle accident near Forster. He is survived by his loving wife Diane McKeand, 3 step children Chloe, Brodie and Camilla Maxwell and his two daughters Elissa and Chloe McKeand. He loved playing the guitar, taking photos of his family and of his cats. He will be missed. Ross was privately cremated and on Friday 5th April at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Terrigal there was a celebration of Ross's life. The photo shows Ken Grant (1/69), Di McKeand and Dick Whitaker (also 1/69) who were among the large gathering of mourners.