

## Marin Accountants founder moves to new role in the firm, new focus outside the firm

When Bernard Marin, the founder and managing partner of Marin Accountants, looks back on his career with the practice, it's the people who he best remembers as the highlights of his working life.

'It's always been about more than just the numbers,' says Bernard, 'I've enjoyed working with clients and staff immensely.'

But it's time for a change and from 1 July this year, Bernard will step down as managing partner to take on a consulting role with Marin. He will hand over to Arthur Topalidis, who as managing partner will take day-to-day responsibility for running the practice and managing its team and clients.

Bernard will spend more time with the firm's key clients, work on special projects, succession and estate planning for Marin and take external consulting and directorship positions.

'I'm surrounded by a group of highly capable partners, who will be taking our practice into the future,' says Bernard. 'Each partner will actively manage their areas of expertise and client relationships. They will also help and support Arthur in managing and growing the business. This move will free me up to spend more time with our clients, to help the practice manage relationships and deal with issues relating to our clients' financial matters.'

### A focus on philanthropy

Bernard has also had an extensive involvement in the not-for-profit (NFP) sector.

Positions have included Treasurer and Board Member of Liberty Victoria from 1985 to 1994, Treasurer and Board Director of the Koorie Heritage Trust from 2000 to 2008, Board Director on the Australian Communities Foundation in 2009, and member of the Advisory Board of the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation from 2009 to 2015.

Bernard has served as Treasurer and Board Director of the Melbourne Writers Festival since 2005 and is a member of the finance committee of the Reichstein

Bernard founded Marin Accountants in 1981 and has grown it into a five-partner practice, servicing many well-known, high-wealth Jewish families and businesses, and professionals like Federal court judges, medical specialist and barristers.

The firm provides clients with a range of services, including traditional accounting and advice around business structuring, asset management and taxation, and succession and estate planning for large family businesses (one of Bernard's particular areas of specialisation).

'Client relationships are built on a broad understanding of client needs that allows our advisory services to be effective,' he says.

Another key to Marin's success has been the quality of its employees and their training. 'We have also had great people working with us over the years and we always aim to provide them with a fulfilling environment,' says Bernard.

Foundation and a number of advisory roles and positions on private family boards.

One of his most successful NFP initiatives saw him partner with the late Ron Castan AM QC in 1989 to establish the Alan Missen Foundation. Named after a prominent Liberal senator, the Foundation continues his work of promoting civil liberties and human rights throughout Australia. Each year, it sponsors prizes to each university faculty for the best human rights and civil liberties essay written by a student.

'This work – particularly the Foundation and my involvement with the Koorie Heritage Trust – is something

I consider a very important part of who I am, and what I owe to the broader community,' says Bernard.

'There's a strong link between the Jewish and Aboriginal cultures, where the importance of civil and human rights resonates with the background of horrors experienced by both peoples.

'A good example of this link is the Trust's Stolen Generation program, which is similar to the Shoah Program established for Jewish people. It has established

## Writing and authorship

Retiring from Marin will allow Bernard to focus more closely on another passion: his career as a published author of fiction and non-fiction.

In 1982 he published his first non-fiction book, *Selection in human resource accounting*. Two decades later, after considerable personal reflection, he published a family memoir, *My father, my father*.

This book explores his relationship with his deceased father and the impact this has had on his own personality and identity as the descendant of Jewish refugees who fled pre-war Poland and the Holocaust.

Since then, Bernard has published a short story, '*Skeletons under the Shabbat table*', and is now working on a novel and a further collection of short stories.

the largest database of the Stolen Generation's stories in Australia – recording individual's narratives and helping reconnect them with dislocated families and cultures.'

Bernard was recognised for his contribution to philanthropy, and his services to the accounting profession, with a Membership to the Order of Australia in 2008.

'It was one of the proudest moments of my professional career, but it also made me realise that community service is a lifelong commitment,' says Bernard.

He is working on having both ready to submit for publication some time in 2016.

'My writing is an important part of my broader life, and I enjoy it immensely,' says Bernard. 'I cover a wide range of topics – my novel explores Aboriginal themes, while the short stories inhabit many different locations and settings but with often common themes around people's emotional lives and individuality.

'I've been lucky in my life to have been inspired by the people around me, and I know that's not going to change, even as my current role at Marin comes to an end and a new part of my life begins.'

