

2002 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW CONFERENCE AND DINNER TRIVIA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Round One

1. Who has been the longest-serving Chief Justice?

Garfield Barwick

2. Which former High Court judge lost the sight of his right eye in a Rugby Union match in Canberra after he had graduated from Sydney University?

William Deane

3. What, according to Ninian Stephen in *Permewan Wright v Trehwitt* (1979), ‘are so notoriously perishable a foodstuff that in their deteriorated state they have much enriched the English language in a number of picturesque phrases. There are, perhaps, few other foodstuffs which combine the qualities of being so dependent for their wholesomeness upon freshness, of being so prone to deterioration and the freshness of which at the time of purchase it is so difficult for the consumer to determine from outward appearance. They are not merely perishable but are enigmatic to the ordinary shopper’?

Eggs

4. Which High Court judge was an umpire at a cricket match in 1879 between the colony of New South Wales at the English team, which ended in a riot and the captain of the English team, Lord Harris, attributing this behaviour to the “convict stain”?

Edmund Barton

5. Which of the following is *not* a notable High Court litigant?

A. Michael Crawford

B. the Pope

C. Walt Disney

D. Robert Mitchum

E. Derryn Hinch

Michael Crawford

6. Which Justice holds the record for dissenting from his colleagues more often than any other current or past Justice of the High Court?

Michael Kirby

7. In which year did High Court Justices stop wearing wigs?

1988

8. Who was the High Court judge who never sat? He was also the first Chief Commissioner of the Inter-State Commission and was appointed to the High Court by Billy Hughes in 1913 but resigned amidst public controversy.

AB Piddington. (Before offering the appointment, Hughes had cabled: “Confidential. Most important know your views Commonwealth versus State Rights. Very urgent.” Piddington had replied: “In sympathy with supremacy of Commonwealth powers”.)

9. With which field do we associate Percy Spence, WB McInnes and Jan Senbergs?

Art (they all have artworks hanging in the High Court)

10. Name one Ian Callinan novel.

The Lawyer and the Libertine (1996), or *The Coroner’s Conscience* (1999)

Round Two

1. **Which HC judge has a supernova named after him?**

Lionel Murphy

2. **Which judge's associate was appointed to the High Court while the judge he had worked for remained on the bench?**

McTiernan (judge 1930-76), who was associate to Rich J during World War I

3. **An appeal lies to the High Court from the courts of how many countries other than Australia?**

One (Nauru)

4. **In *Martin v Scribal* (1954), what was Owen Dixon describing when he talked about an 'inner revolving face' contained in 'a capillary tube or duct the diameter of which should not exceed 4 mm' and having an air vent at the other end so that 'a concave meniscus is formed at the interface of the viscous fluid and the air'?**

A ball-point pen

5. **Which four High Court judges never appeared before the High Court before their appointment?**

Griffith, Barton, O'Connor and Powers

6. **Who resigned from the Court after being bequeathed a large stable of valuable racehorses?**

Adrian Knox

7. **Which States have never had an appointment of one of their own to the High Court?**

South Australia and Tasmania

8. **What section of the Constitution did John Latham declare would 'be found written on his heart'?**

Section 92

9. **How many Jewish High Court judges have there been?**

Answer: one (Isaacs)

10. **Which High Court judge spent his recreation time translating Dante's *Inferno*, only to have a reviewer state that he had "succeeded in rendering the poetry of Dante into the language of a parliamentary enactment"?**

Samuel Griffith (story that someone received the book from Griffith and asked him to inscribe it because "I should not like anyone to think that I had borrowed the book, nor should I like anyone to think that I had bought it")

Round Three

1. Which High Court judge re-married at the age of 87?

George Rich

2. What was the character name of the small-time suburban lawyer who initially represented the Kerrigans in *The Castle*? Hint: In arguing his case, he cited as authority both *Mabo* and the “vibe” of the Constitution.

Dennis Denuto

3. When the bank foreclosed on the family home in 1936, which High Court judge helped to bury his father’s library in the backyard of their home (including a complete set of English law reports) before the house was sold?

Ronald Wilson

4. The hearing of the *Bank Nationalisation Case* in the High Court in late 1940s lasted for 39 days. In the Privy Council, the hearing went for a further 37 days, with the opening address of HV Evatt itself lasting 14 days. During the marathon hearing in the Privy Council, how many of their Lordships died?

Two (Lord Uthwatt and Lord du Parcq)

5. Bill Coles, Sheila Mumberson, Antoinette Breddels and Rex Avis have all held which High Court position?

Court crier

6. Which former High Court judge reportedly asked his associate to sprinkle breadcrumbs between Starke’s bed sheets when he and Starke were travelling on circuit to Hobart?

HV Evatt

7. What is the record period of service for a High Court associate?

- A. 6 years
- B. 12 years
- C. 29 years
- D. 35 years
- E. 44 years

44 years (Edward Best, who worked for Barton, Isaacs, Higgins and Rich)

8. Edward McTiernan broke his hip, leading ultimately to his retirement, while attempting to kill what kind of creature?

Cricket

9. What judge of the High Court was appointed at the oldest age?

William Owen at 62 (Justice 1961-72).

10. Which judge, while in attendance at Isaacs’ funeral in 1948, leant over to the 85-year-old Justice George Rich and queried: “George, are you sure it’s worth your while to go home?”

Hayden Starke

