Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2184

Evatt, Elizabeth Andreas

(1933 -)

Born	19331111, Sydney New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Barrister, Commissioner, Judge, Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

Elizabeth Evatt was the first Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia and the first woman to preside in an Australian Federal Court.

In August 2020, a specialist domestic violence resource was established and named in her honour. *The Evatt List*, operating in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia across selected registries, will identify high-risk cases, enabling them to be fast-tracked with appropriate security arrangements in place.

Details

Elizabeth Evatt studied Law at the University of Sydney and at Harvard Law School. A Barrister-at-law at Inner Temple and the New South Wales Bar, her legal career began in England where she was a barrister and editor of the *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*. In 1968 she was invited to join Lord Scarman at the English Law Commission where she worked for five years.

Evatt was Deputy President of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission from 1973-76, before becoming the first Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia (1976-1988). From 1988-1993 she was president of the Australian Law Reform Commission, and Chancellor of the University of Newcastle from 1988-1994.

Between 1984-1992, Evatt was a member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, serving as Chair of the Committee from 1989-1991. She was a member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee from 1993-2000, and was a part time Commissioner of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission from 1995-1998.

Evatt is currently a judge of the World Bank Administrative Tribunal; a Visiting Professor at the University of New South Wales; and Chair of the Board of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre in Sydney. She has for many years been a member of the Australian section of the International Commission of Jurists, and was elected as a Commissioner in April 2003. A niece of former Labor leader Dr H. V. Evatt, Elizabeth Evatt is a Life Member of the Evatt Foundation, and served as Vice-President from 1982-1987.

Events

2020 - 2020
The Evatt List named in her honour, as a means of identifying and prioritising cases in Family Circuit Court Registries where family violence is a risk factor.

2001 - 2001
Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Pioneering Women at the NSW Bar: 1921-1975, New South Wales Bar Association, 2011,
http://www.nswbar.asn.au/the-bar-association/pioneering-women/

Resource Section
Elizabeth Evatt, Brodsky, Juliette, 2011,
http://www.nswbar.asn.au/the-bar-association/pioneering-women/

Law, Kerwin, Hollie and Rubenstein, Kim, 2014,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0624b.htm

Book Section
Recollections, Evatt, Elizabeth, 1987

Edited Book
A Guide to family law : questions and answers to help you make the right decisions, Evatt, Elizabeth, 1991

Report
Final report. Royal Commission on Human Relationships., Royal Commission on Human Relationships (Australia), 1977

National implementation : the cutting edge of international human rights law, Evatt, Elizabeth, 1999

Review of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984, Evatt, Elizabeth, 1996

Genital mutilation : a health and human rights issue, Magarey, Kirsty, 1990

Conference Proceedings
Royal Commission on Human Relationships: official transcript of proceedings, Royal Commission on Human Relationships (Australia), 1976

Conference Paper
The status of women in Asia, Evatt, Elizabeth, 1991

Lecture
Valuing women's work : women, equality and family law reform, Evatt, Elizabeth, 1991

Site Exhibition
The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers

Book
Born in hope : the early years of the Family Court of Australia, Swain, Shurlee, 2012

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection
Elizabeth Evatt interviewed by Daniel Connell in the Law in Australian society oral history project [sound recording]

Elizabeth Evatt address at the National Press Club on 24 September 1980 [sound recording]

National Archives of Australia, Sydney Office
Working papers of Justice Elizabeth Evatt, chronological series

Personal papers relating to family law matters, single number series

Records created by Justice Elizabeth Evatt as Chairman of the Royal Commission into Human Relationships, single number series

Files created by Justice Elizabeth Evatt as Chancellor of Newcastle University, single number series

Files created by Justice Elizabeth Evatt as President of the Australian Law Reform Commission, single number series

Personal correspondence files, single number series

Addresses given by Justice Elizabeth Evatt, single number series

National Archives of Australia, Melbourne Office
Files created by Justice Alastair Bothwick Nicholson as Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, single number series

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Craig McGregor, 1961-2005 [manuscript]

Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection
Pat Richardson scrapbooks relating to the Women's Electoral Lobby and women's events, 1977-2002

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