



The  
**Thirty-First Conference**  
of  
**The Samuel Griffith Society**  
**9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2019**

**The RACV Club  
501 Bourke Street  
Melbourne, Victoria 3000**

## Friday, 9 August 2019

- 2:00pm:** **Special Pre-Conference Event**  
Tour of the Robert Menzies Institute, University of Melbourne
- 6:15pm:** Pre-Conference Cocktail Party
- 7:00pm:** **Dinner** (Chair - Stuart Wood, AM, QC)  
With introductions by Senator Dean Smith  
Speakers: Hon Nicholas Hasluck, AM, QC - "*Ministers or Quangos: Take Your Pick*"  
Nick Cater - "*The Voice and other threats to the world's best democracy*"  
*Vote of thanks:* Jeffrey Phillips, SC

## Saturday, 10 August 2019

- 8:30am:** Registration
- 8:45am:** Opening Remarks - Eddy Gisonda
- Session 1A:** **"Federalism - Past, Present and Future"** (Chair - Professor David Flint, AM)
- 9:00am:** Peter Dunning, QC - "*Spence v Queensland - calibrating Australian federalism for a second century?*"
- 9:30am:** Discussion
- 9:45am:** Professor Judith Sloan - "*The erosion of the economic benefits of federalism*"
- 10:15am:** Discussion
- 10:30am:** **Morning Tea**

### The 11<sup>th</sup> Sir Harry Gibbs Memorial Oration

- 11:00am:** Honourable Geoffrey Nettle, AC - "*Sir Harry Gibbs: a legal conservative*"  
With an introduction by the Hon Justice Steward, Federal Court of Australia
- 11:30am:** **Break**

### Session 2: **"The Crown"** (Chair - Peter Jopling, AM, QC)

- 11:40am:** Honourable Alex Chernov, AC, QC - "*The role and appointment of State Governors*"
- 12:10pm:** Discussion
- 12:25pm:** **Lunch**

### Session 1B: **"Federalism - Past, Present and Future cont ..."** (Chair - Keith Wolahan)

- 1:45pm:** Professor Judith Brett - "*Alfred Deakin and Federation*"
- 2:15pm:** Discussion
- 2:30pm:** Laureate Professor Cheryl Saunders, AO - "*The strange (and continuing) story of Commonwealth authority to spend*"
- 3:00pm:** Discussion

**3:15pm: Afternoon Tea**

**Session 3: “Freedom of Speech”** (Chair - Honourable Gary Johns)

**3:45pm:** Michael Sexton, SC - “*Freedom of speech*”

**4:15pm:** Discussion

**4:30pm:** Professor Peter Ridd - “*A sad tale of intolerant and untrustworthy institutions*”

**5:00pm:** Discussion

**5:15pm: Free time**

**Saturday Night Dinner** (Chair - Honourable Ian Callinan, AC)

**6:30pm:** Pre-Dinner Drinks

**7:00pm:** Dinner

Speaker: Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC

*Vote of thanks:* John Roskam

### **Sunday, 11 August 2019**

**Session 4: “Constitutional changes”** (Chair - Honourable Nick Minchin, AO)

**9:15am:** Honourable Eric Abetz - “*An Indigenous Voice to Parliament: The Issues*”

**9:35am:** Discussion

**9:50am:** Alister Henskens, SC, MP - “*Can there be a Plebiscite on the Road to a Republic?*”

**10:10am:** Discussion

**10:20am: Morning Tea**

**Session 1C: “Federalism - Past, Present and Future cont ...”** (Chair - Eddy Gisonda)

**10:50am:** Honourable John Brumby, AO - “*Fixing Federalism: a federation fit for purpose in a changing and challenging world*”

**11:10am:** Discussion

**Session 5: “Courts and Judges”** (Chair - Ben Davies)

**11:20am:** Dr Murray Cranston - “*Judicial appointments under President Donald Trump*”

**11:40am:** Discussion

**11:50am: Break**

**12:00pm: Concluding address**

Honourable John Middleton

With an introduction by the Hon Justice Anderson, Federal Court of Australia

**12:30pm:** Concluding Remarks - Honourable Ian Callinan, AC

**Speakers:**

**Senator the Honourable Eric Abetz** Senator for the State of Tasmania

**Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC** Historian and Author

**Professor Judith Brett** Emeritus Professor of Politics, La Trobe University

**Honourable John Brumby, AO** Former Premier of Victoria, Chancellor of La Trobe University

**Honourable Alex Chernov, AC, QC** Former Governor of Victoria

**Dr Murray Cranston** Senior Political Adviser

**Peter Dunning, QC** Former Solicitor General for the State of Queensland

**Alister Henskens, SC, MP** Cabinet Secretary for New South Wales

**Honourable John Middleton** Justice of the Federal Court of Australia

**Honourable Geoffrey Nettle, AC** Justice of the High Court of Australia

**Professor Peter Ridd** Marine physicist, formerly of James Cook University

**Laureate Professor Cheryl Saunders, AO** Emeritus Professor of Law, University of Melbourne

**Michael Sexton, SC** Solicitor General for the State of New South Wales

**Professor Judith Sloan** Professor of Economics, University of Melbourne

The next annual conference of the Samuel Griffith Society will be held in Sydney, 2020

**The Samuel Griffith Society**  
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