

**CITATION
(Doctor of Laws)**

SIR DARYL DAWSON, AC KBE CB QC

Born in Melbourne in 1933, Sir Daryl Dawson has led a life characterised by outstanding service to the law, the administration of justice and the community.

After secondary education at Canberra High School his enrolment as a law student at the University of Melbourne in 1951 continued his family's long association with the University. His father Claude Dawson, a distinguished journalist, completed his MA in philosophy at the University, where his mother, Elizabeth, also took out an MA. As an undergraduate student Sir Daryl was a resident of Ormond College and an active member of the Student's Representative Council. He graduated with an LLB (Hons) in 1956.

Awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to Yale, Sir Daryl completed his LLM there in 1956 before returning to Melbourne to enter into Articles. He was called to the Bar in 1957. During the 1960s he was a Lieutenant-Commander in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve in charge of its legal service in Melbourne.

At the Bar Sir Daryl developed a flourishing practice, principally in commercial and constitutional law, and was much in demand as Counsel in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. He appeared in numerous important and often high profile cases and enquiries, renowned for an extraordinary clear and logical mind and an ability to express thoughts with great precision and brevity. He took silk in 1971.

In 1974 Daryl was appointed as Solicitor-General for Victoria. With carriage of both criminal and civil cases, in the appellate courts and as Principal Legal Advisor to the Government, his enormous contribution to the establishment of important principles of law began in earnest. While it is particularly in the field of criminal law that Sir Daryl has left an enduring legacy, as Solicitor-General Sir Daryl also argued numerous important constitutional cases before the High Court. Many of these were concerned with the rights of States and the operation of federalism.

Sir Daryl was appointed to the High Court in 1982, where he served for 15 years until his retirement in 1997. During his period on that Court, he personified the very essence of a distinguished Judge and jurist. He was completely independent in articulating the law and in deciding the case. The *Dams Case* and the *Mabo Case* are good illustrations of his adherence to principle and his independence in arriving at conclusions based on principle. His influence on the High Court's thinking was and remains considerable.

Sir Daryl's contribution to the administration of justice has continued since his retirement from the High Court. From 1998-2003 he served as a member of the final appellate court in Hong Kong. He has conducted amongst other enquiries, the Royal Commission into the Longford Gas Explosion, and the important enquiry into the *Trade Practices Act*. He remains an Arbitrator par excellence on the national and international stage.

Despite the demands on his time while at the Bar and as Solicitor-General, Sir Daryl managed to serve on a number of important public and other institutions, particularly giving service to many from which he had benefited in the past. The breadth of that service is exceptional.

He was the inaugural Lecturer in Introduction to Legal Method for the Council of Legal Education and taught that course for many years. He was a member of the Victorian Bar Council and many of its important committees, including its Ethics Committee.

Sir Daryl has maintained a close association with the University. He became an external member of the Law Faculty in 1972, chairing a major curriculum review in 1972-74. During that period he participated as a guest lecturer in the LLM program. He has served as member (1965-73), and then Chairman, of the Ormond College Council (1991-1992), as a member of Convocation, and as a member of the Council of the University for 10 years from 1976. Since appointment as a Professorial Fellow of the University in 1998 Sir Daryl has regularly participated as a member of Faculty boards, contributed to teaching in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs and carried out research within the Centre for Comparative Constitutional Studies.

For many years Sir Daryl was a member and then Chairman, of the Australian Motor Sport Appeal Court. In 1998, he became a Director and Chairman of the Menzies Foundation. In all of these capacities, Sir Daryl has given his time generously and made lasting contributions.

Sir Daryl's remarkable contribution to the community has been recognised through many awards, including honours at the highest level. In 1980, he was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB). He was knighted in 1982, becoming a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE), and in 1986, he was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC), Australia's highest civilian honour.

It is fitting that his contribution is now recognised by the highest award of the University.