



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

OCCASIONAL LECTURE SERIES

Time, Chance and Parliament Lessons from Forty Years

Harry Evans

**Main Committee Room
Parliament House**

**Friday 24 July 2009
12.15pm–1.15pm**

WHAT MAJOR CHANGES have overtaken the Australian Parliament in the last four decades, and have they all been for the better? How have chance and fortune influenced those changes? Why did a Senate Clerk instruct his colleagues not to mention one of his most significant works? Why did a Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet accuse him of undermining the government? What did the Vietnam War have to do with the establishment of the Senate committee system? How was that system nearly destroyed in the 1980s? Did the greatest parliamentary failure occur six years ago? Can the institution cope with the crises of the present time?

IN THIS LECTURE the Clerk of the Senate, Harry Evans, employs a long perspective to identify the underlying trends of Australian parliamentary history, the role of happenstance and lessons for the future.

HARRY EVANS came to work for the Parliament in 1967, joined the Senate Department in 1969 and was appointed Clerk in 1988. He is a writer on Australian parliamentary and constitutional affairs, and is editor of the standard work on Senate procedure, *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice*, now in its twelfth edition. He will retire at the end of this year.

Admission free—bookings not required

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