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RT. WOR. BRO. SIR LESLIE JAMES HERRON (1902-1973)

Sir Leslie James Herron was born on 22 May 1902 at Mosman, Sydney, second of six children of native-born parents, Henry Herron, an insurance clerk, and his wife, Emily Ethel, nee Downie.

Leslie was educated at the Church of England Preparatory School at Mosman, Sydney Grammar School and the University of Sydney. (LLB. 1924). He obtained second-class honours despite being an enthusiastic athlete, oarsman and footballer, playing first grade Rugby Union as a breakaway for Western Suburbs from 1922 to 1925.

Admitted to the Bar on 28 August 1925, he read with R.G. Bonney and built up a successful practice, mainly in common law, on the Northern Circuit. He spoke to Juries "in a down to earth manner which they could understand" and in consequence, "snatched innumerable verdicts."

At St James Anglican Church, Sydney, on 6 January 1930, he married Andree Lorna, daughter of Frank Leverrier K.C., and they lived at Wollstonecraft until building a house at Castle Cove in 1960. Taking up golf, he played off a handicap of nine at his best, and was President of the Australian Golf Club from 1944 to 1973.

Herron was appointed an acting District Court Judge in February 1939 and took silk on 20 December that year. Elevated to the Supreme Court on 10 February 1941, he sat mainly on criminal and civil cases attempting "to keep the balance between wartime needs of the Executive and the rights of the individual."

He received a death threat in December 1948 after having sentenced Charles Ivan Le Gallien to life imprisonment for patricide. Given police protection, Herron played golf with his bodyguard. In 1958, he served as a Royal Commissioner inquiring into the Auditor-General's statements concerning Abram Landa, the Minister for Housing.

Devoting time to the administration of sport, Leslie Herron was Chairman, from 1933-1939, and President from 1943 to 1956, of the New South Wales Rugby Union. He was foundation Chairman in 1948 of the Australian Rugby Union and he chaired the International Rugby Football Board in London in 1957. He was also President of Sydney Grammar School Old Boys Union from 1948 to 1950 and the President of the New South Wales Amateur Swimming Association from 1949 to 1964. He was also a member of the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust where he served as Chairman from 1970 to 1972.

