

2003

## Testimonial Dinner: George and Joanne Dixon

Roger J. Miner '56

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George and Joanne Dixon  
Testimonial Dinner  
Kozel's Restaurant  
Ghent, New York  
Friday, April 25, 2003

POLITICIANS

When they made him, they through away the shovel.

He doesn't know the meaning of rest -- he doesn't know the meaning of a lot of other words either.

He is a self-made man who worships his creator.

On his birthday, he sent congratulations to his mother.

If you gave a penny for his thoughts, you would be overpaying.

All he does is tell her how good it's going to be.

I can think of no man more worthy of this award, and neither can he.

He calls Dial-A-Prayer and asks for his messages.

He had a charisma by-pass.

A man once said that \_\_\_\_\_ is the greatest \_\_\_\_\_ in the history of \_\_\_\_\_. And that man is here tonight, and I would like to call upon him now. \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you for the excellent introduction. I am glad to be here. At my age, I am glad to be anywhere. Butch Harrison and I go way back. He was still in State Police uniform when I first met him, and we worked together then and later when he joined the BCI. We have been reminiscing about the days when law enforcement and law enforcers were somewhat different. Some of our memories cannot be repeated in mixed company.

But I am honored to serve here tonight as the speaker and toastmaster for this dinner honoring an old friend. I have not undertaken a job like this in many years. In fact, as I came in a little while ago, I heard a person say: "Isn't that the former Roger Miner? He was a great speaker during his lifetime." Well, reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated. I just have not done any speaking locally in a long time. But this is a very special occasion, and Jackie and I are very pleased to join in this celebration of the judicial career of George Dixon and also to honor Joanne Dixon for the part she has played in his life and career. Jackie and I value their friendship greatly.

When George entered the judging business thirty years ago, I was District Attorney of Columbia County. Even then, he was an eager beaver kind of Justice, dedicated to serving the people, diligent and fair minded. It was a pleasure to appear before him in my capacity as district attorney. [Yes, Beth, in those days the District Attorney often appeared in the Justice Courts]. George performed the work of a judge with integrity, honesty and compassion for his fellowman. He has been firm where firmness was required and lenient when leniency was required, and he did it all with dignity, grace and good humor.

Over the years, George has been a strong supporter of judicial education programs, a mentor for new judges and an exemplar for those who would render impartial justice. He has been the glue that has held together the Columbia County Magistrates' Association, and during his presidential tenure with the organization, presented many interesting speakers, including me. George is the quintessential model for a local judge and justifies the aphorism that the courts closest to the people are the best. (Where does that leave my court?) His thirty years of devoted service, his personal qualities and his professionalism as a justice have earned him the title I now bestow upon him: Dean of Columbia County Magistrates.

On a personal note, Jackie and I want to publicly thank George and Joanne for the help they provided me over the years. When I ran in a hotly contested election for Supreme Court Justice, they were always there to help. When I sought appointment to the Federal Judiciary, they helped by writing letters in furtherance of my nomination and provided moral support as well. They can be pretty tenacious when they are trying to get something done. And when Ronald Reagan called me to offer the position I currently hold, I was tempted to say: "Did George Dixon put you up to this?" God Bless you both and may you have many more years of judicial service.

We are going to have numerous presentations this evening, but first I would like to answer a question that was posed to me this very evening: "Just what the hell is it that you do?"

AGE

When he was young, Colonel Sanders was just a Private.

I don't know how old he is, but his birth certificate is written in Roman numerals.

When he was young, the Dead Sea was only sick.

He looks the same as he did thirty years ago -- old.

There is nothing that he did then that he can't do now, which shows how bad he was then.

Frank Sinatra said that age is good for wine, compound interest and nothing else he could think of.

If he was a car, he would be hard to get parts for.

The years have been kind to him -- its the months and days in between that have kicked the hell out of him.

He picked up a frog who promised to turn into a princess if he kissed her; but he put her in his pocket and kept walking because he said that at his age he would rather have a talking frog.

He bought a waterbed to recall his youth; Joanne calls it the Dead Sea.

## JUDGES

[Gustave Brenke] -- Butch, bring the guilty man in. Shall I read der confession now? [Stubby Shadic] -- Bill of Peculiars; put you onto patrol.

[Hon. J. Wesley Thompson,] presiding -- none of your legal shenanigans.

You have been brought here for drinking. When do we start?

You have been up before me five times, what do you say? I don't know. What time do you get up!

You have faced me in court at least twice a year for the past ten years, what do you have to say? I can't help it if you're not promoted.

You've been brought here for arraignment on charges of burglary, robbery, felonious assault and grand larceny. What do you say? We is none of us perfect.

*God is my lawyer.*  
~~The Lord is my attorney.~~ Get someone locally.

On a case of Jones v. Smith, he would come down on the side of versus.

A lawyer asked for an adjournment because his client was in an accident in which he fell off a loading platform. The lawyer said that his client was hurt so bad that he couldn't have marital relations more than five times a week. Where's that loading platform?



A Testimonial for 30  
Years for JUSTICE FOR  
ALL!!

In honor of:

George C Dixon

Serving since:  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1973

At:

Kozels Restaurant  
April 25, 2003  
6:30pm

Music by:  
"The Overtones"

Paying tribute to:  
George C Dixon

Born in New York City on  
March 18, 1934. The oldest of  
five children

Joined the US Marine Corp in  
1951 and was discharged

Worked for the New York  
Central Railroad, which  
brought him to Chatham, NY  
in 1954

In 1960 he married Joanne  
Every (who has served for 29  
years as his court clerk).

From 1960 to 1970 George  
owned and operated the K&D  
Restaurant in Chatham. In  
1970 he went to work at  
Sterling Drug.

George was elected Chatham  
Village Justice in March 1973  
and then Ghent Town Justice  
in 1975.

George is member of the  
American Legion, Post 42,  
Ghent VFW, Post 5933,  
Chatham Fire Dept. and the  
Catskill Elks Lodge. He also  
portrayed Santa Claus for the  
children at the Ghent Town  
Hall.

Throughout the entire period of  
his community service, a  
period of constructive  
involvement, George C Dixon  
has stood constant in dignity,  
good grace and humor

George & Joanne are proud  
parents of five children, Kevin,

Ronald, Shari, Kelly & Corey  
and loving Grandparents to  
seven grandsons.

George C Dixon, throughout his  
life and career or purposeful  
endeavor, has remained true to  
his commitment, serving  
family, faith and community,  
as well as the law. His  
contributions and  
accomplishments have brought  
great benefit and positive  
influence to bear upon the  
course of jurisprudence and the  
quality of life for others.

Order of Business:

Master of Ceremonies: ✓  
Hon. Roger J Minor ✓  
Justice, US Court of Appeals  
2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit

Announcer: ✓  
Hon. David W. Harrison  
Town Justice for Town of Ghent

Pledge of Allegiance ✓

Dinner 7:15pm  
Roast Beef & Turkey (family style) 3  
hours of Beer, Wine & soda

Presenters:

Hon. Lawrence Andrews  
Town of Ghent Supervisor

Hon. Paul Boehme  
Village of Chatham Mayor

Hon. Thomas Dias  
1<sup>st</sup> VP NYS Magistrate Asso. ✓

Hon. Doris Appel  
President Col. Cty. Magistrates Assoc.

Hon. Stephen Saland  
NYS Senate, 41<sup>st</sup> District

Hon. Patrick Manning  
NYS Assembly, 103<sup>rd</sup> District

David W Harrison, Jr.  
Columbia Cty Undersheriff ✓

Robin Benziger, Captain  
NYS Police Zone 1 Commander

Harvey McCagg, Exe Director  
NYS Div. of Vertern Affairs, 3<sup>rd</sup> Dist.

Mary Spichalsky, President  
NYS Court Clerks Assoc