

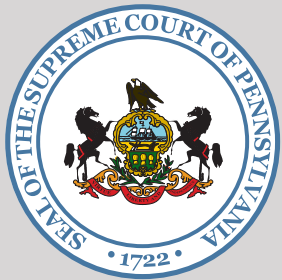
# Top 10 Interesting Facts About the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

The sixth chief justice of Pennsylvania, John Guest was the only justice in the Court's history to serve two separate terms as chief. After being commissioned by William Penn in 1701 to serve as chief justice on the provincial Pennsylvania Supreme Court, he served in that role until 1703 – and then again from 1705-1706. In between his two terms, Chief Justice William Clarke served as chief for one year in 1703 and Guest remained an associate justice on the Court.

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania was a prototype for the United States Supreme Court a half-century later. The link was James Wilson of Pennsylvania, a chief architect of the US Constitution (and its article) creating a federal judiciary, the first Professor of Law at UPenn, and also one of George Washington's first appointees to the US Supreme Court.



The Court's original justices sat in Philadelphia and travelled the Commonwealth on circuit hearing and deciding cases. Throughout the Commonwealth's history as many as five Supreme Court judicial districts were created. Eventually three judicial districts - Western, Middle, and Eastern - were settled upon and circuit duties were abandoned entirely.



The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania is the oldest court in the country.



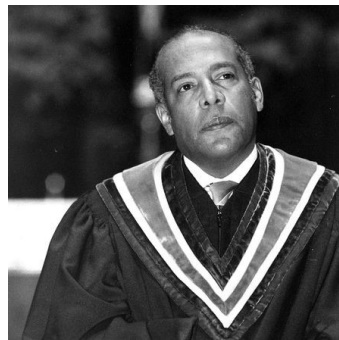
Chief Justice Thomas McKean (1777-1799), called "the father of the judicial system in Pennsylvania," was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, President of the Continental Congress and later Governor of Delaware.

The man who was supposed to serve as the first chief justice of Pennsylvania, William Crispin III, died at sea on his way to Pennsylvania less than two months after William Penn appointed him in 1681.

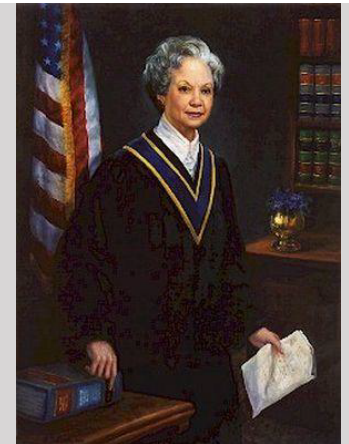


Appointed in 1961, Anne X. Alpern was the first woman to serve as a justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

The Judiciary Act of 1722 created a "Supream Court" with only three justices, who were required to be "of known Integrity and Ability."



Elected to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 1972, Robert N.C. Nix Jr. became the first African American chief justice to serve on any state supreme court in the country in 1984.



Juanita Kidd Stout was appointed in 1988 and became the first African American woman to serve as a justice of any high court in the country.

