

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS IN THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT, 2001

President: **Hon. Richard G. Kopf**

The Executive Board met in July 2001, during the Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. During the meeting, presidency of the Society was turned over to District Judge Richard G. Kopf. Thomas H. Boyd served as president of the Society during the first half of 2001. Frances Ross succeeded Judge Kopf as vice-president, and Circuit Librarian Ann Fessenden continued as secretary/treasurer.

The executive board completed several projects in preparation for the Judicial Conference. During the Conference, a display featuring Eighth Circuit Judicial Conferences from 1934-1970 was exhibited, and the Society's eighth newsletter was distributed. The Society also launched an internet website that provides electronic access to the Society's mission, directors, membership information, and newsletter. The website also includes a separate section for information on each branch.

The U.S. Courts Library has assumed an expanded role in the Society as it has taken over production of Judicial Conference displays, the newsletter, and created the website. The St. Louis library's new space in the Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse features an Archives Room dedicated to housing and preserving Eighth Circuit history. The library has added to its collection the donated Limbaugh rare books and the Blackmun collection of pictures and memorabilia, of which Circuit Librarian Ann Fessenden is curator. In addition, library staff worked with the Kiku Obata & Company to develop the Blackmun Rotunda in the Eagleton Courthouse.

Appeals

Professor Jeffrey Morris has largely completed the draft of an extensive written history of the Eighth Circuit. When completed, the branch will submit the manuscript to the University of Missouri Press. The branch has continued to co-sponsor the renewed John F. Dillon essay competition at the University of Iowa College of Law. This year's winner was Matthew D. Spohn for his paper, *Understanding America's Scenic Parks as Cultural Property*. The branch also prepared a preface to the Eighth Circuit Practice Manual, articles for the Society's newsletter, and material for the court of appeals section of the Society's website. The website material includes a short history of the Eighth Circuit and a judicial bibliography.

Arkansas Eastern and Western

The Eastern and Western Districts of Arkansas are participating in a joint project to gather biographical essays on U.S. district judges of Arkansas who assumed the bench between 1836 and 1960. Thirteen of the sixteen essays were completed by July 2001. When all essays are completed, the project will be submitted for publication. A group picture was taken of Western District Judges Jimm L. Hendren (chief judge), Harry F. Barnes, Robert T. Dawson, and H. Franklin Waters, and hung in each of the district's courthouses. On

August 2, 2001, the federal courthouse in Harrison, Arkansas, was named for Circuit Judge J. Smith Henley.

Iowa Northern

Senior District Judge Donald E. O'Brien has completed a draft history of the Northern District.

Minnesota

The branch is working on a series of projects: standardizing practice among judges regarding preservation of their papers; preparing information for the court's website; and planning a judicial milestone exhibit. GSA acquired funding to renovate the courthouse in Fergus Falls, and the branch will help insure that it is completed with historical accuracy. Oral histories on all newer judges have been completed.

Missouri Eastern

The Eastern District moved to the new Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse in January, 2001. Plans to videotape the senior judges have been on hold due to the move. The branch expects the courthouse learning center to be open within two years. Non-appropriated funds are being used for the center, which is a not-for-profit corporation. The new courthouse has several permanent displays. The Blackmun Rotunda on the 27th floor is dedicated to the memory and legacy of Justice Harry A. Blackmun. Senior District Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh and his family donated a collection of rare legal treatises which is on display in the U.S. Courts Library's Archives Room. John Steuart Curry's mural studies depicting historical themes, donated by Senator Thomas F. Eagleton, are on display on the third floor. The southern alcove of the first floor holds the Eagleton Display, honoring the Senator for whom the courthouse is named. Senior District Judge Edward L. Filippine took part in the creation of a 17-minute film on the courthouse construction project, which was debuted during the court of appeals en banc dedication of the Blackmun Rotunda on July 11, 2001.

Missouri Western

The branch's objective is to have a learning center similar to that planned for St. Louis, but a more definite plan is needed before soliciting funds from the bar may begin.

Nebraska

The official history of the District of Nebraska from 1863 through 1971 is being prepared by Professor John R. Wunder. Research should be finished by summer 2002. Since membership has dropped, the Nebraska branch plans to bolster funds by sponsoring a signing of the history when published, most likely by the University of Nebraska Press.

North Dakota

Ardell Tharaldson, law clerk to Senior District Judge Patrick A. Conmy, is nearing completion of a written history that will be published and sold in the state museum. On August 6, 2001, the Grand Forks courthouse was renamed the Ronald N. Davies Federal Building and U. S. Courthouse.

South Dakota

Senior District Judge John Bailey Jones' secretary, Peggy Teslow, has organized a display of pictures and memorabilia.

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