

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS IN THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT

President: **Frances Ross**

In 2008 the Historical Society welcomed three new directors: Hon. H. David Young (Eastern Arkansas), Cheryl Heilman (Minnesota), and Jeanette Stull (Nebraska).

The executive committee met four times via conference call, and the full board met at the Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference in Chicago. The Historical Society sponsored an exhibit at the conference featuring three displays prepared by the U.S. Courts Library: The Dred Scott Decision: 150th Anniversary, 1857-2007; Little Rock Integration Crisis: 50th Anniversary; and *Empire in the Grasslands: The Eighth Circuit Before 1891*. The *Empire* display was made in honor of the recently published Eighth Circuit history, *Establishing Justice in Middle America: A History of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit*.

At the Judicial Conference, the Society awarded the Judge Donald P. Lay Award of Special Merit to Tom Boyd for his dedication to the Society and, in particular, his stewardship of the project that resulted in the publication of the Eighth Circuit history. Mr. Boyd was presented with a crystal gavel and a granite base as a part of that recognition.

Court of Appeals

With the circuit history released in December 2007, Mr. Boyd made arrangements with the Executive Committee and the Circuit Executive to distribute complimentary copies to all Eighth Circuit federal judges, as well as the attorneys and others who attended the Judicial Conference in Chicago. Jeffrey Brandon Morris, author of *Establishing Justice in Middle America*, spoke to the Judicial Conference about his book. The author also participated in a panel discussion with Judges Bright and Melloy and Tom Boyd about the book and the history of the Court of Appeals.

Arkansas Eastern

Biographical essays of Arkansas' federal judges of the Eastern and Western Districts for the period 1836 to 1960 have been submitted to a publisher for consideration. Also, biographical sketches of Eastern District judges are being prepared to display in the courthouse with portraits of the judges.

Arkansas Western

The branch hopes to be involved in the development of the U.S. Marshal Museum that will be built in Fort Smith.

Iowa Northern

Directors Chief Judge Linda Reade and Leonard Strand have successfully reactivated the branch. A kickoff event was held, with assistance from Richard Lyford, on April 18 in Cedar Rapids, drawing 20 to 30 attendees. At a meeting on August 22, 2008, branch bylaws were adopted and officers elected. The group discussed potential projects, including research

into significant cases and interviews of district and appellate judges. Another meeting was held on October 31, 2008, to hear David McCartney, Archivist for the University of Iowa Libraries, speak on methods of collecting and presenting historical artifacts and information. The branch will next meet on January 30, 2009.

Iowa Southern

The branch completed the oral history of Judge Fagg and a display outside the main courtroom in Des Moines on the history of jury service and Supreme Court cases originating from the district. Work has begun on Judge Longstaff's oral history. The branch is assisting with a timeline display for the Iowa State Bar Association's new building, and Richard Lyford is also preparing oral histories of former Iowa Supreme Court justices.

Minnesota

The branch continued cataloging materials in the Minneapolis Courthouse history room and identifying historical photos for preservation. In May 2008, the branch participated in the Sesquicentennial celebration of Minnesota by arranging for re-enactors to portray Rensselaer R. Nelson, Minnesota's first federal judge, and John B. Sanborn, the first native Minnesotan appointed to the federal bench. The branch also revised the district's history brochure, made a presentation on the district's historic and modern courthouses, and arranged a videotaped panel discussion of reflections by Senior District Court Judges Alsop, Doty, and Magnuson, moderated by Chief Judge Rosenbaum.

Missouri Eastern

In the branch's project to publish a written history of the district, five chapters have been drafted by Burton Boxerman. The branch worked with Southeast Missouri State University's video department to complete three of its planned six oral histories: Judges Hungate, Nangle, and Filippine. The branch produced a list of 17 important cases and is working on production of four of them for the Judicial Learning Center in the Eagleton Courthouse. Plans are underway to interview Judges Stohr, Webster, and Limbaugh Sr.

Missouri Western

Under the leadership of Chief Judge Gaitan and Paul Donnelly the branch has been energized, reaching a membership of nearly 100, and has launched a successful series of speakers, including Judge William Wilson of Little Rock and attorney Murray Gartner. A luncheon was held in honor of the publication of Judge Wright's book, *Never in Doubt: Memoirs of an Uncommon Judge*. The district's U.S. Attorney's Office is working on its history and interviewed former U.S. Attorney and retired Magistrate Judge Calvin Hamilton. The branch hosted a lecture on U.S. Attorney Maurice Milligan who prosecuted Kansas City boss Tom Pendergast. The branch is also working on funding a permanent display for the Kansas City courthouse.

Nebraska

The branch continues work on a written history of the district. Due to the poor health of the author originally hired, Professor John Wunder, a second author, Professor Mark Scherer, was brought on board. The branch met with both authors in June, and progress on the draft is being made.

North Dakota

The branch is making or upgrading displays to honor Judge Bruce Van Sickle in the Minot courthouse and Judge Ronald Davies in the Grand Forks courthouse. They are also archiving materials of family members and working on the oral histories of Judges Patrick Conmy and Rodney Webb.

South Dakota

The branch will interview Judge Charles Kornmann, who recently took senior status.

2007 - 2009 Board of Directors

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