

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS IN THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT

President: **F. Richard Lyford**

In 2018, the Historical Society executive committee met four times via conference call and continued working with the Appeals branch on its oral history project. During the biennial board meeting, held at the 2018 Judicial Conference in Des Moines, President F. Richard Lyford, Vice President Frances Ross, Treasurer Sheila Greenbaum, and Secretary Joan Voelker were reelected for the 2018-2020 term. The board also approved Omaha attorney Nick Batter as the first Assistant Vice President and an amendment to the Western District of Missouri branch regulations. At the conference, the Society displayed recently published judicial biographies and court histories and two exhibits, *120 Years of Judicial Legacy: Iowa's Eighth Circuit Judges 1869-1989* and *U.S. District Judge G. Thomas Eisele*.

Court of Appeals

The branch collaborated with the executive committee on its oral history project to obtain interviews of the circuit judges who will have reached age 70 by 2021. The interviews of Judges James Loken, Michael Melloy, Duane Benton, and Bobby Shepherd are in the planning stage. The branch has continued to make regular contributions to the Eighth Circuit Bar Association's newsletter and plans to prepare short biographical sketches of the Eighth Circuit judges whose portraits are located in St. Paul's federal courthouse, a project that could extend to circuit portraits in St. Louis' federal courthouse and throughout the circuit.

Iowa Northern

Judge C.J. Williams and Cedar Rapids branch librarian Hilary Naab are updating the court's 2002 history, and Judge Jon Scoles' oral history interview is being planned. The branch intends to update the Cedar Rapids Courthouse History Center, create a mobile history display in the Sioux City Courthouse, and improve the historical presence on the court's website.

Iowa Southern

The branch published a second edition of the district's history in time for the Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference. This update to the 1995 history by George Mills and Magistrate Judge Richard Peterson was authored by Aaron Rogers and Margaret Callahan. The interviews of Judges Michael Melloy, James Gritzner, and Robert Pratt are in the planning stage.

Minnesota

The branch continues to record oral histories for its Portraits of Justice program and has developed a standard set of uniform questions. The court commissioned the portraits of deceased Judges Gunnar Nordbye, Philip Neville, Dennis Donovan, and Robert Bell, assisted by the branch, and held the unveiling ceremony for Judge Nordbye's portrait. Work continues on full length histories of the court. Paul Nelson has drafted two chapters

on the judges and cases, and Steve Flanders is making progress on writing and compiling images about the places the court has sat, as well as a complimentary book that will focus more on the visual aspects of the court's presence in Minnesota.

Missouri Eastern

Judge Carol Jackson's oral history interview, conducted by Judge Stephen Limbaugh, Jr., has been completed and is accessible in the Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse Learning Center. Filming has been completed in *Schlup v. Delo*, one of the district's most significant cases. Research has been completed in the case of *Albrecht v. Herald Company*, and filming is scheduled to be completed later this year.

Missouri Western

The branch retained former *Kansas City Star* reporter Mark Morris to conduct the oral history interviews of the district's six senior judges and carried out four more programs in its successful speaker series: 1) Attorney and author Gillian Thomas spoke on her book, *Because of Sex*, which discusses key cases involving gender discrimination and women's rights in the workplace; 2) Bill Colby, who represented Nancy Cruzan's family, and former Missouri Supreme Court Justice Chip Robertson discussed the Cruzan "Right To Die" case; 3) Joan Biskupic, a nationally-recognized authority on the Supreme Court, and David Von Drehle, columnist for *The Washington Post*, discussed "The Supreme Court in the Age of President Trump"; and 4) Don Fehr, former head of the Major League Baseball Players Association, spoke on the Andy Messersmith case and free agency in baseball and other professional sports. The branch also amended its regulations to reflect its operation as a self-perpetuating board of directors rather than a member-elected board.

Nebraska

A history of the district entitled *Echo of Its Time: The History of the Federal District Court of Nebraska, 1867-1933*, by John R. Wunder and Mark R. Scherer, is slated for publication by the University of Nebraska Press in February 2019. The district unveiled the restored portraits of Judge Joseph Woodrough, Justice Samuel Miller, and Judge Elmer Dundy in Omaha's federal courthouse during an event that included presentations on the district's history by Professors Wunder and Scherer and Assistant Vice President Nick Batter.

North Dakota

The branch worked to preserve historical architecture and fixtures during remodeling projects of courtrooms at Minot and Grand Forks. In consultation with North Dakota State Historical Society and GSA, original light fixtures were renovated and repurposed in the courthouses. The branch also continues to collect courtroom and chambers artifacts.

South Dakota

Efforts to engage interviewers for Judges Lawrence Piersol and Charles Kornmann's oral histories continue. The branch intends to update the court history published in the 1990s and has surveyed the district's courthouse walls for space to hang portraits of its judges. The branch has no funds.

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as of December 31, 2018

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