

Society Update

from the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society — Fall 2000

Two Former Chief Justices Honored by State Bar

Dorothy Comstock Riley Receives Distinguished Public Service Award

with the 2000 Distinguished Public Service Award during the Bar's 65th Annual Meeting. The award was presented during the Wednesday, September 20 luncheon at the Cobo Center in downtown Detroit.

This award recognizes extraordinary governmental service by a member of the State Bar of Michigan. Criteria for the award include being a present or former member of the State Bar of Michigan; service in public office in a way that strengthens the American system of justice under the law; demonstration of the highest standards of integrity, fairness, leadership, excellence, dedication to principle and dedication to the ideals of democracy; and a significant lasting contribution to the nation, the state or the community in which the public servant lives or serves.

Justice Riley has devoted the bulk of her professional career to public service, having served for 20 years at all levels of the Michigan judiciary. She is a former Michigan Supreme Court Justice and Chief Justice, has served as a judge of the Wayne County Circuit Court, and as a judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals. She has served the Supreme Court and the people of Michigan as an exemplary leader.

Her success as a legal scholar and administrator were due in part to her personal integrity and to her belief that the judiciary should be a model of integrity to those it serves.



Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley (center) receives her award from State Bar President Alfred M. Butzbaugh (left) while husband Wallace D. Riley looks on (right).

Legal Milestone to be Dedicated in Honor of Mary Stallings Coleman

Former Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Coleman will be honored on Friday, October 20, 2000 when the State Bar of Michigan dedicates its 28th Michigan Legal Milestone, "Mary Coleman: Pioneer, Advocate, Woman." The milestone commemorates her life, career, and achievements.

Mary Coleman's life and career have made a lasting impact on Michigan's judicial system. Her success in the profession, her devotion to juvenile justice issues, and her work on the advancement of court reorganization are just a few examples of her many accomplishments.

In 1972, Mary became the first woman to serve as a member of the Michigan Supreme Court. In 1979, she was the first woman elected by her peers on the court to serve as its Chief Justice, a position to which she was re-elected for another two-year term.

Mary Coleman will be commemorated in a ceremony sponsored by the State Bar in conjunction with the Calhoun County Bar Association with the unveiling of a permanent plaque at the courthouse in Battle Creek. (Time and featured speakers to be announced by the State Bar of Michigan. Call 517-346-6300 for details.)

The State Bar of Michigan honored former Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley

Read more about Justices Coleman and Riley – as well as 98 other past and present Justices – in the *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide*. See page 4 for ordering details.



Official court portrait of Mary Stallings Coleman by artist Joseph Maniscalco of Detroit. The portrait currently hangs in the Court's Lansing courtroom.

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Society Bids Farewell to Executive Director, Welcomes New Director

Due to her husband's recent transfer out of state, Society executive director Jill Wright recently announced her resignation, effective September 30. Jill, her husband, Phil, and their new daughter, Lauren (born July 22), are relocating to Southern California.



Jill Wright, departing director.

“Professionally speaking,” Jill says, “the two years I’ve been with the Society have been the best two years of my career. The work was stimulating, the members enthusiastic, and the board of directors are an extremely committed group. I want to thank Society president Wallace D. Riley for giving me the opportunity to serve with the Society.”

A new executive director has been selected and has been training with Jill since September 1. Angela Bergman officially takes hold of the Society’s reigns on October 1, 2000.

A Montana native, Angela was graduated with honors from Montana State University in 1996 with a B.A. in English, a minor in psychology, and a secondary teaching certification. While in college, Angela worked as an editorial assistant for a Montana publication.

She moved to Idaho a few months after graduation and sold advertising for a local newspaper until she landed her first teaching job in 1997.

Angela taught English and psychology at two different high schools in Idaho. At Raft River High School, she taught British literature to seniors, a survey of literature to sophomores, and a section of psychology. She also coached the junior varsity basketball team, which went

18-2 for the season. At Burley High School, she taught British literature to seniors, honors English to sophomores, and served as assistant varsity basketball coach, where she helped take the team to the state tournament.

Angela came to Michigan in 1999 and accepted a position with the State Bar as assistant editor of the *Michigan Bar Journal* and administrator in the publications department.

During her tenure as *Michigan Bar Journal* assistant editor, Angela organized and coordinated the production of the Journal on a monthly basis, wrote a monthly column about staff members, helped develop and supervise improvements to the State Bar web site, played an instrumental role in getting the Journal on-line, and worked closely with Advisory Board members in the production of theme issues.



Angela Bergman, new executive director.

About her new role as executive director, Angela says, “I am very excited about this opportunity to apply my editorial and organizational skills, plus my background in education, to further developing the Society’s programs. The Society is a rich resource for Michigan’s judicial history, and I plan to expand our existing programs, possibly develop some new ones, and get the word out around Michigan.”

Angela and her husband, Mike, are the proud parents of two Labrador dogs: Lakota and Echo. In her spare time, Angela continues to officiate high school basketball games, teaches aerobics and kickboxing, and spends time in the outdoors.

Chief Justice Weaver Delivers State of the Judiciary Address

Chief Justice Elizabeth A. Weaver highlighted the state court system's progress in improving court services to citizens on September 28 in the first state of the judiciary address since October 1997.

The Chief Justice addressed a joint session of the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives at noon in the House Chambers in the Capitol Building. The speech was carried live by Michigan Government Television.

"There have been many positive developments in the management of the appellate and trial courts that the Legislature and the public should know about," Chief Justice Weaver said. "At the same time, there are important things that still need to be done."

"I want those in state and local government, and our citizens, to know that we in the judiciary appreciate their support for our efforts to improve court services. We will need their continued support to get the job done," the Chief Justice said.

Chief Justice Weaver announced the first courts to participate in a new Supreme Court program to foster innovation in trial court services to the public. She also unveiled a new initiative to improve guardian-

ship and conservatorship services to adults who need them.

The speech addressed the need to improve public safety by electronically linking the courts and agencies that rely on the fast, efficient transmission of court data for law enforcement purposes. It also addressed the need to complete the family division of circuit court.

Chief Justice Weaver was elected to the Supreme Court in 1994. Her colleagues on the Court elected her chief justice in January 1999.

MSC Opening Session Scheduled

The 2000 Opening Session of the Michigan Supreme Court is scheduled for Tuesday, October 10, 2000 at 9:30 a.m. It will be held in the historic old Supreme Court chambers, located on the second floor of the Capitol building in Lansing. Society President Wallace D. Riley will deliver his annual update on Society activities as well as a preview of what's in store for 2001.

Hall of Justice Update

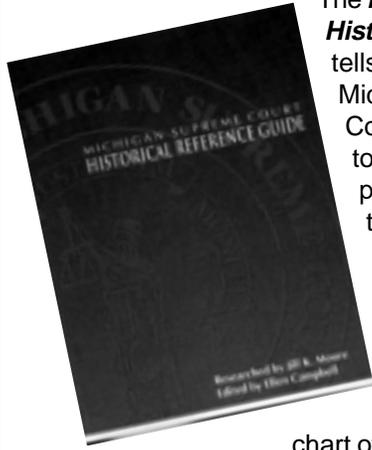
Approved by the Legislature in 1998, the Hall of Justice will consolidate the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals (Lansing office) and State Court Administrative Office into one functional, state-owned facility. These entities now occupy state office and leased space in several downtown Lansing locations. The six-story building, to be located at the corner of Ottawa and Butler west of the Capitol Building, will include, in approximately 280,000 square feet, two courtrooms, centralized administrative offices, a first-floor public education center and a 460-space parking structure. Expected date of completion is Fall 2002. More information on

the Hall of Justice construction is available on the web at WWW.MIHALLOFJUSTICE.COM, or at 517-373-0129.



An artist's rendering of the Hall of Justice, view from front.

Order the *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide*



The *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide* tells the stories of each of Michigan's first 100 Supreme Court Justices, from 1805 to 1998. Illustrated with photos of each Justice, this fascinating, 273-page volume also contains an index of special sessions of the Michigan Supreme Court, sorted both by honorees and speakers, as well as a factual chart of the Court by years, which

lists the Court's composition for each year since 1805.

Call 517-346-6419 to order your copy!

Mission Statement

The Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to preserving documents, records and memorabilia relating to the Michigan Supreme Court. The Society produces publications, special events and other projects to achieve its goals in education and restoration. Current officers and directors are:

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