

Society Hosts 17th Annual Membership Luncheon

On Thursday, April 24, the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society hosted its 17th annual membership luncheon. At the luncheon, guests were entertained by the musical group A Habeas Chorus Line. Chief Justice Taylor and Society President Wallace D. Riley addressed the meeting.

In honor of the Society’s 20-Year Anniversary, Mr. Riley’s remarks focused on the history of the Society and its activities over the past 20 years. He remarked:

It is hard to believe that the Historical Society is entering its 20th year. As we look back over the past two decades, we are pleased and proud of the work the Society has completed and the role that it has come to play in preserving the history of the Court. I’m sure that Dorothy also would be proud.

The Historical Society was incorporated in April of 1988. Then-Chief Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley recognized the need for an entity separate from the Court to collect, preserve, and record its history. She suggested the creation of the Society and invited me to undertake its formation. With the help of many others and the continuous approval of the justices, we have managed to flourish and I have been proud to serve as President.

Mr. Riley noted the Society’s many achievements and projects and thanked the Society’s members for their ongoing support. He also thanked the members of the Board of Directors, stating:

While our organization could not survive without our members, we would be equally lost without the dedication and leadership of the men and women who volunteer their time to serve on our Board of Directors. Over the past 20 years, 57 individuals have served on the Board, including the two newest additions to our 24 member board, Matthew Carl Herstein and Steven K. Valentine, Jr.

Finally, Mr. Riley presented Professor John W. Reed with the 2008 Legal History Award.

This brings me to the conclusion of the program, with the best for last. In January, the Board voted unanimously to honor Professor John Wesley Reed with the Legal History Award. The Award was created in 2002 to recognize individuals who have greatly impacted Michigan’s legal history through support of the Society and its efforts, or through their work in the law – John qualifies on all accounts.

Besides me, he is the only original board member remaining on the Board today. For the past 20 years, the Society has enjoyed the benefit of his wisdom, wit, guidance, and enthusiasm for law and legal history.

John’s biography on the University of Michigan Law School’s website states that in addition to his decades of service on the Michigan faculty, during which he was repeatedly honored by his students for teaching excellence, he has served as dean at the University of Colorado and, in retirement, as dean at Wayne State University School of Law. His visiting

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teaching appointments have included Harvard, Yale, Chicago, and NYU, among others.

But John's outstanding bio is not the only reason that he deserves this honor. We honor him for his contribution to the Michigan legal system in general.

We honor him for his 60 plus years of educating aspiring law students. John came to the University of Michigan Law School in the fall of 1949, and as a member of the entering class of 1952, I was one of his first students in evidence.

We honor him for his commitment to ensuring that practicing attorneys receive continuing legal education that enables them to practice law more effectively, and

perhaps most importantly of all, we honor him for his passion for the legal profession and his constant

pursuit of dignity in the practice of the law.

In his 60 plus year of teaching and lawyering, John has been a prolific writer and speaker. And much of what he has written and spoken to audiences such as this has been about maintaining respect and dignity in the legal profession. We honor him for that. But you should know that had he been mute, we would still honor him for exemplifying those exact qualities throughout his professional life.

John, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, we present you with the 2008 Legal History Award.



Mr. Riley presents the Legal History Award to John Reed.

Society Welcomes New Board Members

At the April 24 board meeting, the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society elected two new board members:

Matthew C. Herstein and Stephen K. Valentine, Jr.

Matthew C. Herstein attended the University of Michigan, where his undergraduate major was history. Mr. Herstein graduated with



honors from the College of Law at the University of Nebraska, where he was the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards. He was also a partici-

pant in the University of Nebraska College of Law's Moot Court.

Mr. Herstein currently practices law at Deneweth, Dugan & Parfitt, P.C., where his primary focus is construction law, surety law and litigation.

He resides in Royal Oak with his wife Reena.

Stephen K. Valentine, Jr., is a principal of Valentine & Associates, P.C. Since 1967, he has been heavily involved in representing sales agents (both independent and in-house direct employees), brokers and distributors. Areas of involvement include contract negotiation, employment law, litigation to recover commissions, and other distinct matters. He is an internationally recognized expert in these areas.

Mr. Valentine has briefed cases and appeared in numerous courts in

the United States, including the United States Supreme Court, Michigan Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, Michigan and California Courts of Appeal, as well as other state and federal trial courts and other tribunals. He is a member of the State Bar of Michigan and the Florida Bar.

He is active in numerous private and charitable organizations and has served on the Board of Directors of several corporations, and the Southeast Michigan Chapter of the March of Dimes, where he was Co-Chair of the Public Committee and Chaired the Honoree Ball Committee.

Mr. Herstein and Mr. Valentine were each elected to three-year terms expiring 2011.

Chief Justice Taylor Addresses Luncheon

First, I would point out my fellow Justices who have joined us today, and I would ask them to stand and be recognized: Marilyn Kelly, Maura Corrigan, Bob Young, and Steve Markman. Mike Cavanagh and Betty Weaver are unfortunately not able to be here because of other commitments.

The British author G. K. Chesterton once wrote, “When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.” Today we recall, with gratitude, the work of Dorothy and Wally Riley, and their foresight in founding the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society 20 years ago. The video that we saw during the reception reminds us of all the Society has done to preserve the Court’s history and heritage, and of all that would otherwise have been lost.

The preservation of our history is both more necessary and more challenging, given the ever-accelerating pace of events. Twenty years is only a blink of the eye, yet the last two decades have seen enormous changes. Consider that in 1988:

- CDs outsold vinyl for the first time ever.
- The Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan.
- There was a Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall still stood.
- A new medication, Prozac, was introduced as an anti-depressant and quickly became the market leader for treating depression.
- Also in 1988, a new drug, crack, appeared and became a concern for law enforcement.
- The first major computer virus infected computers connected to the Internet.
- Benazir Bhutto became the first woman to head an Islamic nation.
- Mike Dukakis lost the 1988 presidential election to George Herbert Walker Bush.
- The Dow Jones closed for the year at 2168.

- A movie ticket cost \$3.50.
- A first-class postage stamp cost 24 cents.
- And – the average gallon of gas cost 91 cents.

Obviously, much has changed since then, both for good and for ill. Personally, I shudder to think what gas will cost another 20 years hence. And yet one challenge remains constant: making sense of,

and responding to, the events that come at us with lightning speed. This is why we need,

“The preservation of our history is both more necessary and more challenging, given the ever-accelerating pace of events.”

more than ever, to be students of history, particularly our own. That is why the society is so valuable; we see the current Court, its responsibilities and challenges, more clearly, more objectively, when viewed in the light of its past.

While we celebrate the society’s first 20 years, and its achievements which Wally will shortly describe, we also do well to remember the friends who are no longer with us, including our much-beloved and much-missed Dorothy. In March Terry Boyle, the beloved husband



of my former colleague Justice Patricia Boyle, died of cancer; in November of last year, Jim Ryan lost his dear wife Mary. Those of us who had the pleasure of knowing these vibrant, vital human beings are finding it hard to believe that they are gone. But equally, with Mary, with Terry, Dorothy, Mary Coleman and Jim Brickley and so many others, we learn that they continue to have an enormous influence on us and to be very real presences in our lives. That is a gift and we should be grateful for it even as we mourn their loss.

Images from the 17th Annual Membership Luncheon



Thursday, April 24, 2008 — Detroit Athletic Club



Pictured: (1) Ken Mattson, Society board member Christine D. Oldani and Kristen Nitschke (2) Dennis Kolenda, John L. Coté, Justice Marilyn Kelly, Hon. Roman S. Gribbs, and Hon. Joseph M. Impastato (3) Justice Kelly dines with luncheon guests (4) A Habeas Chorus Line performs during the luncheon (5) Paul DeRossier, Society board member Mary Massaron Ross, Paul White, and another luncheon guest (6) Chief Justice Taylor and Hon. William Giovan (7) Members and guests await the start of the luncheon (8) Society President Wallace Riley and Society Executive Director Angela Bergman pose near the 20th Anniversary video screen (9) Edward H. Pappas, Society board member Hon. Wendy L. Potts, Marilyn Keefe and Society board members Ronald Keefe and Hon. Alfred Butzbaugh (10) Society board members Matthew Herstein, Charles Rutherford, and John Reed with Dean S. Lewis (11) David Sparrow, Society board member Hon. Avern Cohn, and Gerald Fisher (12) Hon. John Feikens and Justice Maura Corrigan (13) Justice Markman poses with Society board members Hon. Wendy Potts (right front), Charles L. Levin (right back) and others (14) Former Justices Boyle and Levin and Justice Young join other Society guests

Have you paid your 2008 Dues?

For your convenience, the Society accepts Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. Please call (517) 373-7589 to make your payment by phone, complete and mail or fax the following information to the Society, or pay on-line at <http://www.micourthistory.org/membership.php>

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Mission Statement

The Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, collects, preserves and displays documents, records, and memorabilia relating to the Michigan Supreme Court and the other Courts of Michigan, promotes the study of the history of Michigan's courts, and seeks to increase public awareness of Michigan's legal heritage. The Society sponsors and conducts historical research, provides speakers and educational materials for students, and sponsors and provides publications, portraits and memorials, special events and projects consistent with its mission.

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