A Message from the Society President:
A Look Back at 2007

As 2008 gets underway with bitter cold and winter storms, I pause to reflect not only on the busy year the Society had in 2007, but also on the progress we’ve made and the projects we’ve completed over the past 20 years. April 2008 will mark the 20-year anniversary of the creation of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, and I’m looking forward to honoring that occasion with you at our Annual Membership Luncheon. But enough looking ahead – let’s take a look back at the work we’ve completed over the past year.

Special Events
It was business as usual at the Detroit Athletic Club last April, when nearly 150 of our members and friends joined the Society and the Court for the 2007 Annual Membership Luncheon. Professor Paul Carrington, of Duke University School of Law spoke about Thomas M. Cooley and his illustrious career.

In July, the Historical Society assisted in planning a program for the Conference of Chief Justices on Mackinac Island and has since offered materials and support to two other state courts considering the creation of historical societies.

On October 1, the night before the Court’s opening session, the executive board of our newly created Advocates Guild hosted the first annual Advocates Guild Dinner in the 6th floor rotunda at the Hall of Justice. There, members of the Advocates Guild enjoyed a reception and dinner with members of the Court. The following morning, I once again participated in the Court’s opening session, reporting to the Court on the Society’s recent activities.

Archives and Oral Histories
Over the summer oral historian Judy Christie completed and transcribed the oral history of Erwin Simon. Simon is a former clerk of Justice Henry M. Butzel, and also his son-in-law. The transcript will be made available on our website in 2008.

The Society continues to maintain an inventory of the Court’s collection of portraits, which now numbers 87 and to inspect and evaluate them annually.

Research and Projects
Thanks in part to a grant from the Michigan Humanities Council, two Michigan educators, Brian Stevens and Cassandra Heos, spent the summer working with our Executive Director to create the Verdict of History lesson plans, which provides high school teachers with lesson plans and mini-moot court activities dealing with some of the Michigan Supreme Court’s significant cases. These lesson plans were unveiled at the Center for Civic Education Through Law’s annual teacher conference in December. The plans will also be made available at no charge to teachers through other conferences and on-line.

The Significant Cases Committee continues to work with Professor Paul Moreno to complete the second part of the Verdict of History project – publication of a list of
some of the Michigan Supreme Court’s significant cases and articles discussing the cases and their impact on Michigan citizens.

Additionally, the 2007 Coleman Intern, Laura Langolf, completed projects listing all of the former Court clerks and commissioners and their dates of service.

**Membership**

Thanks to the creation of the Advocates Guild, approximately 50 new attorneys joined the Historical Society in 2007. As our long-standing members continue to reach life members status, recruiting new members to support the Society is becoming increasingly important.

**Board of Directors**

Our Board of Directors met three times over the past year to conduct the business of the Society. In April, we elected one new director, Scott S. Brinkmeyer, to the board. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all members of our board for their hard work and their dedication to our mission.

I also want to thank you, our loyal members, for your participation and support over the past year. We look forward to continuing to pursue our mission and to bringing the history of the Court to the citizens of the state.

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**Save the Date!**

Join the Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court and Fellow Society Members at the Annual Membership Luncheon

Thursday, April 24, 2008 -- Noon at The Detroit Athletic Club
Detroit, Michigan

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**2007 Board of Directors**

Left to Right (Back Row) Richard D. Reed, Scott S. Brinkmeyer, Hon. Alfred M. Butzbaugh, Hon. Charles L. Levin, Michael Murray, and Frederick G. Buesser, III (Vice President)

(Middle Row) John W. Reed, Christine D. Oldani, Mary Massaron Ross, Janet K. Welch, Ronald D. Keefe, Eugene D. Mossner, Hon. Michael G. Harrison, and Lawrence P. Nolan (Treasurer)

(Front Row) Charles R. Rutherford, Carl W. Herstein (Secretary), Wallace D. Riley (President), Hon. Avern L. Cohn, and Frank J. Kelley

Not Pictured: Lawrence G. Campbell, Hon. Conrad L. Mallett, Jr., Hon. Denise Langford Morris, and Hon. Wendy L. Potts

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**Special Thanks to Our 2008 Corporate/Law Firm Members**

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Can't Wait for 2008:
A Message from the Executive Director

It’s hard to believe that I have now been the Executive Director of the Historical Society for over seven years. I continue to be honored to be working with this wonderful organization and our outstanding board members.

2008 will be a special year for the Society as we will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary. I am looking forward to making 2008 one of our most successful years yet.

Publications and Website

This year, the Society will continue to distribute our existing publications and to create and distribute our newsletters.

I am very excited to be overseeing a redesign of the Historical Society’s website. The new site will feature many new elements and will be up and running before our April membership luncheon.

Annual Membership Luncheon

This year’s Luncheon will be a celebration of the Society’s 20-year anniversary. The program will feature a look back over the many projects and programs in which the Society has been involved since its creation.

We will also be honoring one of our original board members, John W. Reed, with the Legal History Award.

Education

The Verdict of History teaching units are officially complete – now we’ll focus on getting them to teachers. We are planning to present the lessons at the Learning Center’s teacher conference and will be publicizing their availability to high school teachers around the state.

Coleman Internship

I am very pleased to welcome this year’s Coleman Intern, Brittany West, to the staff. Brittany is a senior at Michigan State University, majoring in English. She is an honor student and a member of James Madison College.

Brittany will be working with me to find supporting materials and images to accompany our Verdict of History articles and to edit the articles and prepare them for publication and distribution.

Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center Update

In October 2007, the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center celebrated five years of educating the public about the important role that the law plays in the everyday lives of citizens.

Since its gala opening, the Learning Center has welcomed more than 55,000 visitors. The majority of tour groups continue to be civics students from Michigan, but visitors from around the world learn about our court system at the Learning Center. In the past six months visitors have traveled from as far away as Germany, Ukraine, China, and Nepal.

With the generous support of the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center Fund, the Learning Center continues to update exhibits and offer educational programs.

In the coming months, the Learning Center will host several programs, including:
- Law Day (May 1)
- Exploring Careers in the Law, 10th–12th grades (June 23–27)
- Exploring Careers in the Law, 7th–9th grades (July 14–18)
- One Court of Justice Educator Workshop (August 19)

If you would like to schedule a tour or know of anyone who would like to participate in special programs at the Learning Center, visit http://courts.mi.gov/plc/ or contact Rachael L. Drenovsky, Learning Center Coordinator, at 517-373-5027 or drenovskyr@courts.mi.gov for more information.
### Membership Roster

The Society groups its members into three categories: Life Members, which includes the categories of Benefactor, Major Sponsor, and Sponsor; Annual Members, containing the categories of Contributing, Sustaining, Patron, and Student; and Corporate/Law Firm Members. The year listed after each member’s name indicates the year he/she joined the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society.

#### Life Members

**Benefactor**

$\text{Over } \$5,000$

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- Thomas E. Brennan, 1988
- Patricia Hill Burnett, 2006
- Avern L. Cohn, 1989
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- Robert P. Young, 1999

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$\$2500 - $4900$

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#### Memorial/Honorarium Donations

- **In honor of Charles R. Rutherford**, Adam Strauss
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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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