

2003 Coleman Intern Completes Women and the Law Project

2003 Coleman Intern Allyson Miller completed her term with the Society in August. Over the course of the summer, she worked on several projects, including the Women and the Law project. The result of her hard work is a series of pages on our website that include the biographies of 19 Michigan women. In addition, Allyson created a PowerPoint presentation that can be used by teachers and lecturers and is available by contacting Angela Bergman at 517-373-7589.

While the list may not be comprehensive, it focuses on women who stand out as champions of Michigan women, were trendsetters in the law, were “firsts” in their field, and are role models for aspiring young women.

The purpose of the Women and the Law project was to acknowledge the contributions of women in Michigan, not only to the legal profes-

sion, but also to the daily lives of the people. While there are undoubtedly countless influential women in our past and present, the list was simply meant to highlight a few of the most renowned. The descriptions that accompany each name were not intended to provide a detailed overview of the entire life of the individual, but rather to concentrate on their most publicly recognized or personally important accomplishments to date and the impact of those achievements on other women in the legal profession

and in the general population of Michigan. The project was meant to serve as a basic introduction to the many women who have changed the Michigan legal system to better reflect the values of all it represents.

The web pages, which can be viewed by going to www.micourthistory.org and clicking on the Resources menu, include pictures of the featured women where available.



in this issue



2003 Coleman Intern Completes Women and the Law Project.....	1-3
Society Members Earn State Bar Honors...	4-5
Michigan Justices as Authors.....	6
In the Spotlight.....	7

Opening Session
9:30 a.m. October 14
Old Supreme Court Chambers

The women featured are:

Sarah Killgore Wertman: The first woman law student and graduate of the University of Michigan and the first woman to be admitted to the State Bar of Michigan, or to the Bar of any state for that matter.

Octavia Bates: Chair of the Committee on Domestic Relations of the National Council of Women and the National Federation of Women's Clubs delegate to the 1899 London International Council of Women, where she delivered a paper entitled "The Study of Law for Women".

Martha Strickland: The first woman to argue a case before the Michigan Supreme Court in 1890. She successfully argued the right of women to hold the office of deputy county clerk in Michigan, making women eligible to secure valuable employment positions in local government.

Emelia Schaub: The first woman in the State of Michigan to win a murder case, the first woman prosecutor in Michigan, and a champion of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indian Tribes.

Anne R. Davidow: Made history in 1948 when she appeared before the U.S. Supreme Court to argue the case of *Goesaert v. Cleary*, becoming the first to make the argument that sex discrimination violated women's constitutional rights by denying them equal protection and treatment under the law. She lost the case before the Court, but convinced the Michigan Legislature to repeal the discriminatory law.

Jessie Pharr Slaton: Became one of the first African-Americans in Detroit City government to hold a white-collar job, was the first woman referee in the Recorder's Court Traffic and Ordinance Division, and was appointed by Governor Milliken to the office of Common Pleas Judge in the City of Detroit.

Martha W. Griffiths: The first woman judge of Detroit's

Recorder's Court, made the argument that successfully added the word "sex" to the Civil Rights Act, the first woman member of the House Means and Ways Committee, and the first woman lieutenant governor of Michigan.

Jean Ledwith King: Played an active role in founding and establishing FOCUS on Equal Employment for Women, which filed a complaint against the University of Michigan for sex discrimination in a variety of arenas. The suit led to the first comprehensive investigation of a major university by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Labor for sexual discrimination and resulted in permanent changes to the programs and policies at the University of Michigan. She drafted a complaint because of the sex discrimination in the Houghton-Mifflin textbooks used in the Kalamazoo Public Schools, causing the immediate issue of a 100-page supplement and the revision of the company's textbooks.

Virginia Cecile Blomer Nordby: Was the principal drafter of the Michigan Criminal Sexual Conduct Act, Public Act 266, in 1974, which revolutionized perceptions and interpretations of rape and has since served as a model for nearly thirty other states. She taught a pioneering class at the University of Michigan called Women and the Law.

Anna Diggs Taylor: Became the first black woman judge to be appointed to the United States District Court



for the Eastern District of Michigan and became the first black woman Chief Judge for that district.

Julia Darlow: Became the first woman president of the State Bar of Michigan.

Joyce Dixon: Was responsible for improving the educational opportunities for women in Michigan prisons and became the first woman to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan while in prison.

Mary S. Coleman: Became the first woman justice and Chief Justice on the Michigan Supreme Court and the third woman in the nation to sit on a State Supreme Court. She served as the impetus for revamping the organization of the Michigan judicial system's finances and in 1980 called for a state constitutional amendment to add gender to the categories protected against discrimination.

Dorothy Comstock Riley: Became the first woman to be appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals, was appointed to and then elected to the Michigan Supreme Court, and was later elected by her colleagues to become Chief Justice.

Patricia J. Boyle: Contributed her talents to the drafting of the Criminal Sexual Conduct Act of 1974 and later gave up her tenured federal judge position in 1983 in order to accept an appointment to the Michigan Supreme Court.

Elizabeth Weaver: Received national recognition for her fair but firm treatment of juvenile delinquents as a Probate Judge, served as chair of Governor John Engler's Task Force on Children's Justice, and was elected Justice and then Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court.

Marilyn Kelly: Was the first woman to be elected to and made President of the State Board of Education, became the 99th Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court in 1997, and serves as co-chair of the Open Justice Commission, an organization of the State Bar of Michigan committed to making justice available to all.

Maura D. Corrigan: The first woman to be elected student bar president at the University of Detroit Law School, the first woman to hold the position of the Chief Assistant U.S. Attorney in Detroit, the first woman to

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Today's Holiday: Sep 23, 2003
Fri 147°F
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Jean Ledwith King

Soon after graduating from the University of Michigan Law School in 1968, Jean Ledwith King became extremely active in promoting equality for women. In 1978, she played an active role in founding and establishing FOCUS on Equal Employment for Women, and organizations striving to eliminate sexual discrimination. Five months after the inception of FOCUS, the group filed a complaint against the University of Michigan for sex discrimination in employment, admissions, financial aid, athletics, and a variety of other areas. The complaint had been spurred by the comments of the chief admissions officer for the University's College of Literature, Science, and Arts (LSA), who admitted that they practiced a policy to keep the student body 55% men and 45% women, regardless of qualifications, in order to "prevent overkill areas." The suit led to the first comprehensive investigation of a major university by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Labor for sexual discrimination. ¹ When the University realized that federal funding

Recent News.....

Society Honors
Austine Eberly
Comstock May 19th
Legal History Award
Wilcox is 10th
Honored by
American Jurisdiction
Society
State Bar Names
Michael French
Award Winner

HITTED
LAVELLE
OF
THE BAR IN HISTORY
September 23, 1982

By clicking on a name and picture on the index page, you can read about that individual's accomplishments as they relate to Michigan law.

serve as the Chief Judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals. She was elected to the Michigan Supreme Court and became Chief Justice in 2002. She has helped the Michigan child support enforcement system comply with federal regulations.

Jennifer Mulhern Granholm: Became the first woman to be elected as attorney general of the state of Michigan and four years later was elected as the state's first woman governor.

Information for the Women and the Law project was written and compiled by 2003 Coleman Intern Allyson Miller.

The Coleman Internship was established in 1998 in honor of former Chief Justice Mary Coleman's husband, the late Judge Creighton S. Coleman. The Coleman internship is awarded to undergraduate honors students interested in gaining real-world experience while performing historical research for the Society.

Society Members Earn State Bar Honors

On September 12, 2003, at the Annual Meeting of the State Bar of Michigan, four Historical Society members were honored with prestigious State Bar awards.

Frank J. Kelley Distinguished Public Servant Award

Justice Robert P. Griffin

Robert P. Griffin was named the recipient of the 2003 State Bar of Michigan Frank J. Kelley Distinguished Public Servant Award. The award was created in 1998 by the State Bar Board of Commissioners to recognize a Michigan attorney in elected or appointed office for extraordinary governmental service.

During his extensive career, which spanned five decades, Griffin served for 22 years in the U.S. Congress. He spent 10 years as a U.S. Congressman (1956-1966), 12 years as a U.S. Senator (1966-1978), eight years as Minority Whip in the U.S. Senate (1969-1977), and eight years as a justice of the Michigan Supreme Court (1987-1994). After retiring from the Michigan Supreme Court, Griffin served as a visiting judge on the Michigan Court of Appeals. While in Congress, Griffin's many accomplishments included co-authoring the Landrum-Griffin Act (Labor/Management Reporting Disclosure Act of 1959) and the National Student Loan Program.

Griffin received an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree from Central Michigan University in 1947, a juris doctor in 1950 from the University of Michigan, and honorary degrees from numerous universities.

Griffin is a member of several associations, including



the Gerald R. Ford Foundation, the American Bar Association, the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association, and the American Judicature Society.

Michael Franck Award Winners

Justice Marilyn Kelly of the Michigan Supreme Court and Detroit lawyer and former State Bar president Wallace D. Riley were named this year's State Bar of Michigan Michael Franck Award winners. The State Bar Representative Assembly presents the award annually to a lawyer in good standing who has made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of the profession.

Justice Marilyn Kelly

Justice Marilyn Kelly was elected in 1996 to the Michigan Supreme Court for an eight-year term after serving as a judge on the Michigan Court of Appeals, 2nd District, from 1989 to 1996. Prior to this, she worked as a trial lawyer for 17 years in Wayne and Oakland Counties, during which time she founded Marilyn Kelly & Associates. A former educator, Justice Kelly served as president of the Michigan State Board of Education from 1965 to 1977. She has been an active member of the State Bar and was a member of the Representative Assembly (1986-1988), a member of the Communications Committee (1988-1993), a member of the Family Law Council (1988-1994), and Co-Chairperson of the Open Justice Commission (1998-2003). During her career, Justice Kelly also served as president of the Women's Bar Association of Oakland County and of the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, chaired the Oakland County Bar Association's Family Law Committee, and co-chaired the Circuit Court Mediation Committee and President's Task Force on Improved Dispute Resolution.



Wallace D. Riley

The State Bar's 38th president, Wallace D. Riley is widely recognized for his record of leadership in local, state, and national organizations and his dedication to the improvement of the legal profession. His many roles



include serving as president of the American Bar Association (1983-1984), president of the Detroit chapter of the Federal Bar Association, president of the State Bar Foundation, and president of both the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society and Michigan Historical Center Foundation. Riley also served on

the Attorney Discipline Board from 1999-2002, and chaired the organization from 2000-2002. Before serving as president, Riley held many State Bar offices, including chairperson of the Young Lawyer's Section (1960-1961), a member of the Board of Commissioners (1965-1973), secretary (1969-1970), vice-president (1970-1971), and president-elect (1971-1972.) In 1968, Riley also co-founded the Detroit law firm of Riley & Roumell, P.C., which is now Riley Roumell & Connolly, P.C. Riley holds bachelor's degrees from the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan, an M.B.A. and juris doctor degree from the Univ. of Michigan, and an L.L.M. from George Washington University.

Roberts P. Hudson Award

George T. Roumell, Jr.

A former president of the State Bar of Michigan, George T. Roumell, Jr., received the organization's highest and most prestigious award for 2003. The Roberts P. Hudson Award is presented for the "unselfish rendering of outstanding and unique service to and on behalf of the State Bar of Michigan, the legal profession and the public" and is awarded to the member who "best exemplifies that which brings honor, esteem and respect to the legal profession."

Roumell is recognized for his dedication to the State Bar, having served in several capacities, including presi-

dent (1985-1986), vice president (1983-1984), president-elect (1984-1985), commissioner (1975-1986), chairperson of the Bar Journal Advisory Board, and chairperson of the Character and Fitness Committee (1969-1972). Roumell was also chairperson of the Young Lawyers Section (1959-1960), and was instrumental in the founding of the Institute for Continuing Legal Education. Roumell is also past president of the Detroit Bar Association (1973-1974), which changed its name to the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association in 1992.

In 1968, Roumell co-founded the Detroit firm of Riley & Roumell, P.C., which is now Riley Roumell & Connolly, P.C. Roumell is considered an arbitrator of national reputation and is a writer and lecturer on labor law. Mr. Roumell speaks throughout the country on labor arbitration and has authored several books. He has also worked for more than 43 years as an associate professor at the Michigan State University-Detroit College of Law and for the past few years as a lecturer at the University of Detroit Law School.

Roumell received a bachelor's degree in 1951 from the University of Michigan and a juris doctor from Harvard Law School in 1954. He was awarded an honorary L.L.D. from Detroit College of Law in 1986.

Roumell is a member of many bar associations and professional organizations, including the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, the American Bar Association (fellow since 1977), the Labor Arbitration Panel for the American Arbitration Association, and the Michigan Employment Relations Commission.



Michigan Supreme Court Justices as Authors

It goes without saying that all of the Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court are authors. On a daily basis, they work to write clear, concise opinions and to communicate their ideas and decisions through the written word. Once in a while, however, a Justice will branch off from his or her legal writings to pen a different type of work. Several of our Justices have done just that—many writing non-fiction works such as histories or biographies and others writing fiction based on their experiences in the law. What follows is a list of non-fiction and fiction works by former Michigan justices.

Thomas E. Brennan

- ◆ Judging the Law Schools. East Lansing, Mich.: TEBCO, Inc., 1996. Location: Michigan State University, Business Library.
- ◆ The Bench: A Novel. New York: Vantage Press, 2000. Location: Michigan State University – Detroit College of Law, Law Library Level 2.

James V. Campbell

- ◆ Outlines of the Political History of Michigan. Detroit: Schober, 1876. Location: Library of Michigan, Michigan 2 North.

Thomas M. Cooley

- ◆ Michigan: A History of Governments. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1885. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).

William W. Potter

- ◆ Michigan's Costly and Inconsistent Legislation. [S.l.: s.n., 19—]. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Michigan's First Justice of the Peace. [S.l.: s.n., 1907]. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ History of Barry County. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Engraved and printed by Reed-Tandler Co., [1912]. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Judicial Power in the United States. [S.l.: s.n.], 1940. Location: Library of Michigan, Law.

Otis M. Smith

- ◆ Looking Beyond Race: The Life of Otis Milton Smith. Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 2000. Location: Michigan State University, Business Library.

Talbot Smith

- ◆ Lawyer: Opportunities for Careers in the Legal Profession. New York: Macmillan, 1961. Location: Michigan State University – Detroit College of Law, Law Library Level 1.

John D. Voelker (*Pennname: Robert Traver*)

- ◆ Trouble-shooter; the Story of a Northwoods Prosecutor. New York: The Viking Press, 1943. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Danny and the Boys; Being Some Legends of Hungry Hollow. Cleveland: World Pub. Co., 1951. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Small Town D.A. New York: Dutton, 1954. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Anatomy of a Murder. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1958. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N.
- ◆ Trout Madness. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Hornstein's Boy. New York: S. Martin's Press, 1962. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Laughing Whitefish. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ The Jealous Mistress. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1967. Location: Library of Michigan, Law.
- ◆ About the Historical Novel. [Lansing?] : Historical Society of Michigan, 1970. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Trout Magic. New York: Crown Publishers, 1974. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ People versus Kirk. New York: St Martin's Press, 1981. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N.

Thomas A. E. Weadock

- ◆ A Catholic Priest in Congress : Sketch of Rev. Gabriel Richard. [Washington D.C.: s.n., 1892?]. Location: Library of Michigan, Mich 2 N (Non-Circ).
- ◆ Pere Marquette, the Missionary Explorer
- ◆ The Public Service of Sanford M. Green.

Benjamin F. H. Witherell

- ◆ Reminiscences of the Northwest. Location: Library of Michigan, Michigan 2 N (Non-Circ).

Augustus B. Woodward

- ◆ The Presidency of the United States. Washington City: Published by Derick Van Veghten, 1825. Location: Library of Michigan, Rare.

In the Spotlight.... Two Supreme Court Authors

Justice William W. Potter Served From 1928 - 1940

William W. Potter was born on August 1, 1869, in Maple Grove, Michigan. As a youth he walked a distance of eight miles to and from Nashville to attend high school. A burning desire for knowledge, coupled with an indefatigable spirit, enabled him to complete the four-year course in three years. He was a true, spirited American, reared in the days of self-reliance, and by incessant efforts, he equipped himself for the many important duties to which he would be called.

Potter attended Ypsilanti State Normal College and later graduated from the Law Department of the University of Michigan. He taught school and served as superintendent of schools in Harrison for three years.

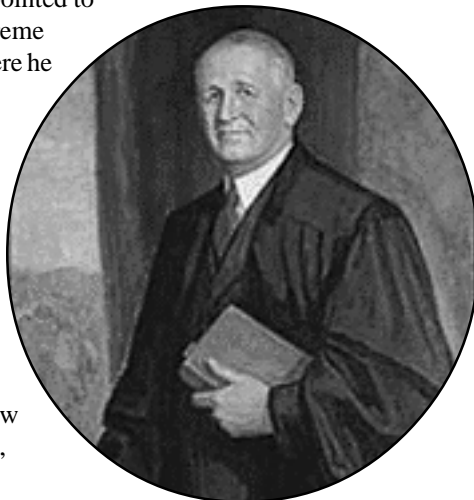
His career in public service began when he was the City Attorney in Hastings. Later, he was Prosecuting Attorney of Barry County, a Michigan state senator, and a member of the draft board during World War I. As president of the Michigan State Bar Association, he fought for racial integration of the Bar. Potter also served as fuel administrator of the State of Michigan in 1922. He was a member of the Michigan Public Utilities Commission from 1919 to 1927. Potter was elected Attorney General of the State in 1926, and was appointed to the Michigan Supreme Court in 1928, where he served until 1940.

Potter was the author of several books. His *History of Barry County* was accurately and interestingly written. The book *Michigan Evidence* is in most law offices in the state, and the volume

Judicial Power in the United States disclosed the breadth and extent of his research. When Potter died, he left behind four volumes of history that were to be published by the Michigan Historical Society.

In addition to his love of work and his fondness for history, research, and writing, Potter belonged to many fraternal societies. He also had a large family. He was married to Margaret D. Richardson and together the couple had 6 children. (Michigan Supreme Court. Michigan Reports: Cases Decided by the Supreme Court of Michigan. Chicago: Callaghan and Co., 1879 - 1948, Vol. 295.)

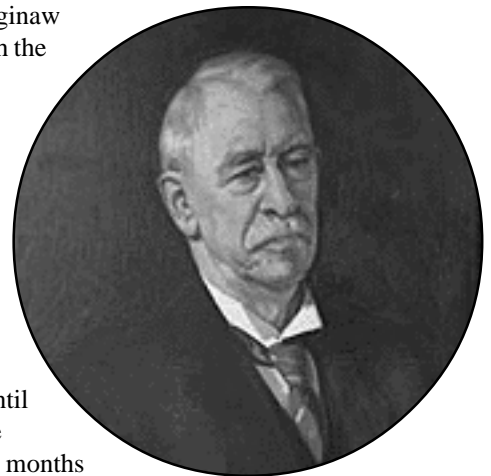
William W. Potter died in 1940.



Justice Thomas A.E. Weadock Served In 1933

Thomas A.E. Weadock was born in Ballygarrett, Ireland, on January 1, 1850, and with his parents came to the United States in his youth. Most of his life was spent in Michigan. He entered the University of Michigan Law School in 1871, and received his instruction from Thomas M. Cooley and James V. Campbell.

Admitted to the Bar in Detroit on April 8, 1873, Weadock was eminent in the legal profession for 65 years, establishing offices in Bay City at a time when the busy Saginaw Valley echoed with the roar of a hundred saw mills. His valuable counsel was eagerly sought by many of the great lumber barons. He moved to Detroit in 1895 and continued in general practice until his death, with the exception of a few months in 1933, when Governor



William A. Comstock appointed him to the Court.

Weadock held a number of public service positions. In 1883, he served Bay City as Mayor. Later he served his county as Prosecuting Attorney and his state as one of the Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court. In addition to this, he served in the United States House of Representatives.

Disposed by his nature and intellectual inclination to the study of literature and history, he spent much of his leisure time in reading and research. He loved to study the life of Emperor Napoleon I, and his library on that subject was one of the most complete and unique in the entire world. His interest was widely known and the Government of France conferred upon him the decoration of the Legion of Honor, "in token of that country's gratitude for a great and voluntary service." He was an ardent admirer of Andrew Jackson and his library contained many volumes relating to that great popular and political hero.

He also found time to write three biographical books entitled, *Pere Marquette, the Missionary Explorer*, *A Catholic Priest in Congress*, *Father Richard*, and, *The Public Service of Sanford M. Green*.

Thomas A.E. Weadock died in Detroit on November 18, 1938. (Michigan Supreme Court. Michigan Reports: Cases Decided by the Supreme Court of Michigan. Chicago: Callaghan and Co., 1879—1948, Vol. 295.)

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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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Society Update is published quarterly by the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society. Writing submissions, article ideas, news and announcements are encouraged. Contact the Society at: 1st Floor Hall of Justice, 925 W. Ottawa Street, Lansing, MI 48915
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