



Society Update

The Official Publication of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society

Winter 2011

The Year in Review

A Message from Society President Wallace D. Riley



It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the President of the Supreme Court Historical Society since its inception in April 1988. In more than two decades of existence, the Society has accomplished a great deal.

Perhaps the greatest thing we have done, however, is to bring together a diverse group of people who share the same passion: legal history. The loyalty of our members is evident and demonstrated in the **Membership Roster** enclosed in this edition of the *Society Update*. Year after year, your support helps us to do the things we promised to do when setting forth our mission statement in 1988.

The year 2010 was a continuation of those goals.

Last year we worked with portrait conservator, Ken Katz, to restore the paintings of five historic Michigan Supreme Court justices. To see some of the portraits that were restored, including “before” and “after” photos, see **“The Care and Feeding of Portraits”** inside this issue.

Our membership luncheon last April at the Detroit Athletic Club was once again well-attended. The vignette was provided by Assistant Attorney General John Fedynsky, who regaled the crowd with stories from his book, *Michigan’s County Courthouses*.

The Advocates Guild, our specialty group created in 2007, continued to add new members to its ranks last

year. The majority of these new members are new to the Society, and it is gratifying to see our work reaching new audiences. In turn, I invite those of you who are existing Society members to consider joining this elite group. You are eligible if you have appeared in a calendared appeal before the Michigan Supreme Court. Among the benefits of membership is an invitation to a special dinner at the Hall of Justice, timed to coincide with the opening of the Court’s new year in October, and a commemorative tile designed and fired by Pewabic Pottery of Detroit.

Finally, I commend the men and women of our Board of Directors. This highly talented group of lawyers, judges, and former Supreme Court justices provides leadership and ideas that make the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society unique in the nation.

Membership renewal notices were mailed to annual members early in February. It is my sincere hope that this dues request will be met with your familiar generosity. Thank you, as always, for your support!

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Goals for the Year Ahead

Executive Director's Report by Carrie Pickett

According to the Chinese calendar, 2011 is the year of the rabbit, a time characterized by prosperity, industriousness, and peace. There is no better way to analogize my hopes for the Society in the coming year.

One of the big projects I will be working on in 2011 is an update to our **Oral History library**. Oral histories are part of a community's oral tradition and, as such, preserve the cultural and historical background from one generation to the next. Currently, the Society has twelve recorded oral histories available via our website, in partnership with the nationally renowned Vincent Voice Library at Michigan State University.

Over the coming year, the Society's Oral History Committee will collect the oral histories of several former Michigan Supreme Court justices and make these available to you.

The Oral Histories can be found on our website at www.micourthistory.org under the "Justices" link. You can read transcripts of the interviews with the Justices, listen to the audio file online, or download individual segments to an MP3 player.



Pictured here with 2010 Law Student Prize winner Maria Jhai from the University of Michigan Law School and Secretary of the Board Carl Herstein. Awarding this prestigious prize to legal history scholars at all five state law schools is one of my goals for 2011.

I also expect one or more **portrait dedications** in the coming year. Former Chief Justice Conrad L. Mallett sat for his portrait earlier this year with Simmie Knox, a portrait artist from Washington, D.C. Watch your mailbox for an invitation to the dedication ceremony toward the end of this year. Society members receive exclusive invitations to these special sessions of the Court.

The vignette planned for this year's **Annual Membership Luncheon** promises to be both interesting and timely. Professor Mark Hurwitz, a legal historian from Western Michigan University will present our historical look at judicial selection. Please join us to learn how the Michigan system evolved.

Finally, if you have an idea for the Society, please email me at cpickett@micourthistory.org or call (517) 373-7589. While I cannot guarantee that we will be able to implement every idea, I certainly enjoy hearing from you!



Pictured here with Holly Garber, Deputy Circuit Court Clerk from Manistee, and her daughters Kendyll and Mattie. The Garber family visited the Supreme Court Learning Center last summer. The Society serves as fiduciary for the Learning Center.

The Care and Feeding of Portraits: Three Georges



Before and after photos of the portrait of 49th Justice George M. Clark (1919–1933). Note the paint loss on the lip of Justice Clark. While the repair to this canvas was fairly minor in scope, the effect is significant. This portrait was painted by Roy Gamble, who was a prolific painter of Michigan Supreme Court Justices of that era.



The restoration of the portrait and frame of 12th Justice George Martin was more intensive. Martin served from 1851 until his death in 1867. He was the first Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and was succeeded by Thomas M. Cooley.

All photos in this section courtesy of Conservation and Museum Services.



Before and after photos of the portrait of 60th Justice George E. Bushnell (1934–1955). Also painted by Roy Gamble.



Around the HOJ

Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court

After a lengthy period of relative stability, the members of the Michigan Supreme Court have undertaken a judicial version of musical chairs in recent weeks.

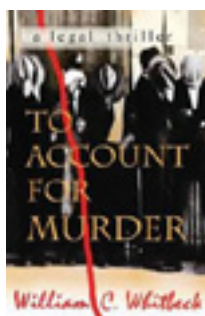
Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. was elected to his third term on the Court in November, and chosen by his peers to serve as the Chief Justice in January.

Mary Beth Kelly, formerly Chief Judge of the Third Circuit in Wayne County, was also elected by the voters in November. She took the oath of office on January 1st of this year.

Justice Maura Corrigan (MSC 1999-2011) was appointed by newly-elected Governor Rick Snyder to lead the Department of Human Services in early January. Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Brian K. Zahra was appointed to replace her. He took the bench on January 14, 2011.

Rounding out the Court are Justices Michael Cavanagh, Marilyn Kelly, Stephen Markman, and Diane Hathaway.

Books of the Times...



Michigan Court of Appeals Judge William Whitbeck's legal thriller, *To Account for Murder*, debuted in December. Published by the Permanent Press of Sag Harbor, New York, the novel fictionalizes the true crime murder of Michigan state senator Warren G. Hooper in 1945.

The book can be purchased in most bookstores as well as from online booksellers such as Amazon and Barnes and Noble (bn.com).



Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. addresses those in attendance at the exhibit opening of Michigan's County Courthouses in the Learning Center on January 21st. Also pictured are Justice Stephen Markman who wrote the foreword to the book on which the exhibit was based and author John Fedynsky who signed copies of the book for those who attended the event. Photo courtesy of the State Bar of Michigan.

Temporary Exhibit in the Learning Center

On January 21st, the Society was pleased to open a temporary exhibit in the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center featuring Michigan's County Courthouses.

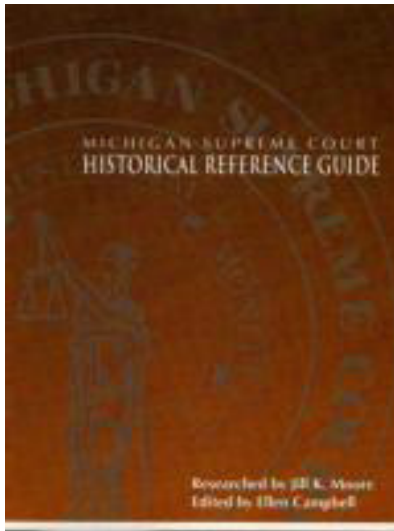
Author John Fedynsky provided the source material for the temporary exhibit, which runs through the end of March, from his encyclopedic book *Michigan's County Courthouses*.

The exhibit features both interior and exterior shots of six unique county courthouses: Alpena, Grand Traverse, Ingham, Lapeer, Marquette, and Midland Counties.

The book was published by the University of Michigan Press and can be purchased from their website, most bookstores, and online booksellers.

The Learning Center introduces the judicial branch of government to visitors of all ages. It is free and open to the public Monday through Friday. For questions, please contact Rachael L. Drenovsky, Learning Center Coordinator, at (517) 373-5027 or email drenovsky@courts.mi.gov.

New Member Incentive



Tell all of your friends! New Society members will receive the *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide* with their paid membership.

The *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide* was first published by the Society in

1998. It contains biographies of the first 100 justices of the Michigan Supreme Court as well as a factual chart of the courts by year, showing which justices served together.

Other publications from the Society include the *Index to Special Sessions*, made to look like an issue of the Michigan Reports. It contains transcripts of Special Sessions of the Court from 1988–2003. The book costs \$35.00 and can be purchased from the Society by calling (517) 373-7589 or via our website at www.micourthistory.org/publications.php

Member Spotlight



The official Michigan Supreme Court portrait was painted by Joe Maniscalco and hangs in the 6th floor rotunda in the Hall of Justice. It was presented on March 30, 1995.

James L. Ryan, 89th Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, is the Society member we are featuring in this issue. Judge Ryan was appointed to the Michigan Supreme Court in 1975 by Governor Milliken to replace Justice John Swainson. He was subsequently re-elected in 1976 and 1978, serving ten years on the Court before his appointment by President Ronald Reagan to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in 1985.

Judge Ryan recently took “inactive status” from his federal judgeship. At right is a photo from the dedication of his court portrait on September 22, 2010.



Photo courtesy of Detroit Legal News.

2011 Society Member Contribution Form

Please use this form if you would like to renew your annual membership or make an additional financial contribution to the Society for 2011. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization so all contributions are tax-deductible for federal income tax purposes. Thank you for your support!

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Please detach this form and mail to: Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, 1st Floor Hall of Justice, 925 W. Ottawa Street, Lansing, MI 48915.

You may also fax it to (517) 373-7592.

Individual membership \$100.00

Advocates Guild membership \$150.00

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Please note that while the Society has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list, we would like to hear from you if there are any corrections to be made.

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Save the Date!

Please join the justices of the
Michigan Supreme Court,
past and present
for the

2011 Annual Membership Luncheon

Thursday, April 28, 2011
11:30 a.m.

The Detroit Athletic Club
241 Madison Street
Detroit, Michigan

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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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 Phone: (517) 373-7589 Fax: (517) 373-7592

E-mail CPICKETT@MICOURTHISTORY.ORG Website: WWW.MICOURTHISTORY.ORG



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