



Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit

Newsletter # 10 January 2012



Now on display -- Portraits of the Judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

View [on-line the portraits of 35 judges](#) who have served on the U.S. Court of Appeals. ([Click on Portraits of U.S. Appeals Court Judges](#)) Examine the portraits and learn about the artists who painted them and the judges they portray.

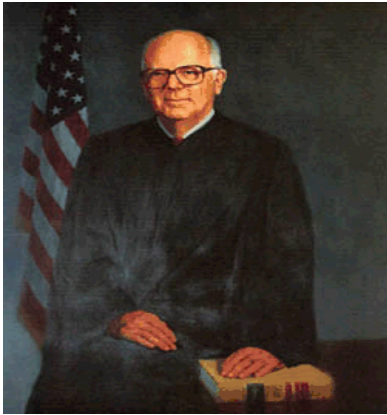
Judge Elijah Barrett Prettyman, left, joined the Court in 1945 and served as Chief Judge from 1958 - 1960.



The Judge and the Marshal

Two colorful oral histories, newly added to the Society's collection, are available on its website (www.dcchs.org).

This is the familiar face of [Richard "Kirk" Bowden](#), Deputy U.S. Marshal, who has served our courts for over 25 years. Marshal Bowden's oral history recalls his journey from undercover cop to driving through the White House gates to deliver a subpoena to Richard Nixon. In jury rooms, he has quieted "table-pounders" to break up fist fights. He was responsible for the care and feeding of sequestered jurors when they



were no longer housed overnight on the top floors of the Courthouse. Read his colorful recollections, including his descriptions of the most memorable judges and lawyers he worked with, in his oral history.

The career of [Judge Frank Nebeker](#), D.C. Court of Appeals Senior Judge, spans decades during which he was prosecutor, government ethics director, and judge in two courts. Read his oral history for descriptions of the people and issues he worked with along the way as well as his recollections of the running debate during the 1960s and early 1970s between Circuit Judges Bazelon and Burger over the rules to be applied when insanity was raised as a defense to criminal charges and the role of psychiatrists as expert witnesses in such cases.



A bit of history

Did you know that, in addition to its appellate function, the D.C. Circuit Court was the principal trial court in early Washington, applying Virginia law and procedures when it met in Alexandria and those of Maryland for its Washington sessions? In 1938, Congress established a criminal court to relieve the Circuit Court of criminal proceedings. The District Court was largely a maritime court.



A new exhibit

A new Society feature: a display of the likeness of the portrait of Judge Cranch, one of the first three judges to sit on the Circuit Court where he remained for 54 years. The exhibit includes interesting facts about the judge and can be seen in two locations – on the first floor of the Prettyman Courthouse and the Bryant Annex.

This is an ever-changing exhibit -- a new judge will be featured every three months.



Welcome to Logan Smith, the Society's new Treasurer

The Historical Society has a new Treasurer: Logan D. Smith, a partner at Zuckerman Spaeder. The Society's previous Treasurer, Lisa Barclay, who now serves as Chief of Staff to the FDA Commissioner, remains on the Board.



Join the Historical Society

We are grateful to the many individuals who regularly support the Society's activities including our panel discussions, mock competitions for area high school students, oral histories, and historical exhibits. We welcome new individual and law firm members. Help us educate the public about the role of the courts, the rule of law, and the proud history of the federal courts in the District of Columbia by joining the many judges, lawyers, and citizens who are Society members.

[Use the membership card on our website and JOIN NOW!](#)