



Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit

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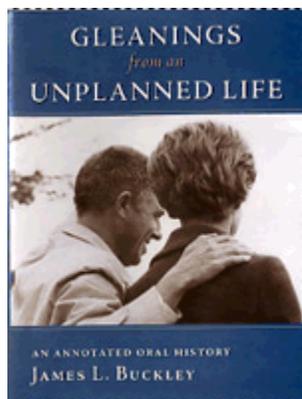
Happy Holidays!

The members of the Board and staff of the Historical Society send our best wishes to all Society members for a happy, healthy, and productive 2011!



Expansion of the Society's Oral History Program

With 64 oral histories completed and available for review by scholars, lawyers, and the public, and 38 additional histories underway or under seal, the Historical Society will initiate a number of new oral histories this year. The first step: training a new group of attorney-interviewers on January 27. The lead instructor will be Donald A. Ritchie, Historian of the United States Senate and one of the nation's leading oral historians. The training will also feature a mock oral history interview of Judge David Tatel by Society president Steve Pollak.



The History of a Special Oral History

One of the oral histories taken by the Society has an interesting history of its own. After being the subject of a full life oral history sponsored by the Historical Society, former D.C. Circuit Judge James Buckley, pleased with results of the in-depth interviews conducted by Wendy S. White, thought about annotating the oral history for his children. Encouraged by his family to develop a book, he used the oral history as a "framework." The result, Gleanings from an Unplanned Life, published by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. The book, which has been critically well received, has been read and enjoyed far beyond the reaches of Judge Buckley's own family.



Meet Robert Ellis, An Archivist at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in Washington, D.C.

Bob is responsible for the records of the U.S. Supreme Court, the Courts of the District of Columbia Circuit, and the U.S. Court of Claims.

Commencing in 1987, he has been assisting courts, scholars, historians, governmental agencies, and members of the public in locating documents in these records.

One of the earliest enthusiasts for the Historical Society of the D.C. Circuit, Bob tried to join the Society soon after it was created – before it became a membership organization. Now one of the Society's most active members, Bob works with the Board to discover and make available to the public records of historic cases litigated in our federal courts. The Society regularly benefits from his expertise as a member of the Committee on Archival Preservation and Historical Research.

Bob's fascination with the early history of the District of Columbia and its courts began when he did some research about his wife's ancestors who lived in Washington in the early 1800's. That interest blossomed when he discovered that many of the nation's founders lived in or visited the District and appeared in probate, land, and other court records housed at NARA.



Looking ahead

The Society will sponsor its annual Mock Court Program on April 8, 2011. We anticipate that more than 75 students from Washington high schools, prepared by mentors from D.C. law firms, will argue cases before judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Watch for photos of the students presenting their arguments in federal courtrooms this spring on the Society's website at www.dcchs.org.