



# Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit

Newsletter # 15 April 2013



Chief Judge Garland

## **A Special Welcome and Thanks**

Welcome to the newest member of the Historical Society Board: Chief Judge Merrick B. Garland and special thanks to former Chief Judge David B. Sentelle for his five years of service as a member of the Society's Board.



Judge Robinson presenting a certificate to a student in 2011.

## **Just Ahead :**

### Mock Court Program

Over 90 high school students from the Washington area will be arguing cases before nine District Court judges on Friday, April 12. Lawyers from Arnold & Porter, Goodwin Procter, Steptoe & Johnson, Williams & Connolly, WilmerHale, Wiltshire Grannis, and Zuckerman Spaeder are helping the students prepare for their first legal advocacy experience.



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

### “Women in the Life and Law of the Courts of the D.C.Circuit”

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, former Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals Patricia M. Wald, and Chief Judge Royce C. Lamberth of the U.S. District Court will be joined by Stanford Emerita Professor of Law Barbara Babcock, former District Court Clerk Nancy Mayer-Whittington, and advocates before the courts Michele Roberts and Helgi Walker to talk about the past, present, and future of women in the D.C. Circuit Courts. Listen to an historical overview of the participation of women in these Courts; comparisons to other circuits; hurdles encountered, cleared and remaining; the impact of increasing numbers of women involved in Court activities; and a wide-ranging discussion of the issues.



Judge John Fisher

### **Inside Two New Oral Histories: Advice for Appellate Lawyers and a Call for Problem-Focused Legal Education**

The do’s and don’t’s of appellate advocacy are detailed in a new oral history taken for the Society of D.C. Court of Appeals Judge John R. Fisher. Judge Fisher, who served 16 years as Chief of the Appellate Division in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, gives advice on “selling” your appeal. Check it out on the Historical Society website at [www.dcchs.org](http://www.dcchs.org). [Click on oral histories.](#)



Dean Judith Areen

Long-time Georgetown University Law Center dean Judith Areen wants legal education to be more “problem-focused,” rather than “case-focused” or “litigation-focused.” Her inside look at running a law school has now been preserved in an Historical Society oral history, available in the Library of Congress, the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., and the Judges’ Library in the E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse.



Judge Merrick

### **President Lincoln’s Private War with Judge Merrick, an Unsolved Mystery, and Other Facts of Historical Interest**

Learn about the [D.C. Judge](#) who irritated President Abraham Lincoln so much during the Civil War that the President stopped his pay, sent soldiers to his home, and abolished the court on which he sat to get rid of him. [Visit the Historian’s Corner.](#)

Read about the unsolved mystery that arose in a thrift shop outside Houston, Texas, involving the original Commission appointing E. Barrett Prettyman to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in 1945.

Read some little-known but interesting historical tidbits. Go to [“Of Historical Interest.”](#)



Judge Edgerton

### **On display in the Courthouse: Portrait of Judge Henry White Edgerton**

One of many D. C. Circuit judges who had great influence on courts throughout the nation, [Judge Edgerton](#) was the first D.C. federal judge to assert that segregated public schools violated the Due Process clause of the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution, a view later adopted by the U.S. Supreme Court. Judge Edgerton wrote opinions opposing granting Congress and the government broad power to investigate the loyalty of citizens and to deny passports, require loyalty oaths, and brand organizations as subversive during the anti-Communist Cold War fervor of the 1950s. A direct descendent of Governor William Bradford of the Plymouth Colony, Judge Edgerton served on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit for 33 years, showing admiration for judges who protect the interests of the underprivileged and who are tolerant of change.



Judge Oberdorfer

### **In Memoriam**

We remember fondly [Judge Louis F. Oberdorfer](#), one of the Historical Society's most faithful and dedicated supporters. Admired for his vision, leadership, intellectual heft, and gentle manner by members of the Society and its Board, Judge Oberdorfer served proudly for ten years as the first Chair of the Society's Board and as Co-Chair with E. Barrett Prettyman, Jr., of the Courts' Bicentennial Anniversary celebration in 2001.