



Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit

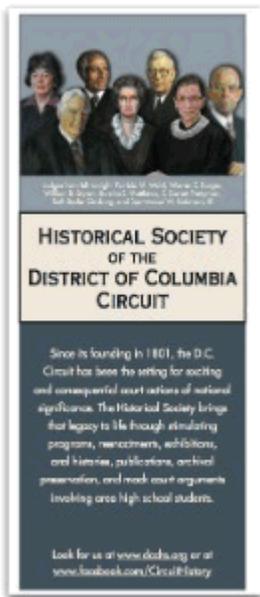
Newsletter # 13 October 2012



Preserving Judges' Non-Official Papers

Chief Judge Royce C. Lamberth has good advice for new judges: "Think about the handling of your personal papers soon after you join the Court. If I had thought about the prospect of donating my papers when I began my judicial career, as I am now as I prepare to send them to the University of Texas Library, I would have done a number of things differently."

Chief Judge Lamberth shared his advice with four of the District Court's newest judges, Judges Beryl A. Howell, Robert L. Wilkins, James E. Boasberg, and Rudolph Contreras, in a meeting convened by the Historical Society on September 18. George W. Jones, Jr., Chair of the Society's Committee on Archival Preservation and Historical Research, and Stephen J. Pollak, Society President, talked about the types of papers to maintain, how best to organize them, and considerations in choosing a repository. George Jones stressed the need for judges to maintain not only their judicial papers but the important papers from their earlier careers as lawyers, "A lawyer's career prior to becoming a judge often becomes significantly more interesting to historians and biographers precisely because the lawyer has become a judge." ([Read more about Preserving Judges' papers.](#))



An Offer for Law Clerks of the D.C. Circuit Courts

The Society is offering complimentary one-year memberships to current law clerks of judges of the D.C. Circuit Courts and to the law clerks who served during the 2011-2012 and 2010-2011 terms.

[Sign up here.](#)



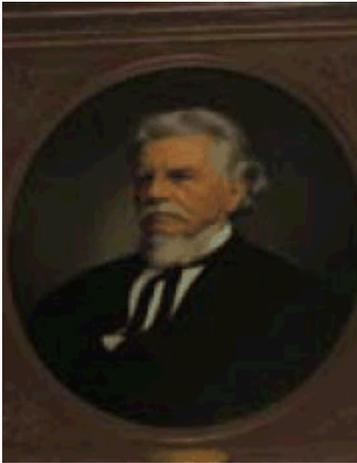
Read Jim Dyke's Oral History

Few Washingtonians are as well-connected as McGuire Woods partner James W. Dyke, Jr. A former chairman of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, Virginia Secretary of Education, and Domestic Policy Advisor in the White House, his recognition includes Washingtonian magazine's list of the "150 Most Powerful People" in the D.C. region and "Best Networker" in the area according to the Washington Business Journal. Beginning his education in racially-segregated Prince Georges County schools, he went on to graduate first in his class at Howard University Law School and created many of the legal and structural changes that brought Home Rule to the District of Columbia. His inspiring story is the latest addition to the oral histories available on the Historical Society's website (www.dcchs.org).



On display in the Courthouse

Available for viewing in the Courthouse is a likeness of the portrait of [Judge Burnita Shelton Matthews](#), the first woman to serve as a U.S. District Court judge. Coming soon: the portrait of Judge Richard Alvey, who was named to the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia by President Grover Cleveland and who served as its first Chief Justice.



Some Interesting Historical Facts

The Society is regularly posting historical happenings involving the Courts of the D.C. Circuit Courts and its judges on its website. (Go to www.dcchs.org and click on **Of Historical Interest**) This information is typically taken from *Calmly to Poise the Scales of Justice: A History of the Courts of the District of Columbia Circuit*, written by Jeffrey Brandon Morris. Here is a sampling:

How did a Court of Appeals ruling in 1921 [impact major league baseball?](#)

Read about [Chief Justice David Carter's](#) unusual outside interests.



Meet Doris Brown, the Society's Administrative Assistant

At age 19, not ever having known anyone south of Middleboro, MA, her home town, Doris came to Washington to work in the contracts division of the Navy Department. Fourteen months later, she was sent to Covington & Burling to work for Gerhard Gesell, Burke Marshall, and Abe Chayes. When Mr. Gesell's senior secretary left town, Doris took her place, traveling with him for trials in such places as Trenton, NJ, and Grand Rapids, Michigan. When the phone rang one day in the office, and Doris was told that the President was calling Mr. Gesell, she asked, as only she could, "The President of what?" It was President Kennedy calling!

Doris, of course, came to the District Court with Judge Gesell in 1968 and worked with him here for over 25 years, watching the smoke from the 1968 riots, witnessing an American Indian tribe performing a pretrial ritual in the courtroom to clear it of evil spirits, handing out the first five available copies of Judge Gesell's ruling in the Pentagon Papers case to the outstretched hands of 50 members of the press, and the full drama of the Watergate cases, among other things. Thereafter, Doris spent six wonderful years working with Judge David Tatel.