



THE UNITED STATES
DISTRICT COURT FOR
THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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NUNC PRO TUNC

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for the District of New Jersey
Historical Society

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The Historical Society of the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey has been celebrating and preserving the fascinating 220-year history of our District Court, the second oldest in the Nation, for twenty years. We continue, as actively as ever, becoming a model for historical societies throughout the Country.

The Society has created and hosted numerous programs commemorating the history of the Court. Among these were the acclaimed video history of the "Camden 28 trial," which aired on public television; tributes to the Magistrate Judges and Bankruptcy Judges of our District, a program on the bizarre history of the Court's Lady Justice statue; and an event celebrating the Chief Judges throughout the District's history.

The Society actively has taken the lead in restoring and highlighting historic Courthouse artwork. We sponsored the re-creation from photographs of two WPA murals that had inadvertently been destroyed; we assisted in restoring and celebrating the historic Charles Ward murals in Trenton; and we found and restored a lost Eagle statue that had once adorned the original Newark Courthouse. The Society is also busy identifying and cataloguing the art displayed in the Courthouses of all three vicinages.

The Society is also proud to have commissioned a comprehensive history of the Court written by a local scholar, titled *This Honorable Court*, which is believed to be the only history of a District Court in the Country. It is offered for sale in the bookstore of the Supreme Court of the United States.

To fulfill our mission to preserve the Court's proud history, members of the Society have been taking the oral histories of major living figures in the District Court's history, which are posted on the Court's website. We also collect, catalogue and preserve historical Court-related documents in our archives.

Members in the Society receive as part of their membership our semi-annual newsletter, *Nunc Pro Tunc*. The newsletter reviews our many Court-related activities and includes quality articles on the history of the Court written by our members and judicial advisors.

Last but certainly not least, the Society provides many opportunities for camaraderie between the Bench and Bar. These include our annual judicial reception for members, our Chairman's Ball and numerous other events throughout the year. We also sponsor annually a swearing in to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States, preceded by a memorable breakfast in the Court.

These are but a few of the many activities of the Society. If you are not already a member, please join us. It will enhance your knowledge and enjoyment of practicing law in this historic District.

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Honorable Harold A. Ackerman: Distinguished Jurist, Mentor, and Friend

By: Jeffrey S. Pollak, Esq.

Career Law Clerk to Judge Ackerman (2003-2009)

The District of New Jersey mourns the loss of the Honorable Harold A. Ackerman, who passed away at the age of 81 on December 2, 2009, after serving as a District Judge for nearly 30 years.

Judge Ackerman was born on February 15, 1928. Judge Ackerman attended Seton Hall University between 1945 and 1948, during which time he served in the U.S. Army, attaining the rank of sergeant. After returning from the service, he attended Rutgers Law School in Newark and received his law degree in 1951. After graduation, Judge Ackerman worked in private practice for three years before taking a position with the New Jersey Workmen's Compensation Division of Labor and Industry in 1954. He began what would become a 54-year judicial career by becoming a judge of the New Jersey Worker's Compensation Court in 1955. He served in several state-court judicial posts between 1955 and 1979, including judgeships with the Union County District and County Courts, as well as the Law and Chancery Divisions of the Superior Court, before being nominated to the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey by President Jimmy Carter on September 28, 1979. Judge Ackerman received his commission on November 2, 1979, and was sworn in as a District Judge on January 3, 1980. Judge Ackerman assumed senior status on February 15, 1994.

During his tenure in the District of New Jersey, Judge Ackerman heard thousands of cases and presided over hundreds of trials and hearings, including many involving political corruption, organized crime, and fraud. In 1984, after a lengthy bench trial, Judge Ackerman held that a Teamsters local union had been controlled by organized crime through violence and intimidation, and became the first judge in the nation to assert federal control over a mob influenced union under the RICO statute. His tireless efforts over the next 14 years restored democracy to the union and helped rid the union of mob control. From 1986 to 1988, Judge Ackerman presided over what, at the time, was the longest criminal trial in American history: the prosecution of 20 alleged members of the Lucchese organized crime family. Judge Ackerman frequently sat by designation on the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and in recent years he also sat by designation annually on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Judge Ackerman also served as a mediator with the Third Circuit's Appellate Mediation Program, and he was renowned for his uncanny ability to settle cases.

Judge Ackerman loved this Court and his country, and enjoyed every minute of his service to the Court. Throughout his years on the bench, he fostered close relationships with his law clerks and staff. Judge Ackerman ate lunch with his law clerks every day, sharing his legendary stories and jokes, and considered his clerks part of his family. He served as a mentor and friend to his devoted law clerks, many of whom have gone on to have distinguished careers in public service and private practice, in academia, and on the bench. As a judge, he prided himself on treating all litigants fairly and with respect and courtesy. He lived by the motto inscribed in Latin on the bench in his Newark courtroom: "Let justice be done though the heavens fall." Judge Ackerman's fairness, humor, and larger-than-life presence will be sorely missed.

An oral history interview was conducted of Judge Ackerman on behalf of the Historical Society, and it can be viewed at <http://www.history.njd.uscourts.gov/video/index.html>.

**We mourn the loss of Raymond A. Brown, Esq.
Distinguished Advocate and Citizen.
1915 - October 9, 2009**

**The Lawyers Advisory Committee of the United States District Court for the
District of New Jersey**

By: Thomas R. Curtin, Esq.

The mission of the Lawyers Advisory Committee is to serve the United States District Court and its Judges in achieving, dispensing and administering justice in a fair, impartial, effective and efficient manner.

The Committee's work includes: serving as a liaison and a method of communication among the Bench, the Bar and the public; discussing with the Court the matters the Committee believes might improve the administration of justice; undertaking projects as requested by the Court; conducting disciplinary investigations of lawyers upon the request of the Court; and finally, proposing, recommending and reviewing local rules and procedures to improve the Court's proceedings.

The Lawyers Advisory Committee was formed in 1983 by former Chief Judge Clarkson S. Fisher, and its members are selected by the Chief Judge. Chief Judge Gerry, Chief Judge Thompson, Chief Judge Bissell and Chief Judge Brown have appointed members to the Committee during their tenures as Chief Judge and have selected a lawyer to serve as the Chair. The Committee's initial Chair was Donald A. Robinson, followed by Cynthia Jacob, Mary Sue Henifin, Phillip Sellinger and current Chair, Thomas R. Curtin.

The District Judges and Magistrate Judges attend the LAC meetings, participate in the discussions of the Committee and serve on the sub-committees of the LAC. The Chair meets with the Chief Judge prior to each meeting and solicits suggestions for agendas from each member of the Committee and from the Judges. An agenda is prepared, circulated and discussed at each of the meetings.

The Committee has its own site on the Court's webpage and publishes its actions and recommendations on that website. The Clerk of the Court, Bill Walsh, and his colleagues Jim Murphy and Jack O'Brien serve as staff liaison to the Committee.

Since its inception, the principal task of the Committee has been to develop, review or revise the Local Rules of Civil and Criminal Practice, and to recommend to the Board of Judges that those policies be adopted as a part of the Local Civil Rules. Working with the Court, the Committee reviews and recommends changes to the Local Rules or suggests the modernization of those Rules to meet contemporary needs.

The Committee also provides advice, when appropriate, on issues raised by lawyers in connection with the differences in practice in each of the three vicinages. In its most recent business, the Committee has reviewed and revised Appendix R of the Local Rules urging Magistrate Judges to advise lawyers at the initial Rule 16 conference to read and become familiar with Appendix R; recommended the amendment of Rule 5.3 concerning motions to seal; and recommended a modification to Local Rule 30.1 concerning communications between witnesses and counsel during cross-examination at depositions and at trial. It revised Local Rule 301 to increase the amount of compensation to mediators who volunteer for the Court's mediation program and to eliminate the three free hours. It recommended the revision of Local Rule 301.1(e) and Appendix Q to permit

neutral evaluation. It assisted the Court in the development and adoption of Local Patent Rules. It recommended modifications to Local Rule 56.1 with regard to a statement of material facts in motions for summary judgment. At the urging of former Magistrate Judge John Hughes, the LAC developed a standard confidentiality agreement to be used in the event that the parties are able to come to an agreement with regard to one. Appendix S to the Rules is now in effect.

The value of the Lawyers Advisory Committee is best summarized by the following quote by Chief Judge Brown: “The LAC is an invaluable part of federal practice in New Jersey facilitating communication between the Bar and the Bench. The LAC's recommendations and assistance have led to up-to-date local rules and practices, making New Jersey one of the finest and most efficient Districts in the entire Federal judiciary. The Committee is invaluable to both lawyers and judges.”

On October 5, 2009, members of the Historical Society were sworn into the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States on the first day of the new term, which was Justice Sonia M. Sotomayor’s first day on the Bench as a Supreme Court Justice.



Newest members of the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States.

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