



Updated 6/1/2009

## Superior Court

### 2009 Calendar of Events and Programs

#### Statewide

##### Symposium and Commemorative Dinner

A symposium will be held on September 22, 2009, at the Boston Public Library to explore the historical origin of the Superior Court, the impact of themes such as judicial independence in notable cases, and future challenges facing the court. Professor Stephen Burbank of the University of Pennsylvania Law School and National Public Radio host Tom Ashbrook will serve as panel moderators. Following the symposium, United States Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer will deliver the keynote address at a commemorative dinner hosted by the Supreme Judicial Court Historical Society and the Massachusetts Bar Association.

##### Reflections

Approximately 50 current and former justices have written essays about their experiences and reflections as a Superior Court judge. These will be published by the Social Law Library.

##### Massachusetts Law Review

The fall issue of the Massachusetts Law Review will be dedicated to the Superior Court. Topics include articles about the founding of the court, summary judgment, the evolution of discovery, traditions and mores of the court, static exhibits and public history, novels in which the Superior Court plays a role, and how changes in the court have affected the practice of law.

##### Static Exhibits

Static exhibits will be installed in jury assembly rooms across the Commonwealth on such topics as separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary, the jury system, and subjects of local or regional interest.

## County Events and Programs

### Barnstable County

- Written history of Barnstable Superior Court
  - In collaboration with the Barnstable County Sheriff Inmate Graphic Arts Program, 5,000 copies will be distributed to jurors, schools, historical societies, and the general public beginning in March.
- Photographic and static exhibit displayed in the Barnstable Superior Courthouse
- School program at Barnstable Performing Arts Center ~ April 14, 15, & 16
  - Vignettes depicting famous criminal and civil cases tried in the Barnstable Superior Court will be performed by the Barnstable High School Drama Club. Anticipate a total audience of 1,500 students over three days.
- Educational and Celebratory Event at Barnstable Superior Courthouse ~ Law Day, May 1 from 11-1 PM
  - This event is co-sponsored by the Barnstable County Bar Association with musical entertainment provided by the Cape Cod Symphony Orchestra.
  - Winners of the high school graphic art contest to design a pictorial postmark commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be announced.
- Barnstable Village Tour ~ June 12 from 4-7 PM
  - A guided historic walking tour of Barnstable Village including a tour of the courthouse.
  - Reception following at the Barnstable Historical Society's Daniel Davis House in Barnstable Village.

### Berkshire County

- Local Cable Television Programs:
  - The history and work of the Superior Court - Chief Justice Barbara Rouse and Judges Daniel Ford and John Agostini.
  - Criminal program - the staging of mock hearings on a motion to suppress, sentencing, and bail that will be distributed to schools on a CD-ROM for classroom discussion. Participants include District Attorney David Capeless, Sheriff Carmen Massimiano, attorneys, and Judge Daniel Ford.
  - Civil program - the staging of mock hearings on a preliminary injunction and other civil matters that will be distributed to schools on a CD-ROM for classroom discussion. Participants include attorneys and Judge John Agostini.

## Bristol County

- "Justice: The Bristol County Superior Court, 1859-2009" at the Old Colony Historical Society, 66 Church Street, Taunton ~ February 19 through July 31
  - The exhibit will offer among other attractions, visual and written illustrations of the Superior Court's establishment at Taunton in 1859, notorious trials in the Superior Court such as the "Bicycle Bandit" in 1896 and the 1923 trial of a serial killer as well as a look at the construction of the original and standing Superior Courthouses.
- High School Students Visit the New Bedford Superior Courthouse ~ March 12
  - Teamed with an assistant district attorney or defense attorney, Fall River High School students will have an opportunity to watch a trial or motion hearing, to question a lawyer about the proceedings, and to discuss with the lawyer what it takes to become a member of the bar. The program will end with a discussion among the bench, bar, and students about the use of language and skills in winning legal arguments.
- Symposium on the Last Public Hanging in Bristol County ~ March 12 from 6:30 - 8:00 PM at New Bedford Superior Courthouse
  - In December of 1894, Daniel Robertson was put to death by hanging, the last public hanging in Bristol County. Paul Cyr, Curator of Special Collections at the New Bedford Public Library, will bring us back to those times by dramatically re-enacting the case and chronicling the county's strong sentiments against capital punishment; of 435 executions in Massachusetts from 1630 to 1947, only five occurred in Bristol County.
- Symposium on Great Mill Fire ~ April 15 at Bristol Community College
  - On the morning of September 19, 1874, fire broke out in Granite Mill # 1 that had been built with a pitched barn roof. The fire trapped many of the young workers in the attic who were unable to reach the stair towers. They were therefore forced to choose between burning to death or jumping five stories to the ground. Subsequent lawsuits were dismissed by the Bristol County Superior Court. On appeal of the "test case," the Supreme Judicial Court stated the applicable law: an employer had no duty "to provide means of escape or to ensure the safety of the servant." This symposium will go back to that time,

- exploring the court's response to the case and examining how the law has changed since that time.
- Lecture by Dr. William Hanna on the exhibit at the Old Colony Historical Society in Taunton ~ April 16 at 7 PM
- Symposium on Selected Issues in the "Big Dan's" Trial ~ May 7 from 5-7 PM at Fall River Superior Courthouse
  - Judge Lloyd Macdonald will lead a panel made up of trial participants, including the trial judge and representatives of the press, to discuss their thoughts on what administrative, logistical, and strategic adjustments were necessary for the simultaneous trial of two complex cases. The panel will also discuss the competing claims of free trial/free press and what impact the trial had on an evolving understanding of gender and ethnic stereotyping.
- Symposium on Trial of Charles Cuffee at Southern New England School of Law ~ May 13 from 4-6 PM
  - In May of 1871 at the New Bedford Superior Courthouse, Charles Cuffee, a fourteen-year-old African-American, was convicted of the first-degree murder of Benjamin Howard, a white man. The symposium will examine the clashing currents of the times in New Bedford whose people were known for their strong abolition sentiments and whose population also numbered many families with racial antagonisms springing from the loss of sons, brothers, and husbands in the Civil War. A panel led by Carl Cruz will examine the trial of Charles Cuffee, with particular attention paid to Cuffee's lawyer, William Henry Johnson, the first African-American lawyer in Bristol County, a man born to slavery, bred to be a jockey, and a run-away slave who escaped, eventually settling in the City of New Bedford.
- Primer on the Law for Young People ~ May 1 at 9am
  - A team of local attorneys, experienced educators, and law students from the Southern New England School of Law will design a middle school/high school teaching unit on the 1871 trial of Charles Cuffee.
  - This trial was chosen because it presents a unique teaching opportunity to address the evolution of jurisprudence over the past 150 years in the area of civil rights, defendant's rights, and race relations. The teaching unit will address a variety of legal issues including juvenile justice, the Fifth Amendment right to counsel and right to remain silent, and race relations.

- Symposium on New Bedford Teachers' Strikes ~ June 11 at New Bedford Public Library, 6-7:30pm
  - In 1969 and 1975, the Bristol County Superior Court responded to strikes by the New Bedford Teachers' Union. While the first teachers' strike was resolved without incarcerating teachers, in the 1975 strike, teachers went to jail. Through the eyes of those involved in the labor negotiations and court proceedings, including a teacher who went to jail, this symposium will explore the court's response to the strikes and assess the impact the strikes had on community relations and upon the lives of both educators and students.
- Symposium on Watuppa Water Rights cases at Bristol Community College ~ September 17
  - In 1889, the City of Fall River depended entirely on the prosperity of its fifty-seven cotton mills located below the 130-foot falls of the Quequechan River. From 1883 to 1891, the Superior Court and ultimately the Supreme Judicial Court, would face three cases known as Watuppa 1, 2, and 3, that sought to resolve the competing claims of the City of Fall River and mill owners on use of the Quequechan River. This symposium will consider that trio of cases in the context of a broader examination of public and private rights. Panelists will also discuss new debates and ideas on use of the Quequechan River.
- Lizzie Borden, Redux ~ Multiple dates and locations
  - New Bedford Superior Courthouse ~ September 24
  - Fall River Superior Courthouse ~ October 22
  - Taunton Superior Courthouse ~ November 19
  - Ms. Borden was acquitted of the murder of her father and mother and no other suspect was ever identified. The trial, which took place in 1893 in the New Bedford Superior Court, continues to interest and intrigue the public. Not a re-enactment but in a mock trial, Ms. Borden will be tried again with two lawyers serving as team prosecutors and two lawyers as team defense. The audience will vote a verdict.
- Symposium on Future of the Superior Court at Taunton Superior Courthouse ~ October 15
  - Fifty years from now, what will the Massachusetts Superior Court look like? What kinds of cases will dominate its docket and how will the court utilize the technology of our modern world in transacting its business? These questions will be a focal point for the symposium that will also closely explore the challenges the court faces in maintaining its

independence in an age of rapid information dissemination through a vast array of media outlets.

- Lizzie Borden C.S.I. (Crime Scene Investigation) ~ Date to be announced
  - This program, which will be held at the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, will bring practical understanding of this piece of local history into the classroom. State police investigators will re-create the blood soaked homicide scene. Detective Lieutenant Kenneth F. Martin, Commanding Officer, Crime Scene Services Section of the Massachusetts State Police, will show high school students how such a scene would be examined today.

### **Essex County**

- Outreach by Judges to Students in Essex County
  - In celebration of National Constitution Day in September, Judges Richard Welch and Christine Roach spoke to students at North Shore Community College.
  - In collaboration with North Shore Community College and the "Kids in College" program, Judge Richard Welch spoke to elementary, junior high, and high school students on four Saturdays at the Newburyport Superior Courthouse about the three branches of government, separation of powers, and the history and work of the Superior Court.
- Open House - "Yankee Homecoming Event" ~ July 26, 10am
  - In conjunction with the Yankee Homecoming Event in Newburyport the Superior Courthouse will be open to the public Sunday afternoon for tours of the oldest continuously operating court in the United States.
- Histories of Essex County Courthouses
  - Brochures detailing the histories of the courthouses in Newburyport, Salem, and Lawrence are being written by judges.
- Framed Tablets Displaying Historic Pictures of the Essex County Superior Courthouses
  - Jay Williamson, the Curator of the Historical Society of Old Newbury, has researched the archives at the Peabody Essex Museum and other locations for old photographs of the Essex County Superior Courthouses and their surroundings. He is preparing three identical tablets that will display these pictures together with a narrative explaining the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the court; they will be hung in each of the three courthouses.

- Talk on the Superior Court by Chief Justice Barbara Rouse to the Essex County Bar Association at the Annual Dinner at Spinelli's in Lynnfield ~ May 21, 6 PM

### **Franklin County**

- Educational and Celebratory Event at Franklin County Superior Court in Greenfield ~ May 22 from 1-4 PM. Secondary school children invited to participate in mock trial.
- Interview with Judge Samuel Tisdale, the oldest living Superior Court judge

### **Hampden County**

- High School Debate Series ~ February through April
  - The debates will take place at Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative in West Springfield and include ten high schools located throughout the county. After four rounds the finalists will debate before a large public audience on Law Day, May 1, at the Western New England School of Law.
- WGBY program "State We're In" ~ January 9
  - Program featured Justice John Greaney (ret.), Judge Constance Sweeney, and retired Assistant Clerk of Courts Kathleen McGreal and was devoted to the work of the Superior Court in Western Massachusetts.
- WGBY program "Around the Water Cooler" ~ September
  - A discussion of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Superior Court and the events associated with it.
- Springfield Republican
  - The local newspaper plans to print a number of essays written by judges.
- Western New England Law School's Alumni Magazine ~ Spring
  - The magazine will feature a cover story and interviews about the anniversary and the work of the court. A later edition of the magazine will report on the high school debates.
- Judges Constance Sweeney and Tina Page to speak to Western New England Law School alumni on February 18.
- Presentation of "The Rivalry," the Lincoln and Douglas debates ~ May 12 at 7PM Dever Hall, Westfield State College
  - The play is a professional production that will give a special performance in honor of the anniversary to be held at Westfield State College. Reception to follow.
- Symposium on the right to counsel at Western New England Law School ~ October

- o The event will focus on the right to counsel and the developments articulated in *LaVallee v. The Justices of the Hampden County Superior Court*. Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Margaret Marshall and Anthony Lewis will participate. A reception and dinner will follow.
- Springfield Senior Internship and Summer of Work and Learning
  - o Students will shadow judges and court personnel

### **Hampshire County**

- Calvin Coolidge Commemorative Plaque Ceremony ~ June 18, 4pm
  - o Hampshire Bar Association to donate brass plaque for statue on courthouse lawn for Calvin Coolidge.
  - o Ceremony will feature retired Judge W. Michael Ryan as the speaker.
- Talk by Lyndall Gordon on the Lavinia Dickinson case ~ Date to be announced
- Open House for students ~ June 18 at 4PM
  - o Includes tours of the courthouse for students and civil and criminal informational presentations.
- Hampshire Gazette will publish a supplement dedicated to the Superior Court

### **Middlesex County**

- Kickoff Event at University of Massachusetts-Lowell ~ April 30, Panel 5-6:30 PM, Reception 6:30-8 PM
  - o Panel discussion on the Belmont murder trial that was the subject of Sebastian Junger's book *A Death in Belmont*. Panelists will include participants from the actual trial as well as Sebastian Junger, F. Lee Bailey (who represented the Boston Strangler), and commentary by Middlesex District Attorney Gerard Leone.
  - o A reception will follow at the Chancellor's Residence hosted by Chancellor Martin Meehan.
- Law Day Celebration, Lowell Superior Courthouse ~ May 1, 2009, 8AM - 3PM
  - o Co-sponsored with the Greater Lowell Bar Association, Inc.
  - o Presentations of the history of the Superior Court and the Lowell Superior Courthouse, speeches from dignitaries, and tour of the courthouse.
  - o High school students who are selected as winners of an essay contest regarding Abraham Lincoln will be recognized.

- The People's Law School ~ September through October 2009, exact dates, times and location to be determined.
  - Six weekly classes on various legal and judicial topics, taught by lawyers and judges, and open to interested members of the public.
  - Individuals who attend all six classes will receive certificates of completion.

### **Norfolk County**

- Norwood High School Assembly ~ April 14
  - Judge John Connor, Jr. will address the freshman class at an assembly.
- Weymouth Middle School Assembly ~ April 16
  - Judge Robert Cosgrove will address the students at an assembly.
- Milton Middle School Assembly ~ May 4
  - Judge John Connor, Jr. will address the students at an assembly.
- Open House at Norfolk Superior Courthouse ~ May 5 from 5-7 PM
  - Court will be open to the public. Each courtroom will have a representative of the District Attorney's office, the Sheriff's office, and the Jury Commissioner's office to provide information on his/her particular role and how it relates to the Superior Court. Bob Hansen from the Dedham Historical Society will also be giving tours.
- Norfolk County Bar Association Dinner at Dedham Hilton ~ May 13
  - Judge Judith Cowin from the Supreme Judicial Court will be the keynote speaker, with an introduction by Chief Justice Barbara Rouse.
- Sacco and Vanzetti trial will be re-created at Norfolk Superior Courthouse ~ May 19 at 7 PM
  - Dedham District Court Presiding Judge Maurice Richardson (ret.) has written the script and will play the role of the court officer (narrator). The prosecution and defense will both present their closing arguments to the jury.
- School Assemblies in Randolph, Stoughton, Canton, and Dedham ~ May 18, 22, & 29
  - Judges Dortch-Okara, Cosgrove, and Fishman will address students at these local schools.
- Historical Exhibit ~ May through December
  - A collection of Norfolk County historical photographs and artifacts will be on display in the courthouse for

jurors, court users, and the public to view throughout the year.

### Plymouth County

- Educational and Celebratory Event at Plymouth Trial Court complex sponsored by the Plymouth County Bar and Plymouth District Bar Associations ~ May 7 8:30AM - 5:30PM
  - High school students will tour the courthouse and participate in discussions with judges
  - Historical exhibits will be on display in the courthouse lobby.
  - Mock trial competition between two local high schools.
  - A naturalization ceremony for new citizens and their families, as well as distinguished guests previously naturalized in Plymouth County, will take place in the late morning. John Riordan, Plymouth County Commissioner, Timothy Cruz, Plymouth County District Attorney, and restaurateur Chris Tsaganis will be the guest speakers.
  - An afternoon reception, meet and greet, and tours will complete the day. Speakers include Chief Justice Barbara J. Rouse and Retired Superior Court Chief Justice Robert Steadman.
- Students from Brockton High School law class were filmed participating in a mock suppression hearing. The film will be shown at Brockton High School followed by a question and answer session with judges and attorneys on May 14 at 2:30 PM. It will also be shown at the Plymouth Trial Court Complex to guests on May 7.

### Suffolk County

- Chief Justice Barbara Rouse to appear as a guest on Clerk Maura Hennigan's cable television show ~ February 10 from 1 - 1:30 PM
- Massachusetts Bar Association Mock Trial Competitions
  - February 25 in Courtroom 907 ~ 2-4:30 PM
  - March 10 in Courtroom 815 ~ 2-4:30 PM
  - March 18 in Courtroom 916 ~ 2-4:30 PM
- Open House program for Jurors ~ Date in June to be announced
- A performance by the Theatre Espresso of *The Anthony Burns Story* at the John Adams Courthouse, Boston ~ April 15 at 10:30AM
- Book discussion by author Stephanie Schorow on *Cocoanut Grove Fire* at the Social Law Library, John Adams Courthouse, Boston ~ May 4 from 5-7 PM
- Static exhibit to be installed permanently in the Suffolk County Courthouse jury assembly room (date TBA)

- Archival demonstration at Suffolk County Courthouse ~ May 15 from 12-2 PM
- *Jack and the Beanstalk* Mock Trial ~ June 15, 10:30am for elementary School students
- Book discussion by author Stephen Puleo on the *Great Molasses Flood of 1919* at the Social Law Library, John Adams Courthouse, Boston ~ September 14 from 5-7 PM

### **Worcester County**

- Film Festival - films to be shown to various student groups followed by discussions led by judges and attorneys
  - *To Kill a Mocking Bird* - Worcester VOKE - February 12 at 8:30-11:30 AM and 6:30 PM
  - Additional film dates and locations to be announced
- Open House at the Worcester Trial Court Complex ~ June 4 at 4 PM
  - Grand opening of the new Law Library from 2-4pm
  - Featuring Chief Justice Barbara Rouse as guest speaker
  - Unveiling of restored statue of Moses by the President of the Worcester Bar Association
  - Re-enactment of the trial of Bathsheba Spooner featuring Madaline Arn, followed by a discussion on how the case would differ if tried today