
GLENN A. GRANT, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

www.njcourts.gov • Phone: 609-376-3000 • Fax: 609-376-3002

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Dear County Bar President and Members:

The New Jersey Judiciary has launched a website - the New Jersey Supreme Court Virtual Museum - that chronicles the state Supreme Court from the adoption of the current state constitution in 1947. The Virtual Museum was created and is maintained by the Supreme Court Historical Advisory Board, which Chief Justice Stuart Rabner formed to preserve the rich history of the state's highest court. The Virtual Museum, which can be viewed at <https://www.njcourts.gov/courts/supreme/vm/scvirtual.html>, includes speeches, correspondence, videos and photographs of the Court and key figures in its history. The site includes detailed biographical profiles of the first seven Chief Justices to serve under the 1947 New Jersey Constitution, biographies of deceased associate justices who have served since 1948, links to testimony before the New Jersey Constitutional Convention of 1947 Committee on the Judiciary - which drafted the judicial article of the current constitution - and the structure of the Judiciary before enactment of the 1947 Constitution.

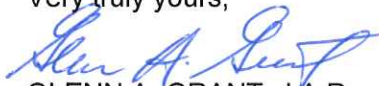
New Jersey has had a Supreme Court since before it became a state in 1787. However, the Supreme Court did not become the state's highest appellate court until 1948. New Jersey's first constitution, in 1776, included a Court of Appeals, which was then the state's court of last resort. The state constitution of 1844 established the Court of Errors and Appeals as the state's highest court, deriving its name from its function of hearing appeals and correcting errors of lower courts. That court was abolished after voters approved the 1947 constitution establishing today's New Jersey Supreme Court, which held its first session in its courtroom in the Statehouse Annex in Trenton on September 15, 1948. Photographs of that courtroom and the adjoining conference room - both of which are now legislative hearing rooms - are featured on the Virtual Museum site.

In addition to maintaining the Virtual Museum, the Advisory Board's work includes short- and long-term projects; identifying, locating, and researching materials for the Court's collection; locating and collecting Court-related artifacts; identifying and placing markers or plaques on historically significant Court sites; commemorating significant historical anniversaries and publishing articles and books. The Advisory Board also recommends to the Supreme Court content and material for inclusion on the Virtual Museum website as well as the inclusion of notable cases and other legal events involving the New Jersey Judiciary.

The Supreme Court Historical Advisory Board is also working with the Rutgers Oral History Archives to conduct in-depth interviews of living former chief justices and associate justices. Chaired by retired Supreme Court Associate Justice James H. Coleman Jr., the Advisory Board is comprised of sitting and retired justices and judges as well as law school professors, deans, attorneys and others.

To donate photographs, documents, artifacts and memorabilia related to the New Jersey Supreme Court and the New Jersey Judiciary for inclusion in the Virtual Museum, contact Mike Mathis in the Judiciary's Office of Communications and Community Relations at 609-815-2900 ext. 52352 or at Mike.Mathis@njcourts.gov. Thank you.

Very truly yours,



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