

SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE
SPECIAL SESSION

**Commemorating the 300th Anniversary
of Courts on the Green**

**October 14, 1999
2:00 P. M.
Superior Court – Courtroom #1
Dover, Delaware**

Opening of Court:	President Henry duPont Ridgely Superior Court, State of Delaware
Remarks:	<p>The Honorable E. Norman Veasey Chief Justice, Delaware Supreme Court</p> <p>The Honorable Maurice A. Hartnett, III Justice, Delaware Supreme Court</p> <p>The Honorable Nancy W. Cook 15th Senatorial District</p> <p>The Honorable Nancy H. Wagner 31st Representative District</p> <p>The Honorable Michael P. Cebrick Vice President, Kent County Levy Court</p> <p>The Honorable James L. Hutchison Mayor, City of Dover</p> <p>Barbara Wallace, Board Advisor Delaware Paralegal Association</p> <p>Bradley S. Eaby, Esquire, President Kent County Bar Association</p>
Adjournment:	President Judge Henry duPont Ridgely

Members of Judicial Conference

Senators

The Honorable James T. Vaughn
The Honorable Nancy W. Cook
The Honorable Colin R. J. Bonini
The Honorable John C. Still, III
The Honorable F. Gary Simpson

Representatives

The Honorable Bruce C. Ennis
The Honorable Charles E. Welch
The Honorable G. Robert Quillen
The Honorable Nancy H. Wagner
The Honorable Donna D. Stone
The Honorable G. Wallace Caulk Jr.
The Honorable Gerald A. Buckworth

Kent County Row Offices

Recorder of Deeds – Dr. Raymond M. Warner Jr.
Receiver of Taxes – Joyce Melvin
Register of Wills – Ross W. Trader
Clerk of the Peace – Edith Hemphill
Kent County Sheriff – James Higdon Jr.
Register of Chancery – Loretta L. Wooten

Kent County Levy Court

Mr. Robert McLeod
The Honorable Michael P. Cebrick
The Honorable Paul Davis
The Honorable P. Brooks Banta
The Honorable Ronald D. Smith
The Honorable Harold J. Peterman
The Honorable Donald A. Blakey
The Honorable David R. Burris

Kent County Bar Members

The Honorable G. Robert Quillen
The Honorable Nancy F. Wagner
The Honorable Donna D. Stone
The Honorable G. Wallace Caulk Jr.
The Honorable Gerald A. Buckworth

Kent County Row Offices

Recorder of Deeds – Dr. Raymond M. Warner Jr.

Special Session

October 14, 1999

2:00 p.m.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Good afternoon and welcome to a special session of the Superior Court of Delaware commemorating the 300th Anniversary of Courts on the Green.

Joining us today for this special occasion are members of the various Delaware courts, including the Supreme Court of Delaware, the Court of Chancery, the Family Court, and the Court of Common Pleas.

I would like to introduce those who are seated with me on the bench today. To my right is the Honorable E. Norman Veasey, Chief Justice of Delaware. To my left is the Honorable Maurice A. Hartnett III, Justice of Supreme Court of Delaware. To Chief Justice Veasey's right is the Honorable Myron T. Steele, Vice Chancellor of the Court of Chancery. To the left of Justice Hartnett, the Honorable James T. Vaughn Jr., Resident Judge of the Superior Court.

Kent County Superior Court Judge William L. Witham Jr. could not be with us today because he is attending National Judicial College.

We also have members of our various courts in the jury box as well.

The Court wants to recognize the Members of the Delaware House and Senate who are present, the Members of the Delaware Judiciary and the Bar, Kent County public officers, particularly Senator Cook and Representative Quillen, Representative Wagner, Clerk of the Peace; Edith Hemphill, Register of Chancery, Loretta Wooten, and

Robert McLeod of Kent County Levy Court, Administrator; Commissioner Michael P. Cebrick, Commissioners Banta, Smith, Peterman, Blakey, and Burris.

To all of you, and to all of the friends of the Delaware Courts, a special and warm welcome.

It is now my honor to introduce the Chief Justice of Delaware, the Honorable E. Norman Veasey for any remarks he may wish to make on this special occasion. Chief Justice Veasey.

CHIEF JUSTICE VEASEY: Thank you, President Judge Ridgely. Distinguished fellow Members of the Judiciary, Members of the General Assembly, elected and appointed officials from Dover, Kent County, and all over the State, and distinguished fellow Delawareans. We Delawareans love to celebrate tradition. This is a wonderful tradition here. 300 years at this site, a tricentennial for the Courts.

I remember many other notable occasions in Delaware, and those in Kent County in particular, where we celebrate other traditions. It wasn't long ago that we celebrated the bicentennial of the Delaware Court of Chancery. We had a celebration right out here on The Green in 1992. I remember Justice Hartnett, who was then a Vice Chancellor, spoke eloquently about the history of the Court of Chancery. So I look forward to his remarks today.

Also, in the historical vein, we in the Supreme Court of the Delaware Judiciary look up to Justice Hartnett for many things: His jurisprudence, and his acumen, but his historical perspective is always interesting. And I find that in Kent County, many, many

of our judicial colleagues and other colleagues are particularly expert in history and love to celebrate history.

I bring you greetings from the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court uses this courthouse from time to time in important cases and important ceremonial occasions. In just two months, we will be in this courtroom, and it will be packed with people who will be admitted to the Bar of Delaware for the first time. Being admitted to the Bar of Delaware is something very special, and recognized to be special all over the country. So we will have two sessions in this very courtroom to honor those who are being admitted to the Bar.

Just before I came over here today, I was in the Supreme Court Building right across The Green, and looked at the bronze plaque of all the Members of the Delaware Bar from the date of the very first one, which was Thomas Spry in 1676, the first member of the Delaware Bar. That tradition is what we're celebrating today on this site.

So I want to congratulate Dover and Kent County. I want to congratulate all the judges, the court employees, and everybody who has worked so hard to put together this celebration today, and just for the very fact that they are celebrating this wonderful occasion.

So, President Judge Ridgely, thank you very much for inviting me, and I look forward to the rest of the proceedings.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you Chief Justice. It's always a privilege and honor to have you join us.

I would like to ask at this time Justice Hartnett to give his remarks on the reasons for this particular occasion, and the history which we are commemorating. Justice Hartnett.

JUSTICE HARTNETT: Today we are celebrating both the 300th Anniversary of the first holding of Court on The Dover Green, and the 300th birthday of the City of Dover.

Let us briefly step back to over 300 years ago. In the fall of 1699, the first trial was held in what was then a new Courthouse for Kent County. It was the first building erected in what is now Dover, and ever since Court has been continuously held on The Dover Green.

All this occurred, because in 1681, William Penn had been given what is now The State of Delaware by the Duke of York, brother of Charles II, King of England. In 1683, upon visiting this area shortly after his arrival in America, Penn selected the site for a Court House for Kent County. Dover exists today because, as Penn intended, it grew up around that Court House. By 1716, Dover had grown to 300 residents.

Court, however, had been held in what is now Kent County before Penn arrived, when the County was called St. Jones County. By 1680, court sessions were held in private homes on the St. Jones River near its mouth at the Delaware Bay.

Sometime after 1680, a log building was erected and used as a Court House, but its location is unknown. Commencing in 1690, Court was held in the tavern of James Maxwell located near the present intersection of Kings Highway and Park Drive

in what is now Dover. There were objections, however, to the holding of Court at that place because of the boisterous tavern atmosphere.

In 1694, the Provencial Council, after rejecting two other sites, decided to build a Court House for the people of Kent County on 200 acres of vacant land owned by William Southersby near a boat landing at the west side of the Dover or St. Jones River. This landing is at a bend in the river near the foot of what is now Water Street, just a hop skip and jump to the east, and in 1694, ocean going vessels were still docking there. As recently as 1950, it was still being used as a landing for small boats.

The purchased tract of land is bounded on the north by what is now North Street, on the south by South Street, on the east by the St. Jones River, and on the west by the railroad and Eden Hill Farm.

As I noted, the first building erected on what is now called The Green, was the Court House. Its construction commenced in 1697 on the very site where we meet today. It was located in accordance with the 1693 direction of William Penn “that a Court House be built at the proposed cross streets of the Town of Dover.”

That Court House was located at the intersection of proposed King Street, which is now State Street, and the Long Road, now the south side of The Green. Then as now, the Court House site is the crest of the small hill that commences at the Water Street Landing.

Court was first held in the new Court House on September 12th, 1699. Tonight and tomorrow night, that first trial will be restaged in music in this Courtroom and, hopefully, many of you will be able to attend.

In 1699, a trial, once commenced, continued until concluded, often lasting through the night. If convicted, the defendant was immediately taken outside to receive the punishment imposed. For many years, various notices were read to the public at the beginning of each term of court, because so few could read.

In December of 1699, the frugal Provincial Council leased the new Court House for nine years to Phillip Hunings, contingent upon his building a stable, a twelve foot square wine cellar, and a pasture. He was also required to maintain the Court House in good repair, keep a tavern or house of entertainment in the Court House and provide sufficient necessities such as drink, meat, lodging, and hay and corn for horses.

This tavern was originally called the “Kings George Tavern,” but its name was changed during the Revolution to “The George Tavern.”

By 1722, the County had outgrown the 1699 Court House, and a new brick Court House was erected on the site of the present Old State House on the east side of The Green. Upon the erection of the 1722 Court House, the old 1699 Court House was sold, but it continued in use as a Tavern until after the Civil War, when it burned.

On May 12, 1777, the capital of the new Delaware State was moved to Dover, and in 1722, the Kent County Court House was pressed into use as the State Capitol. This Court House also became inadequate, and in 1775, Kent County Levy

Court decided to have a new Court House erected. It, however, was not until 1782 that the old building was demolished to make room for a new Court House.

By 1791, this new Court House, which is now the Old State House Building on the east side of The Green, was in use by the County Offices, the Courts, and the State. In 1792, the General Assembly met there for the first time.

From that time until 1874, the Old State House served as the Court House for Kent County and as the State Capitol, but it had only one Courtroom.

By 1870, it became obvious that the building serving as a Court House and as the State Capitol was overcrowded, and steps were taken by the Levy Court to have a new Court House erected. In 1874, the Old Court House was sold to the State for exclusive use as the State Capitol. The present Court House where we are now meeting, was then erected on the site of the 1699 Court House that was then a vacant lot. At the time of the construction, the Court House was Victorian in appearance and four stories high. When originally built, and until 1918, the street floor was occupied by small one-room offices leased to attorneys.

In 1918, a major renovation of the Court House took place. The fourth floor, used as a Town Meeting Room and dance and convention hall, was removed. The exterior appearance was also changed from Victorian to Georgian. An entire new brick façade was substituted; the building was expanded, and most of the fireplaces were removed.

In 1983, the entire building was completely refurbished for court-related uses. The project was a joint endeavor of the Kent County Levy Court and the State.

The County continues to own the building, but the State leases from the County the space used for the Courts.

Many famous trials have taken place here. In the late 19th century, a dentist attempted to defraud his life insurance carrier by murdering a black servant and skinning his body. He then set fire to the building and the body, hoping to pass off the body as his. The doctor was apprehended on the midnight train to Harrington. He was arrested and brought to trial here on the Green.

He was represented at trial by Williard Saulsbury, later a United States Senator, and still later, the Chancellor of Delaware. At the trial, he argued self-defense, and got his client off with a conviction for a much lesser offense. He received but a short prison term. It is said that the attorney, Willard Saulsbury, prevailed because of his personal acquaintances with each juror.

In 1949, the Court House was the scene of “The Lonely Heart Murder” trial that some of you may remember. It received daily international publicity. In 1948, Inez Brennan lured at least five elderly men to her farm on Horsepond Road east of Dover by advertising the availability of her companionship in lonely hearts magazines. She then convinced her 15-year old son to murder the men for their money. Both were convicted of First Degree Murder, but were sentenced only to life imprisonment. They were later released and left Delaware.

In 1953 a trial in this courtroom established the first national precedent that evidence obtained by radar was admissible in court to prove the excessive speed of a motor vehicle.

Many other notable trials have taken place here, and the Supreme Court has occasionally used it for its arguments and for various ceremonies. Even the General Assembly has met here.

Today is also the 300th Anniversary of the Dover Green which came into existence as “The Court House Square.” In the mid-1800’s, the Town of Dover officially named it “The Green.” The existence of a public square like The Green is typical of an old English town, and The Dover Green was often used for markets and fairs until the middle of the 19th Century.

In front of the Court House, in July 1776, the Declaration of Independence was first read to the inhabitants of Dover. At the same time, a picture of King George III was burned. This celebration occurred before the celebration in Philadelphia, and it has been said that this was the first Independence Day celebration in the new country.

On December 7th, 1787, in Battel’s Golden Fleece Tavern on The Green, Delaware ratified the United States Constitution, thus becoming “The First State.”

During the Civil War, much of the population of Dover gathered daily on The Green to hear local lawyers read the latest dispatches from the war front. Both Southern and Union sympathizers were there, and there were often scuffles between the two sides.

Beginning with the Revolutionary War and continuing through the 20th Century, soldiers have mustered and left from The Green. In the early years, the Court House was the only general election polling place in the County, and The Green has been the scene of numerous political rallies and torchlight parades. Presidents Wilson,

Coolidge, and Johnson, among others, have spoken here, and it has often been the site for the Inauguration of Governors. It was, until the 1920s, the scene for Return Day Ceremonies after a general election like those that still take place in Georgetown.

Today, not everything of importance that occurs in Dover takes place on The Green, and the Court House is no longer the social and political center of the Town. The Green, however, remains the ceremonial heart of Dover and the State and continues, as it has for 300 years, to fulfill its role as the site for offices for lawyers and judges, the scene of business transactions, and the seat of justice for the people of Delaware.

Even now, some natives say, when all is still and the Court House clock strikes midnight, a visitor to The Green may still encounter the ghost of Chief Justice Chew, despite the townspeople's attempt to lay his ghost to rest in 1745; or hear the sounds of ancient fairs and rallies; or even hear the arguments of long forgotten members of the Bench and Bar.

Happy birthday to Dover, and its Courts.

(A P P L A U S E.)

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you again, Justice Hartnett. I know at least one of those historical precedents you cited, The Lonely Hearts Murder case. I think Judge Vaughn's father was an investigating officer in that case. Judge William G. Bush III, before his admission to the Bar, was an investigator in that case, and my father was a prosecutor in that case. So the legacy still continues.

JUSTICE HARTNETT: And three judges heard the case.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: It's now my pleasure to recognize the Honorable Nancy W. Cook, of the 15th Senatorial District and Co-Chairman of the Joint Finance Committee for remarks and a presentation.

Senator Cook, welcome.

HONORABLE NANCY COOK: Good afternoon. Chief Justice Veasey, Members of the Supreme Court, President Judge Ridgely, Members of the Judiciary, elected officials, and honored guests. It's certainly an honor and pleasure for me to be here today and represent the Delaware State Senate on this very special occasion.

I do have a senate resolution that the General Assembly and the State Senate passed in August in our special session in Resolution No. 15, and I will read you part of that.

It's Delaware State, the 140th General Assembly, Senate Resolution No. 15, and sponsors: Senator Cook, Senators Adams, Vaughn, Bonini, Simpson, and Still.

"Extending appreciation to the judges, attorneys and employees of the Courts of Kent County on the 300th Anniversary of the First Meeting of the Courts.

"WHEREAS, three hundred years ago on September 12, 1699, the Courts of Kent County first met in their then new court house on The Court House Square, now The Dover Green, in Dover at the present location of the Kent County Court House;

"WHEREAS, the Courts since that date have met on The Dover Green in Dover; and

“WHEREAS, the Courts have always been a critical part of the social and economic life of Dover, Kent County, and the State of Delaware; and

“WHEREAS, the Senate of 140th General Assembly desires to honor the Courts, their Judges, attorneys and employees on this important occasion, and to express their appreciation to the Courts’ important role in our society and to the City of Dover, Kent County, and the State of Delaware;

“NOW THEREFORE:

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the 140th General Assembly extends to the Judges, attorneys and employees of the Courts of Kent County our warm appreciation for their dedicated service to the people of our City, County, and State.”

We also have a historian that works for the Delaware State Senate, Dick Carter. Many of you may know him, and he has presented a very lovely tribute that captures much of the history that Justice Hartnett captured, and perhaps at some point, you can keep it in your archives. But at this time, I would like to present that tribute to you, and just read you a couple of paragraphs from it, because it does recite some of the same history that Justice Hartnett did.

“Be it hereby known to all that the entire Senate of the 140th General Assembly of the State of Delaware joins Senator Nancy W. Cook, Sponsor, in recognizing:

“The Three Hundredth Anniversary of the First Meeting of the Court on the Dover Green, then The Court House Square, which occurred on the Twelfth Day of September, A.D. 1699.

“The Senate joins Senator Cook in marking the Tricentennial of this event, and, in so doing, paying tribute to all those members of the Bench and Bar, past and present, and the members of their staffs who have done so much over the past three hundred years to further the Administration of Justice in this historic place.”

And it goes on and recites some of the same history, and at this time I would like to present this to the court, and for their archives, or for future review.

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(A P P L A U S E)

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PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you, Senator Cook.

These documents will be included in the official records and archives of the court, and we're truly grateful to the Senate for them.

At this time, I would like to recognize Representative Nancy Wagner of the 31st Representative District of Kent County, and Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee for her remarks and presentation. Welcome, Representative Wagner.

HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVE WAGNER: Thank you. Good afternoon, Chief Justice Veasey, Members of the Supreme Court, President Judge Ridgely, Members of the Judiciary Bar, elected officials and honored guests.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today. I bring to you from the House of Representatives, our congratulations and our good wishes for the future. And I also bring House Resolution No. 46, whose language is somewhat identical to the Senate, so I will simply read the last bit.

“Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the 140th General Assembly, House Resolution No. 46, honoring and extending appreciation to the Judges, attorneys and employees of the Courts of Kent County, our warm appreciation for their dedicated service to the people of our City, our County and our State.”

This was sponsored by Representatives Wagner, Welch, Buckworth and Caulk, Quillen and Stone, and B. Ennis.

It’s a pleasure to be here, and we look towards to 300 more years.

Thank you.

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(A P P L A U S E)

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PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you.

I’m pleased to recognize at this time Ronald D. Smith, Esquire, of the Kent County Levy Court for his remarks and a presentation. Mr. Smith, welcome.

RONALD D. SMITH: Thank you, Your Honor. Good afternoon Chief Justice Veasey, Supreme Court Justices, President Ridgely, Vice Chancellor Steele,

and other members of the judiciary, and other elected officials, fellow attorneys, as well as court personnel and guests that are here today.

On behalf of the Levy Court, we also have a resolution honoring the court on this historical date. I'll only read one or two parts of it.

“WHEREAS, on September 12, 1699, the Courts of Kent County first met in the “new” Court House on The Court House Square, now known as The Dover Green; and

“WHEREAS, the courts of Kent County are and have always been an integral part of the social and economic life of Dover, the State Capital City; and Kent County, the central county of the State; and

“WHEREAS the Kent County Levy Court desires to honor and express their appreciation to the Courts, the Judge's, Attorneys and Employees on this great historical achievement.”

I'm particularly pleased to be able to present this. Obviously, as a member of the bar, it's an honor, and I thank my fellow commissioners for the court to do this.

We also have a unique role of being the landlord here for two or three hundred years now in, and I'd have to say as a landlord, there's probably not a better tenant you could have than the State of Delaware. It's been a good relationship over the years, and hopefully, there wasn't a security deposit when we began this, as I don't think it's been an interest-bearing account. I thank you.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you, Commissioner Smith.

(A P P L A U S E .)

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PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you, Commissioner

I have to add that having been one of the tenants here, our relationship with the County could not have been better. The County has worked extraordinarily well with the Court in providing us these quarters, and we appreciate that.

The Court now wishes to recognize, essentially, a co-celebrant, since this is also in recognition of the 300th birthday of the City of Dover, it is my honor and privilege to recognize the Mayor of the great City of Dover, James L. Hutchison for his remarks and presentation.

HONORABLE MAYOR HUTCHISON: Good afternoon. Chief Justice Veasey, President Judge Ridgely, Justice Hartnett, Vice Chancellor Steele, Resident Judge Vaughn. Members of the Senate, The House, Members of the Judiciary, Members of the Delaware Bar, Staff and Employees of the Courts.

What a special day this is. We come together today, not only with the City, but the Court to celebrate 300 years. I personally am honored, because I had the opportunity to work 25 years in law enforcement, and had the opportunity to spend many

times and many hours in this very courtroom, and I certainly have the deepest respect and regards for this system.

Without a doubt, this legal system is the very best in the world today. So it is indeed very special for me as the Mayor of this beautiful city to be here to celebrate this very special occasion. And I have a resolution which I would like to read to the Court, if I may.

“WHEREAS, on September 12, 1699, the Courts of Kent County first met in their then new court house on The Court House Square, now known as The Dover Green, which is the present location of the Kent County Court House; and

“WHEREAS, ever since then the courts have met on The Dover Green in Dover and have been a critical part of social and economic life of the City of Dover and Kent County; and

“WHEREAS, the 300th Anniversary of the Court’s first meeting on The Dover Green provides a fitting opportunity to recognize and honor the courts, judges, attorneys, and employees on this important occasion and to express appreciation for the courts’ important role in our society and to the City of Dover, Kent County, and the State of Delaware.

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER extend to the judges, attorneys, and employees of the Courts of Kent County, our warm appreciation for their dedicated service to the people of our City, County, and State.” And most importantly, to the United States of America.

Signed: Robert R. Christiansen, Council President, and myself, James L. Hutchison, Mayor of the City of Dover.

It's an honor to present to you this resolution.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you.

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(A P P L A U S E)

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PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: At this time, I would like to recognize Barbara Wallace, Board Advisor to the Delaware Paralegal Association for her remarks.

Welcome, Ms. Wallace.

MS. WALLACE: Chief Justice Veasey, President Judge Ridgely, Members of the Judiciary, Members of the Bar, elected officials, and honored guests. It's a great honor that you have allowed me to be here today to represent the contributions that non-lawyers have made to this 300 year history of the Courts.

I have the occasion to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the National Federation of Paralegals, which is like our bar association, which really celebrates 25 years of a formalization of our proof. But I think it is fair to say that for all these 300 years, there have always been non-lawyers involved that supported the efforts and the proceedings in the court. But recently, we have become the more formal and recognized group, and we are very happy to be recognized today.

I was asked to bring some statistics with me, and I'm not going to go through 300 years of statistics about how many people there are, and how much progress we've made, but I will let you know some things to give you an idea of where we are now and where we hope to go in the future.

According to the Department of Labor, and these are 1997 figures, there were one thousand eighty persons practicing in the State of Delaware. And at that time, there were 110 legal technicians and commercial, and 790 legal secretaries. There were many people who feel that this is a great moving towards that we have pretty much two paralegals – one paralegal for every two attorneys. There we go. But now people who study the legal model feel that that is actually going to be flipped. That in the future, for every one attorney, there will be two or three paralegals and, of course, as a paralegal, we hope that that takes place.

A lot of that has to do with what we can bring to the table, what we can contribute, what we do, and how we can support the legal system. It has to do with economics. Delaware is pretty much right there with the paralegal profession. Our annual salaries in Delaware pretty much mirror the annual salaries for paralegals throughout the country, and in 1997, that was around \$34,000 a year.

So it may seem funny to say how can all these salaried people at \$34,000 plus a year, really contribute? Now, you have to look at what the average salary a year was for attorneys. And I've been told to say this very clearly and loudly, as loud as you say that the average salary was \$72,500 for attorneys. So what we have done is take a look at what job is appropriate for what person to do from an education standpoint and

from an economic standpoint, and we feel that the paralegal, the legal secretaries, the court clerks, all of us that are recognizing ourselves as the professionals that we are, can contribute a lot to the court, and we hope in the future that we'll be able to contribute even more in a very professional way.

So, again, I want to thank you for including us today. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you.

(A P P L A U S E)

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: I note that the work of paralegals is not only indispensable to many lawyers, it's indispensable to the Courts which have paralegals that work with us.

The court would now like to recognize Bradley S. Eaby, who is the President of the Kent County Bar Association for his remarks. Mr. Eaby, welcome.

MR. EABY: Thank you, Your Honor. Chief Justice Veasey, Supreme Court Justices, President Judge Ridgely, Chancellors, Trial Court Judges, Magistrates, Legislators, and other Dignitaries, Lawyers, Guests, and Court Employees.

On behalf of the Kent County Bar Association, I would like to thank all of you for providing such a fine judiciary system wherein we can all practice our profession.

It's hard to imagine that a Court House full of lawyers and politicians could agree on one thing, but we do. And it's the same idea that William Penn aspired to approximately 300 years ago in this very spot.

The belief that humankind can only prosper and advance in a society that provides an even-handed, unbiased, equal system of justice, open to all it's inhabitants.

Right now, during this ceremony, untold numbers of people throughout the world are suffering from grave deprivation of human rights and the trampling of individual freedoms.

Just the other day, while listening to the radio, I heard about a vigilante group in South Africa called the Mapogo. They dispense their own form of justice. Many of its members have recently been charged with murder, kidnapping, and torture. People need a system of justice. It's as basic as the food and water that sustains us. If the government does not provide a forum that the citizens have faith in, they will devise their own. It may turn out to be like the Mapogo. But they will put something in place.

Let us never fall victim to an unacceptable judicial system. Let us continue to strive to provide the best legal system in the world for another 300 years, and 300 years after that, and so on. So that 300 years from now, the local Bar Association will meet to, hopefully, show their gratitude for our Courts. The Courts continued existence is a testament to the public trust and confidence they inspire. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: Thank you.

(A P P L A U S E)

PRESIDENT JUDGE RIDGELY: The public trust and confidence of the citizens we serve is, of course, essential to the operation of the Courts.

We appreciate all of the very kind remarks of all our speakers today, and the resolutions which we have received demonstrate that public trust and confidence. They will be appropriately framed and displayed in this Court House with pride.

I want to thank, again, all of our speakers for helping us commemorate the 300th Anniversary of the Courts on The Green and the City of Dover.

This concludes this Special Session of the Superior Court, with the commemoration continuing into the evening in other ways.

There will be a group photograph of the Kent County Bench and Bar at 6 p.m. in front of the steps of The Supreme Court. And tonight, and also tomorrow evening in this courtroom at 7 p.m. there will be performances of a musical, The King v. Elliner Ruttee, a musical written by Robert Young, Esquire, of the Kent County Bar Association, and it will be performed by Kent County Theatre Guild.

If you are interested in attending, tickets are being distributed on a first come, first-serve basis and can be obtained from Catherine Hickey. I believe she is present today and has tickets with her. I would ask her to stand so she may be identified.

Thank you again for your attendance.

Court is now adjourned.

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