

A Guide to the Oral History Interview of John Thomas Bruce, Office of the Chief Staff Attorney, Supreme Court of Virginia, October 11, 2013

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Descriptive Summary

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Creator

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1 digital video recording (1 hour, 47 minutes, 58 seconds); 1 transcript (48 p.)

Repository

Supreme Court of Virginia Archives, Virginia State Law Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

Because the library is not open to the general public, researchers should contact the library to arrange access to the collection.

Acquisition Information

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Biographical/Historical Information

The Supreme Court of Virginia Historical Commission was established in 2006 to preserve and promote the history of the court. Oral history interviews of retired Supreme Court of Virginia justices, Court of Appeals of Virginia judges, other individuals associated with the Virginia courts, and civil rights attorneys were begun in 2007. The project is ongoing.

John Thomas (Jack) Bruce (b. 1951) became Chief Staff Attorney for the Supreme Court of Virginia in 1978. Before that, he was a clerk in the office of Robert Irons, Special Assistant to the Supreme Court of Virginia, and practiced law in Norfolk. A native of Norfolk, he graduated from the College of William and Mary and earned a law degree from the University of Richmond.

Scope and Content

Oral history interview of John Thomas Bruce by Cassandra Newby-Alexander, Professor of History, Norfolk State University, at the Supreme Court of Virginia in Richmond, October 11, 2013. Bruce talks about growing up among his mother's extended family in Norfolk, Virginia, his education, and his career as an attorney in the Office of the Chief Staff Attorney, first as a law clerk after graduating from law school, and as Chief Staff Attorney from 1978 to 2003. He discusses working with his predecessor Robert Irons, Special Assistant to the Supreme Court of Virginia until his sudden death in 1978; Chief Justice Harry Carrico, Justice A. Christian Compton, and Justice Richard H. Poff, all of whom were based in Richmond, and changes he has witnessed since he began working at the court in the 1970s.

Index Terms

Bruce, John Thomas, 1951-.

Newby-Alexander, Cassandra.

Oral histories (document genres) -- Virginia.

Virginia. Supreme Court -- 20th century.