



**For Immediate Release**

**October 8, 2008**

## **MISSOURI SUPREME COURT TO HOST OPEN HOUSE IN CELEBRATION OF CENTENNIAL**

As October 23 approaches, so does the end of the Missouri Supreme Court Building's 100th birthday year. To commemorate the celebration, the Missouri Supreme Court will host an open house from 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 23.

The three-story, red-brick building, which opened in January 1907, features French Renaissance architecture, stone pillars at each wing of the front façade, stone trim and a slate roof. Prominent in its lobby is a massive marble staircase. The building houses the offices of the Supreme Court clerk and the Clerk's staff, two courtrooms, the two-story high Supreme Court Library, and, by statute, the office of the state attorney general.

The open house will include guided tours of the courtroom where oral arguments take place, portraits of past Supreme Court judges, the library and a judge's chambers.

Guests also will be able to see relics and displays not usually open to the public, including rare historic books such as Henry Bracton's "On the Laws and Customs of England" (circa 1257); Nicholas Statham's "Abridgment on the Law" (circa 1470); and Sir Robert Brooke's "La Graunde: An Abridgement" (1573).

The Supreme Court Building opened its doors for business in October 1907. It was built with the proceeds from the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair in St. Louis. The Missouri General Assembly originally appropriated \$185,000 from those proceeds for the building, but by the time it opened – 10 months later than scheduled – the state was over its budget by about \$215,000, with a total cost of approximately \$400,000. To reconstruct the building today would cost at least \$15 to \$20 million.

The Supreme Court of Missouri was established in 1820, one year before Missouri was granted statehood. When the state's capitol was established in 1875 in Jefferson City, the judges heard cases in the basement of the Capitol Building. In 1877 the first Supreme Court building was constructed southeast of the Capitol Building roughly where the Missouri Department of Transportation building now stands.

For more information about this event or the Missouri Supreme Court, contact Beth Riggert at (573) 751-4144 or [beth.riggert@courts.mo.gov](mailto:beth.riggert@courts.mo.gov).

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