

Finding Aid to the Judge Richard E. Arnason Collection

Descriptive Summary

Title: Judge Richard E. Arnason Collection

Date Range: 1913-1916; 1966-2014

Collection number: [Accession #2014-58](#)

Extent: 18 boxes - plus unboxed items / ground breaking shovel for Arnason Law Center / two oversized gavels / walking cane

Repository: County History Center, Contra Costa County Historical Society, 724 Escobar Street, Martinez, CA 94553, 925-229-1042

Legal status: public

Information for Researchers

Access: Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights: [\[Here we need to add the publication rights\]](#)

Preferred Citation: Suggested citation of these records is: [Identification of item], Judge Richard E. Arnason Collection, Contra Costa County Historical Society.

Additional Materials:

"DO IT NOW" MAIL HOLDER

Clock – Rollie

Black T-Shirt "Richard Arnason Justice Center"

Ground breaking shovel for Arnason Law Center

Judge Arnason's letterhead

3 Judges gavel of various sizes, two of which are oversized

Judge Arnason's briefcase containing Los Angeles Daily Journal, January 13, 1995 with profile of the judge and correspondence from the Western Title Insurance Company dated October 17, 1985.

Plaque: California Trial Lawyers Association: Trial Judge of the Year 1973 at 12th. Annual Tahoe Convention on the 9th day of November 1973

Plaque: Alameda-Contra Costa Trial Lawyers' Association commendation for 25 years of service

Plaque: In recognition of 30 years on the Contra Costa Superior Court bench

Plaque with gold gavel "Trial Judge of the year 1993"

Davis Transcript 52613 People vs. A. Davis volume 6-1

Arnason photo large and small also small photo of Angela Davis

Large movie poster "Free Angela Davis & all Political Prisoners"

"California Search & Seizure practice"

"Angela Davis Case Collection"

Calendar Binder rev. April 2010

2 "Death Penalty Bench guide"

"The Icelandic Canadian" Winter 1972

“Eyewitness Identification” Legal & Practical Problems” by Nathan R. Sobel
Large movie poster “Free Angela Davis & all Political Prisoners” in general collection

Scope and Content: The Collection consists of artifacts and extensive court documents that once belonged to Judge Richard Arnason. Judge Arnason served as a Superior Court Judge for 49 years. He was the presiding judge in the Angela Davis trial, in 1972, which is arguably one of the most significant (for both legal and political reasons) cases of the latter 20th century.

Arrangement of Materials:

Box 1

- Folder 1-17 Angela Y. Davis Reporter’s & Trial transcript Vol. 35 – 50, May 3, 1972 – June 2, 1972.
- Folder 18 Angela Y. Davis Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, Brief & Proof, July 14, 1971.
- Folder 19 Angela Y. Davis Mandate Petition Points & Author, July 14, 1971.
- Folder 20 Angela Y. Davis Proof of service by mail for Henry Fields, August 2, 1971.
- Folder 21 Angela Y. Davis Opposition to Petition for Writ of Mandate, August 13, 1971.
- Folder 22 Angela Y. Davis Petition for Hearing in the Supreme Court, Sept. 7, 1971.
- Folder 23 Angela Y. Davis Petition for Hearing Exhibits, Sept. 7, 1971.
- Folder 24 Angela Y. Davis Petition for Hearing in Supreme Court, Sept. 7, 1971. DUPLICATE
- Folder 25 Angela Y. Davis Motion to File Brief – Amicus Curiae – ACLU, Sept. 17, 1971.
- Folder 26 Angela Y. Davis/Ruchell Magee, Notice – Superior Court of CA-Marin, filed Oct. 26, 1971
- Folder 27 Angela Y. Davis Petition for Writ of Petition, filed Jan. 10, 1972.
- Folder 28 Capital Case Compendium 2008, pages 1 – 226.
- Folder 29 Capital Case Compendium 2008 continued, pages 227 – 411.
- Folder 30 Capital Cases - People v. Cunningham
- Folder 31 Capital Cases – People v. James Matthew Heard & Atkins v. Virginia.
- Folder 32 Death Penalty Cases – Questionnaires

Box #2

- Folder 1 Significant cases August 2001 People v. Valdez
- Folder 2 Significant cases August 2001 People v. Maureen Mc Dermott
- Folder 3 Significant cases August 2001 Charles C. Apprendi, Jr. v. New Jersey
- Folder 4 Significant cases August 2001 Leon Chambers v. State of Mississippi
People v. John Paul Reynoso
Edward H. Coolidge v. New Hampshire
People v. Kenneth Ray Neal
People v. Charles Edward Storm
Colorado v. Francis Barry Connelly
California v. Hodari
- Folder 5 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions People v. Tracy Dearl Cain
- Folder 6 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions Robert S. Minnick v. Mississippi
- Folder 7 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions Prima Facie Notes
- Folder 8 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions John L. Brady v. State of Maryland
- Folder 9 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions People v. Miguel Angel Bacigalupo
- Folder 10 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions People v. Gerald frank Stanley
- Folder 11 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions People v. Jeffrey Hawkins
- Folder 12 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions People v. William Kirkpatrick
- Folder 13 Death Penalty Cases & Instructions Tison v. Arizona

- Luis E. Melendez-Diaz v. Massachusetts
 - Indiana v. Ahmad Edwards
 - Bennie Dean Herring v. United States
 - People v. Rodney Louis Gaines
 - Re: Sotero Gomez on Habeas Corpus
- Folder 35 Significant cases Volume 1 (file 1 of 3)
 - Mitchell v. United States (1998-99)
 - Lilly v. Virginia (1999)
 - John George Brown on Habeas Corpus
 - Gray v. Maryland (1997-98)
 - People v. Scott Alden Whitson (1998)
- Folder 36 Significant cases Volume 1 (file 2 of 3)
 - Mack Vernon Bunnell v. Superior Court
 - People v. Cadelia Louise Howard (1997)
 - Emerson Electric Co. v. Superior Court (1997)
 - People v. Ellena Starr Nesler (1997)
 - People v. Superior Court, John Marks (1991)
- Folder 37 Significant cases Volume 1 (file 3 of 3)
 - Florida v. Enio Jimeno (1991)
 - People v. Mark Alan Bradford (1997)
 - Michael A Whren v. United States
 - James L. Brown v. United States
- Folder 38 Significant cases Volume 2 (file 1 of 3)
 - Franks v. Delaware (1978)
 - People v. Luttenberger (1990)
 - People v. Shawn Hill (1998)
 - People v. Airreque Peevy (1998)
- Folder 39 Significant cases Volume 2 (file 2 of 3)
 - People v. Jose Luis Mendoza (1998)
 - People v. Hal Lee Flood (1998)
 - People v. Natalie Nadine Guiuan (1998)
 - People v. Michael Damien Milan (1973)
- Folder 40 Significant cases Volume 2 (file 3 of 3)
 - Atwater et al v. City of Lago Vista
 - Florida v. J.L.
 - Minnesota v. Thomas Carter
 - Minnesota v. Melvin Johns

Box #3

- Folder 1 Official Correspondence about Angela Davis Trial
- Folder 2 Personal Letters to Judge Arnason about Angela Davis
- Folder 3 Arnason Thank You letters to Jurors & Courtroom staff
- Folder 4 Documents regarding Changing Venue to San Francisco Survey results, etc. Angela Davis
- Folder 5 Angela Davis Newspaper Clippings May 13, 1971 – May 24, 1972
- Folder 6 Angela Davis Newspaper Clippings May 25, 1972 – July 3, 1985
- Folder 7 Court Documents Relating to Ruchell Magee
- Folder 8 Exhumation of Judge Haley's Remains
- Folder 9 Personal Notes on Angela Davis Trial
- Folder 10 Motion to Dismiss Indictment – Grand Jury documents Angela Davis
- Folder 11 Court Documents – Angela Davis' Bail

- Folder 12 Misc. Angela Davis Court Documents
- Folder 13 Minute Orders – Jan. – April, 1972 Angela Davis
- Folder 14 Motion to Strike Count 1 – Filed Dec. 8, 1971 Angela Davis / Ruchell Magee
- Folder 15 Indictment Nov. 10, 1970 – Angela Davis & Ruchell Mcgee
- Folder 16 Discovery Order Documents July 26-27, 1971 Angela Davis
- Folder 17 Minute Orders Angela Davis Trial
- Folder 18 Documents Re: Witnesses & Witness Testimony Angela Davis
- Folder 19 Judge Arnason’s File on Case #3 Left as Found - Angela Davis 1 of 2
- Folder 20 Judge Arnason’s File on Case #3 Left as Found – Angela Davis 2 of 2
- Folder 21 People vs. Davis Motion & Venue – Marin County #4
- Folder 22 Judge Arnason’s Files on Case #5 Left as Found – Angela Davis Trial 1 of 2
- Folder 23 Judge Arnason’s Files on Case #5 Left as Found – Angela Davis Trial 2 of 2
- Folder 24 Judge Arnason’s Files on Case #6 Left as Found – Angela Davis Trial
- Folder 25 People vs. Angela Y. Davis Pre-Trial Motions Heard Jan & Feb 1972
- Folder 26 Personal Correspondence & Vouchers 1968 – 1971
- Folder 27 People vs. Ramirez, Cebada, Rojas, Esparza, Munez
- Folder 28 People vs. Robert Page Anderson
- Folder 29 Developmental Disabilities Council / Health Services

Box #4

- Book “The War Within” by Bob Woodward
- Book “Where Death Delights” by Marshall Houts - Adventures in Courtroom Medicine
- Book “A Man’s Reach” the Select Writings of Judge Jerome Frank
- Book “Sentencing & Parole Handbook with forms by Stuart J. Faber
- Book “The Art of Selecting a Jury” by the Honorable Robert A. Wenke
- Book “California Search & Seizure Practice” second edition update September 1991
- Book “California Expert Witness Guide” by Raoul D. Kennedy & James C. Martin Dec. 1987
- Book “Deering’s California Codes” Penal 1 – 260
- Book “Deering’s California Codes” Penal 261 – 484
- Book “Deering’s California Codes” Penal 485 – 951
- Book “Deering’s California Codes” Penal 952 – 1161
- Book “Deering’s California Codes” Penal 1161 – 1472
- Book “Deering’s California Codes” Penal 1473 – End
- Rotary Bell

Box #5

- Book “Western Legal History” The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society Winter/Spring 1992
- Book “Western Legal History” The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society Summer/Fall 1992
- Book “Western Legal History” The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society Winter/Spring 1993
- Book “Western Legal History” The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society Summer/Fall 1993
- Book “Western Legal History” The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society Winter/Spring 1994
- Book “California Expert Witness Guide” by Raoul D. Kennedy
- Book “California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice” Final Report
- Book “The Icelandic Canadian” Summer 1972
- Book “The Icelandic Canadian” Autumn 1972
- Book “The Icelandic Canadian” Spring 1973

- Book "Authorized" By No Law" The San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1856 and the United States Circuit Court for the Districts of California by John D. Gordon, III
- Book "The Art of Instructing the Jury" McBride
- Book "The Art of Instructing the Jury" McBride DUPLICATE
- Book "The Story of the California Judges Association: The First Sixty Years" by Cameron Estelle Andersen
- Book "Psychiatry in the Everyday Practice of Law" second edition by Martin Blinder, MD
- Book "Hearsay Handbook" third edition by David F. Binder
- Book "California Judicial Conduct Handbook" third edition by David M. Rothman
- Book "California Criminal Law Procedure and Practice"
- Book "The Bill of Rights" It's Origin and Meaning by Irving Brant

Box #6

- Folder 1 Reporter's Transcript – Dec. 22, 1970 (Magee – San Quentin State Prison)
- Folder 2 Reporter's Transcript People of California vs. Angela Davis Jan. 5, 1971
- Folder 3 Declaration of Service – Feb. 8, 1971
- Folders 4 - 54 Reporter's Transcript San Rafael Hall of Justice – March 9, 1971 thru Feb 3, 1972

Box #7

- Folders 1 – 30 Trial/Reporter's Transcripts Angela Y. Davis dated Feb. 7, 1972 – April 11, 1972

Box #8

- Folders 1 – 13 Trial/Reporter's Transcripts Angela Y. Davis dated April 12, 1972 – May 2, 1972
- Folder 14 Angela Davis Chamber session sealed May 23, 1972 – Extra session May 24, 1971
- Folder 15 Correspondence Re: Angela Davis Trial
- Folder 16 Receipt Book 1958 – 1974
- Binder "Manual for Court Clerks" Municipal court dated Nov. 1961

Box #9

- Trial Minutes #52613 People vs. Angela Davis & Ruchell Magee 1-1 start date March 1, 1971
- Trial Minutes " " " " " & " " 2-1 start date May 14, 1971
- Trial Minutes " " " " " & " " 3-1 start date July 6, 1971
- Trial Minutes " " " " " & " " 4-1 start date Nov 29, 1971
- Trial Minutes " " " " " & " " 5-1 start date March 30, 1972

Box #10

- Folder 1 California Three Strikes Sentencing by Richard Couzens & Tricia A Bigelow
- Folder 2 Felony Pleas binder
- Folder 3 Death Penalty – California - Major cases involving Capital Punishment Litigation
- Folder 4 California Bench book – Adjudication of Sex Crimes Sept. 2006 Couzens / Bigelow
- Folder 5 California Bench book – Adjudication of Sex Crimes Sept. 2006 DUPLICATE
- Folder 6 Search & Seizure Law Report March 1986 to December 1989
- Folder 7 Death Penalty Practice Manual thru Jan. 1, 2000 by Beth Frances Holzman, J.D.
- Folder 8 California Death Penalty Practice Manual 2003 & 2005 supplement
- Folder 9 Capital Case Manual California v. Soknoeun Nem, juror questionnaire & introduction
- Folder 10 California Loose leaf Search & Seizure Handbook 1 of 2
- Folder 11 California Loose leaf Search & Seizure Handbook 2 of 2
- Folder 12 Search Warrant Law Desk book – table of contents (release #9, 5/92)
- Folder 13 Search Warrant Law Desk book by John M. Burkoff
- Folder 14 Warrantless Search Law Desk book 1993/1994
- Folder 15 Sentencing Institute for Superior Court Judges – 1973
- Folder 16 Personal Correspondence
- Folder 17 Work Related Correspondence

- Folder 18 Selective Service Correspondence
- Folder 19 California Center for Judicial Education & Research
- Folder 20 Certificates & Awards
- Folder 21 Juan Vallejo Corona Case
- Folder 22 Rules for Expenses
- Folder 23 Event Information / Invitations
- Folder 24 Photographs & Related documents
- Folder 25 Publications
- Folder 26 Irving Podris Board of Equalization Matter 1962
- Folder 27 Blank letterhead
- Folder 28 Selected Sections – Manuel of Adoptions – Contra Costa County – Citizens Committee on Adoptions Justice A.F. Bray
- Folder 29 Juvenile Justice Commission Report Contra Costa County Plaque: California Center for Judicial Education and Research, for service, 1970, 1974-84

Box 11

- Book “Men of Achievement – 1974 edition
- “The Handy Sports Answer Book” by Hillstrom & Matuz
- “Search & Seizures, Arrest & Confessions Vol. I by Ringel
- “Search & Seizures, Arrest & Confessions Vol. II by Ringel
- “Search & Seizures, Arrest & Confessions Vol. III by Ringel
- Booklet: General Douglas MacArthur’s Farewell Speech at West Point
- Booklet: General George Patton’s Speech to the Third Army
- Plastic/vinyl hard hat – Superior Court of California County of Contra Costa

Box 12

- Folder 1 Answer & Counter Claim MATHOS v. CLARK 10th Township (c. 1917)
- Folder 2 Justice Court 1877 – 1st Township.....1914 – 1915 10th Township
- Folder 3 Justice Court Warrants 1935 – 1936 10th Township – People v. WINANS (Roy & Virginia)
People v. Clyde HOWELL
- Folder 4 Letter dated July 20, 1917 Re: HOFFMAN v. LEHMAN
- Folder 5 Justice Court 1904 – 1914 10th Township
- Folder 6 Register of Actions May 10, 1909 – March 1914
- Folder 7 Civil Actions Asst. dates 1916 – 1917 – 1914 etc. some loose notes included
- Folder 8 Index to unknown ledger dates 1922 – 1923

Box 13

- Folder 1 Docket Book, 10th Township, June 1904-Oct. 1915. Index page in front, cover is missing. Bad condition, but readable. All hand written.
- Folder 2 News Clippings
- Resolution: California Senate, August 15, 1974
- Resolution: California Assembly, September 26, 1974
- Certificate: Hastings-American Trial Lawyers Association – National College of Advocacy faculty member, August 29 through September 4, 1971
- Certificate of Appointment: Member, Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, April 22, 1976, signed by Governor Brown and Secretary of State March Fong Eu
- Certificate of Elections to Board of Governors, State Bar September 19, 1962
- Certificate of Appreciation from California Trial Lawyers Association dated April 4, 1986
- Courtroom Organizational Chart – 2 sets
- California Council on Criminal Justice – Project title “Program for Experimentation with a Model Criminal Trial Court”
- 1915 postcard of Martinez, California Courthouse plus correspondence

- Limitation on media interviews – People v. Angela Davis
- Prospective Juror’s Background Data Sheet - blank
- 12 x 14 photo sepia tone unknown man
- Name the Judge done at the Superior Court’s Annual Dinner Dec. 4, 2014

Box 14

- Book 1 Traffic Docket Police Court of the City of Richmond 1951 + or –
- Book 2 Traffic Docket Police Court of the City of Richmond July 1951 – October 20, 1952

Box 15

- Vol. 1 Criminal Docket Police Court City of Richmond Sept. 1909 – April 1911
- Vol. 2 Criminal Docket Police Court City of Richmond April 1911 – July 1912

Box 16

- Vol. 3 Criminal Docket Police Court City of Richmond July 1912 – July 1913
- Docket – Inventory – Criminal Justice Court 1919 – 1922 – Vehicle Violation

Box 17

- “DO IT NOW” mail holder
- Clock Rollie
- Black T-shirt “Richard Arnason Justice Center”
- Plaque: California Trial Lawyers Association: Trial Judge of the Year 1973 at the 12th annual Tahoe Convention of the 9th day of November 1973
- Plaque: Alameda-Contra Costa Trial Lawyers’ Association commendation for 25 years of service
- Davis Transcript 52613 People vs. A. Davis volume 6-1

BOX 18

- Judge Arnason’s briefcase containing Los Angeles Daily Journal, January 13, 1995 with profile of the judge and correspondence from Western Title Insurance Company dated October 17, 1985.
- Plaque: In recognition of 30 years on the Contra Costa Superior Court bench
- Plaque: with gold gavel “Trial Judge of the year 1993” in briefcase
- Exhibit description “The Aranson Collection” approximately 10” X 16” in briefcase
- Two Exhibit descriptions boards 1) Richard E. Arnason 2) Angela Davis Trial in briefcase
- Wall mount poster for exhibit “Justice & Judges The History of the Law in Contra Costa County in briefcase
- Judge Arnason’s letterhead in two sizes in briefcase
- Small gavel in briefcase

Indexing Terms: Angela Y. Davis Case Collection, law books, personal books, significant cases & death penalty cases, plaques and certificates, Police Court City of Richmond, Traffic & Criminal dockets and warrants

Personal Names:

**Angela Y. Davis
Ruchell MaGee
Soknoeun Nem**

Archivists Note:

The Angela Davis Trial materials are extremely important. They will be of great importance to historians in the future and legal scholars. Judge Arnason's participation in this trial puts him in a very special group of jurists.