

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF  
STANLEY MOSK

1912—2001



STANLEY MOSK  
LIBRARY AND COURTS BUILDING  
914 CAPITOL MALL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 6, 2002

Hon. Stanley Mosk served California for more than half of the 20th century. His remarkable life of service ended on June 19, 2001. In the year that has passed since his death, lasting memories of the man he was—the scholar, the judge, and the public servant—have been expressed in the words of his family, friends, and colleagues.

A memorable man, Justice Mosk was also a man of memories. His writings show that he treasured life. That he also treasured his own life is clear: Because he cared for the words and objects that marked his life's passages, they remain today, to inform us and increase our appreciation of this great man and the time in which he lived.

Born in San Antonio, Texas, in 1912, Stanley Mosk received his primary and secondary education in the public schools of Rockford, Illinois. His involvement in community service developed early. Among his records is a certificate recording his membership in the American Tree Association, awarded because he had, "as a good citizen, planted a tree." A fledgling journalist, he co-edited his high school newspaper and represented Rockford in the annual Illinois High School Press Conference. He was a member of the school's championship debate team. An athlete as well as a scholar, he played baseball during his high school years and covered the football and basketball seasons for the school paper.

Mosk received a bachelor of philosophy degree from the University of Chicago, Division of the Social Sciences, in June 1933. He continued his education at Southwestern University School of Law and was admitted to the practice of law in California in 1935.

His life of public service began with his appointment to the staff of Governor Culbert L. Olson in 1939. He served in the cabinet as legal advisor and later as executive secretary. In 1943 he was appointed to the superior court in Los Angeles. He resigned

his judgeship to serve in the U.S. Army during World War II. At the conclusion of his military service, he returned to the bench, remaining until his successful campaign for Attorney General. He won the 1958 election for that office by a margin of more than one million votes, the largest in any contest in the United States that year.

In his nearly six years as Attorney General, Mosk issued approximately 2,000 written opinions in matters ranging from water rights to voting rights. He is remembered for his strong stand in favor of permitting an African-American golfer, Charlie Sifford, to participate in a PGA tournament, thus effectively ending the sport's racial restrictions. Among his many constructive proposals in the field of law enforcement was the establishment of the Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training.

Justice Mosk was appointed to the California Supreme Court in September 1964 and served until his death in June 2001. He was at all times an esteemed colleague, a legal scholar of the highest order, and a seeker of just and workable solutions. He authored more than 1,400 opinions in matters as varied as the use of racial quotas as a basis for admission to medical school (the *Bakke* decision); the ability of disabled parents to retain custody of their children; the requirement that physicians disclose treatment options and risks to their patients (doctrine of informed consent); and the holding that journalists cannot be jailed for contempt of court for refusing to give prosecutors unpublished material.

Justice Mosk served California for more than 60 years. His participation in public policy development and judicial decision making is unparalleled in the history of the state. His life and work remain models of service and excellence, and his memory will be honored for many years to come. 

## OBJECTS EXHIBITED

are from the Stanley Mosk Collection, a gift from the Hon. Richard M. Mosk, in the Archives at the California Judicial Center Library.

- VITRINE 1 EARLY LIFE  
Photos of the very young Stanley Mosk  
Rockford High School baseball team, 1930  
*My Confirmation: A Memory Book of My Confirmation and Religious School*, containing certificate of confirmation dated 16 May 5686 1926  
Rockford High School yearbook  
High school and college scrapbook  
University of Chicago pennant
- VITRINE 2 EARLY PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE, 1939–1942  
Southwestern University law diploma  
Admission to the State Bar of California  
"Governor Olson's 'Little Cabinet,'" *Sacramento Union*, January 7, 1940  
"Olson Delays Execution of the Duchess," *Sacramento Bee*, June 20, 1941  
Culbert L. Olson campaign sticker
- VITRINE 3 LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE, 1943–1959;  
ARMED SERVICE  
U.S. Army photo, World War II  
U.S. Coast Guard Reserve pin  
Retention campaign publicity materials  
Resignation letter to Governor Earl Warren upon enlistment in the U.S. Army, 1945  
Photo of Mosk with International Film and Radio Guild members, 1946  
Presidential campaign pin, "I'm Madly for Adlai," 1952  
Testimonial dinner program, 1958  
"Race Covenants Illegal, 'Un-American,'" *Los Angeles Sentinel*, October 30, 1947 

## OBJECTS EXHIBITED, *continued*

- VITRINE 4 ATTORNEY GENERAL, 1958–1964  
Map of California voting districts  
Photo of Mosk with President Harry S Truman  
Tennis shoe  
“Stanley Mosk: The Politician Who Dares,”  
*Pageant*, October 1964  
Attorney General campaign materials  
Campaign photo of Mosk with Los Angeles high school students, 1962
- VITRINE 5 SUPREME COURT JUSTICE, 1964–2001  
“Mosk Finds Court Job Slower But Rewarding,”  
*Los Angeles Times*, January 18, 1965  
Photo of Mosk with Indira Gandhi  
Photo of Mosk with Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Photo of Mosk with President Lyndon B.  
Johnson and Lady Bird Johnson  
Photo of Mosk with Robert and Edward Kennedy  
*Bakke v. The Regents of the University of California*,  
18 Cal.3d (1975)  
“Death Penalty Ended by High Court Ruling,”  
*San Francisco Examiner*, February 18, 1972  
Chinese New Year’s Parade grand marshal ribbon
- VITRINE 6 SUPREME COURT JUSTICE, 1964–2001  
Mosk’s book *Democracy in America—Day by Day*, 1995  
“You can’t unring the bell,” a favorite Mosk saying  
Bookplate and books from Mosk’s collection  
Tennis trophy  
Color photographic portrait  
Caricature  
Justice Stanley Mosk Day proclamation  
Program from courthouse renaming ceremony,  
Los Angeles, June 10, 2002  
Supreme Court identification badge



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Hon. William R. McGuinness  
*Administrative Presiding Justice, Court of Appeal, First Appellate District*

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