

A Century of Transportation Law

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As the University of Denver College of Law celebrates its centennial in 1992-93, thoughts return to its inaugural year of 1892 when Denver was a developing land transportation center.

In the first days of the College, law students and practitioners were exploring and making law occasioned by railroads, beasts of transportation burden and developing mechanical transportation technology. Like today, there were many questions surrounding transportation involving the people, property and implements used and affected by a fast developing concern for the emergent mobile west.

At its 75th birthday, the College of Law intensified its concern about transportation law. It was in 1967 that Marian F. Jones, Esq., John P. Thompson, J.D. '50, Alvin J. Meiklejohn, J.D. '51, and others, approached me as Dean of the College of Law to join with the Transportation Lawyers Association (then the Motor Carrier Lawyers Association or MCLA) to establish an annual National Transportation Law Institute.

Since 1968, the College has cosponsored and produced with the Transportation Lawyers Association the annual Transportation Law Institute at which hundreds of attorneys and practitioners, as well as governmental and industrial executives from across the nation, gather for several days of intensive professional training and review of broad issues in transportation law. The institutes have also included updates on current

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legal and economic developments in such areas as legislative proposals for regulatory reform, computerized legal research, and antitrust developments in transportation law. Each annual institute proceeding has been bound in volumes which are significant research resources to those interested in transportation law.

The association with the Transportation Lawyers Association (TLA) has grown and flourished to this date. For example, in 1976, the Transportation Lawyers Association established a TLA Professorship at the College of Law, in which chair Professor Paul Stephen Dempsey is the current incumbent.

Upon establishment of the TLA Professorship at the College, the Transportation Lawyers chose to move this Transportation Law Journal to the College of Law. The Journal began in 1968 at Osgood Hall, University Law School of York University (Toronto, Canada) and was a publication of the MCLA Board of Governors. Upon moving the Transportation Law Journal to the College of Law in 1976, the Journal became a publication of the College and has been published by students at the College under the wise, watchful eyes of the TLA Professor.

College of Law students have intensified their interest in transportation law over the last 25 years as a result of the expanded academic offerings in transportation law and the work other student editors of the Journal have provided. A student Transportation Law Society was established and a Transportation Scholarship Fund bearing the name of one of the Institutes founders, Marian F. Jones, allows a student to pursue specialized studies in the transportation law program.

The Institute, the Journal, the student Transportation Law Society, the enhanced transportation law curriculum, and the supporting scholarship fund, have established a strong, sound, singular, transportation law program at the College.

Those first law students and faculty in 1892 would be proud of their progeny.