

**An Interview with Mary Ann G. McMorrow**  
**Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission**

Mary Ann McMorrow worked in a law firm before joining the Cook County State's Attorney office. Upon leaving there, she entered into private practice. She became a circuit judge, an appellate court justice, and an Illinois Supreme Court justice from Illinois's First District. She served as Chief Justice from 2002 to 2005, and retired from the court in 2006.

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Chicago Bar Association, Chicago, Illinois

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Joel Daly, Retired Chicago news anchor

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**Abstract**  
**Mary Ann G. McMorrow**

Biographical:

Mary Ann (Grohwin) McMorrow was born in Chicago, Illinois on January 16, 1930. She attended Rosary College before going to law school at Loyola University, where she graduated in 1953. After she obtained her law license, she began working at Riordan & Linklater as a general practice attorney. She then worked in the Cook County State's Attorney's office in the Criminal Division, but left for private practice. She became a circuit judge in 1976, and an appellate judge in 1985. In 1992, she was elected as the first woman to serve on the Illinois Supreme Court. When she became chief justice in 2002, she was the first woman to head a branch of Illinois government. She retired from the court in 2006.

Topics Covered:

Growing up in Chicago in 1930s and 40s; Great Depression; Debating with friends; Studying law; Experiences as woman in law school; Practicing law; State's Attorney's office; Private practice; Being slated for judge; Illinois Supreme Court; Cases: *Avery v. Johnson*, *Best v. Taylor Works*; Death penalty; General Observations on Judiciary.

Note:

Readers of this oral history should note that this is a transcript of the spoken word. The interviewer, interviewee, and editor attempt to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the oral history, nor for the views expressed therein.