

Jack Edward Tanner

Ms 57

Biography:

Jack E. Tanner

Born on January 28, 1919 to Emma (Trixie) and Ernest (Ernie) Tanner, Jack Edward Tanner has lived in Tacoma all his life. Jack attended Stadium High School where he excelled in football and baseball. In 1943, Jack joined the Army and served in one of its segregated "Jim Crow" units. Jack returned to Tacoma and the waterfront as a longshoreman in 1945.

While working on the waterfront, Jack attended the College of Puget Sound and the University of Washington Law School. In 1955, he passed the bar examination on his first try. As a lawyer, Jack represented Puyallup tribal leader, Bob Satiacum and other Indian rights activists in fights over fishing rights and tribal recognition. Aside from being a lawyer, Jack was active with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1956 to the 1960s. He held several offices including, Tacoma president, regional vice president, and delegate to the national NAACP board. In 1963, he and other national civil rights leaders conferred with President Kennedy at the White House on civil rights. Also in 1963, Jack led the NAACP opposition to Tacoma's Open Housing Referendum No. 4. Besides the NAACP, he was also active within the Democratic party on local and national level. He served on Senator Henry M. Jackson's 1975 presidential campaign and offered support for many Democratic candidates. In 1968, Jack ran for governor as a Democrat and made a mid-pack showing in the primary.

After twenty plus years as a lawyer, Jack Tanner was nominated by President Jimmy Carter as a federal district court judge. His nomination endured an investigation by the Washington State Bar Association in response to allegations put forth by another local attorney. On June 2, 1978, Jack Tanner took the oath of office. As Washington's first African-American member of the federal judiciary, controversy did not elude Judge Tanner. Among the first cases he decided, he drew sharp criticism: by finding conditions at Walla Walla State Penitentiary, to represent cruel and unusual punishment; the unconstitutionality of the 1982 anti-busing initiative; and unequal pay for women by the State of Washington, known nationally as the Comparable Worth case. In 1991, Judge Tanner took senior status.

Ernest Tanner

Ernest Charles Tanner was born in Indianapolis, Indiana and had lived in Tacoma since 1900 and died in 1956. He attended Stadium High School where he was an outstanding athlete in track, basketball, baseball and football and later attended Whitworth College under a football scholarship.

A member of the International Brotherhood of Longshoreman from 1917 to 1956, he had been a trustee of Local 38-97 for many years and a member of its executive board. He was chairman of the building committee during the construction of the union's building at 1710 Market St.

Scope and Content:

The Jack E. Tanner collection covers the years 1900-2000 and consists mainly of newspaper articles and photographs from his career. The records are divided into thirteen series: Family, Education, Sports, Army, Lawyer, Politics, Judge, Organizations, Awards and Tributes, Photographs, Scrapbooks, Miscellaneous, and Oversized Items.

The Family series is arranged by family member and ranges from 1900-1999. The records include articles and correspondence about his father, Ernie Tanner and his involvement with the longshoreman union. Also the series contains articles and correspondence about other family members and family history information.

The Education series is arranged chronologically and ranges from 1938-1949. The records include his high school diploma, varsity letter and high school and college annuals.

The Sports series contains newspaper articles chronicling the sports career of Jack Tanner and a copy of Luke Wilson's book, *Sunday Afternoons at Garfield Park: Seattle's Black Baseball Teams, 1911-1951*, and ranges from 1911-1998.

Army series from 1943-1990s contains his official discharge documents, a postcard, and a newspaper article about an annual get-together for African-American veterans.

The Lawyer series is arranged chronologically and range from 1955-1976. The records include newspaper articles about the various cases he handled including the Nisqually Fishing Rights case and information about his trip with Bob Satiacum in 1974.

Politics are arranged chronologically and range from 1959-1996. Records include correspondence between Tanner and elected officials including President John F. Kennedy and Senator Henry M. Jackson, newspaper articles about Tanner's gubernatorial campaign in 1968, and articles about Tanner's involvement with the Democratic party.

The Judge series is arranged chronologically and range from 1973-1999. The records include correspondence about his appointment and subsequent investigation into his actions as a lawyer, newspaper articles about his rulings and correspondence about Clarence Thomas.

Organizations are arranged chronologically and range from 1956-2000. Records include newspaper articles concerning Tanner's involvement with the NAACP, NAAIP, National Bar Association, the Loren Miller Bar Association, and the Just the Beginning Foundation.

Awards and Tributes, 1975-2001 are those awards and tributes given to Judge Tanner throughout his career.

Photographs range from 1903-1999 and are arranged by topic. The series includes photographs of his father, Ernie Tanner, political photographs, photographs of his investiture, and personal photographs.

Scrapbooks are a collection of newspaper articles spanning Judge Tanner's entire career.

The Miscellaneous series, 1969-2000 contains articles from the Red Rose Cotillion and videotape of the June 10, 2000 tribute for Judge Tanner.

The Oversized Items range from 1978-2000 and consist of certificates, photographs, posters, and scrapbooks.

Inclusive Dates: 1900 - 2001 (bulk 1955-1990)

Restrictions:

Volume: 3.5 linear ft.

Accession Number: 2001.89

Record Series 1: Family.

Box 1: Family, 1900-1999.

Folder:

1 Family, Family History, 1920s-1990s.

Special Items: Photocopied pages from a Family Bible with a listing of births, marriages, and deaths.

- 2 **Family, Ernest Tanner, Correspondence, 1956-1990.**
Note: Correspondence regarding Ernie Tanner's death, involvement in the longshoremen union and sports.
- 3 **Family, Ernest Tanner, Education, 1902-1997.**
Special Items: Articles regarding Ernie Tanner's performance in sports at the high school and college level.
 March 13, 1951, Affidavit from A.H. Blankenship, Superintendent of Tacoma Schools, stating that Ernest Tanner was registered at Central School, 1900-1901.
- 4 **Family, Ernest Tanner, Longshoremen, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) #23, 1918-1999.**
Special Items: Listing of Tacoma African American Longshoremen.
 Testimony of Ernest Tanner before the National Longshore Board, Seattle, Washington, August 13 or 24, 1934.
 Transcription of the tape recorded interview with Frank Jenkins by R.C. Berner on June 6 and 28, 1972 in Seattle.
- 5 **Family, Ernest Tanner, Longshoremen, Harry Bridges Conference, 1994.**
- 6 **Family, Ernest Tanner, Longshoremen, Ernest C. Tanner Labor and Ethnic Studies Center, 1996.**
Note: The Ernest C. Tanner Center was sponsored by ILWU #23, University of Washington Tacoma Center for the Study of Community and Society, University of Washington Tacoma Liberal Studies Program, and Harry Bridges Labor Studies Center at the University of Washington Seattle. The purpose of the center is serve as a meeting place to help develop public programming in labor and ethnic studies in the community.
Special Item: "Who was Ernie Tanner" given by Jack Tanner.
 Proclamation of the center's dedication.
- 7 **Family, Ernest Tanner, Longshoremen, Books.**
Special Items: *The Working Longshoreman*, Ronald Magden.
The Working Waterfront: The Story of Tacoma's Ships and Men, Ronald Magden and A.D. Martinson.
- 8 **Family, James Claxton, 1970-1998.**
Note: James Claxton was Jack Tanner's uncle on his mother's side. James Claxton played professional baseball for three days in 1916.
- 9 **Family, Various Family Members, 1940s-1998.**
Special Items: Articles about his daughters, Maryetta and Donnetta.
 Birth announcement of his grandson.
 February 12, 1986, Obituary for his wife, Alice Tanner.
 Article about his brother, Bob Maguinez.
 July 9, 1998, Obituary for his sister, Erna Tanner Davis.

Record Series 2: Education.

Box 1: Education, 1938-1949.

Folder:

10 Education, Stadium High School and College of Puget Sound.

Special Items: June 9, 1938, High School Diploma.
 Varsity Letter from Stadium.

1948 Assignment from College of Puget Sound.

- 11 **Education, 1935 Tahoma, Stadium High School Annual.**
- 12 **Education, 1936 Tahoma, Stadium High School Annual.**
- 13 **Education, 1937 Tahoma, Stadium High School Annual.**
- 14 **Education, 1938 Tahoma, Stadium High School Annual.**
- 15 **Education, 1948 Tamanawas, College of Puget Sound Annual.**
- 16 **Education, 1949 Tamanawas, College of Puget Sound Annual.**

Record Series 3: Sports.

Box 1: Sports, 1911-1998.

Folder:

- 17 **Sports, Articles, 1911-1997.**
Special Items: Story about Ernie Tanner written by Bob Maguinez.
Program for the Tacoma-Pierce County Old-Timers Baseball and Softball 1988 Get-Together.
- 18 **Sports, Sports Career, 1933-1949.**
Special Items: Articles from the various teams Tanner played for.
1933-1934, Junior American Legion Baseball.
1936 Stadium Football.
1936 Stadium Baseball.
1937 Stadium Football.
1937 Stadium Baseball.
1938 Tacoma City League Baseball.
1939-1940 Tacoma City League Baseball.
City League Football.
1948-1948 College of Puget Sound Football.
- 19 **Sports, Lyle K. Wilson, Correspondence, 1996-1998.**
- 20 **Sports, Lyle K. Wilson, Manuscript, 1996.**
Special Item: Copy of Wilson's Manuscript from Lowell Printing and Publishing.
- 21 **Sports, Lyle K. Wilson, Book.**
Special Item: *Sunday Afternoons at Garfield Park: Seattle's Black Baseball Teams, 1911-1951.*

Record Series 4: Army.

Box 1 Army, 1943-1990s.

Folder:

- 22 **Army, 1943-1990s.**
Special Items: December 19, 1945, Honorable Discharge papers.
Separation Qualification Record, January 28, 1948.

Record Series 5: Lawyer.

Box 1 Lawyer, 1955-1976.

Folder:

- 23 **Lawyer, Articles, 1955-1976.**

Note: Articles about his career in general not court cases.

24 Lawyer, Court Cases, 1963-1974.

Note: Articles about his various court cases.

25 Lawyer, Court Cases, Harold and Susanna Peck, 1963.

26 Lawyer, Court Cases, Nisqually Fishing Rights, 1964-1966.

27 Lawyer, Court Cases Fishing Rights, 1965-1969.

28 Lawyer, Court Cases, Dick Gregory, 1968-1969.

29 Lawyer, Court Cases, George Marion Boggs, 1972.

30 Lawyer, Bob Satiacum, 1972-1991.

Special Items: Secretary of State 1972 campaign brochure.

The Weekly, "Satiacum, a Native American Tragedy" article, November 27-December 3, 1985.

Memorial Program, 1991.

31 Lawyer, Bob Satiacum, Travel, 1974.

Special Item: Itinerary for Tanner and Satiacum's trip to various around the world.

Record Series 6: Politics.

Box 1 Politics, 1959-1996.

Folder:

32 Politics, President John F. Kennedy, 1959-1963.

Special Items: Correspondence between Tanner and Kennedy's campaign office.

June 15, 1963 Telegram from President Kennedy concerning the civil rights problem in the nation.

33 Politics, Senator Warren Magnuson, 1961-1974.

Special Items: 1961 Sen. Warren Magnuson Silver Anniversary Dinner Program.

1974 Thank you letter from Norm Dicks about Tanner's help with the Evening with the Magnuson's.

34 Politics, Articles, 1967-1974.

Note: Articles about a possible recall attempt of Mayor A.L. Rasmussen of Tacoma.

35 Politics, Governor's Race, 1968.

Note: Articles about Tanner's gubernatorial attempt in 1968.

36 Politics, Senator Henry "Scoop" M. Jackson, 1971-1987.

Special Items: Articles about Jackson's 1976 presidential campaign.

Thanks for support and aid letters from Jackson.

Memorial program, 1983.

1987 Scoop Jackson Day program.

37 Politics, State Candidates, 1975-1976.

Note: Correspondence from various state candidates, including Brock Adams, Wes Uhlman, Thomas Foley, Norm Dicks, and Llyod Meeds.

38 Politics, President James E. Carter, 1977-1979.

Special Items: Inauguration Invitation and Program.

Invitation to the White House Law Day 1979.

39 Politics, Willie Brown, 1995-1996.

Record Series 7: Judge.

Box 1 Judge, 1978-1999.

Folder:

- 40 Judge, Letters of Recommendation, June 8, 1973 - May 23, 1978.**
- 41 Judge, Washington State Bar Association Investigation, 1977-1978.**
- 42 Judge, Malcolm Edwards Complaint, 1977-1978.**
Note: Legal documents pertaining to the State v. Metcalf in which Edwards accused Tanner of perjuring himself.
- 43 Judge, Senate Judicial Selection Committee, 1977-1978.**
Note: Correspondence about Tanner's nomination.
- 44 Judge, Articles about his appointment, 1977-1978.**
- 45 Judge, Investiture, June 2, 1978.**
- 46 Judge, Congratulatory Correspondence, June 28, 1977 - June 13, 1978.**
- 47 Judge, Correspondence, February 3, 1978 - June 6, 1999.**
Special Items: Anti-Tanner card.
April 12, 1994 Letter to President Bush about the exclusionary tactics of the American Bar Association.
August 4, 1993 Letter to Senator Joseph Biden about the status of Senate Judiciary Committee's consideration of nominees to the Federal bench.

Box 2 Judge, 1978-1999.

Folder:

- 1 Judge, Articles about Tanner and his rulings, 1979-1994.**
- 2 Judge, Court Cases, 1979-1994.**
Note: List of Judge Jack Tanner's decisions and articles about his judicial decisions.
1980 Walla Walla State Penitentiary.
1981 Ray Border, commercial fisherman.
1983 Bethel High School suspension of a student.
1985 Washington State exit poll.
1988 Pennwalt Corporation.
1993 Melody Singleton ruling.
- 3 Judge, Court Cases Comparable Worth, 1983-1998.**
Note: Articles about Tanner's Comparable Worth decision.
- 4 Judge, Court Cases Citations.**
- 5 Judge, Speaking Engagements, July 16, 1984 - April 27, 2000.**
- 6 Judge, Clarence Thomas, August 1991 - August 1993.**

Special Items: Testimony of Jack Tanner on behalf of Clarence Thomas in front of the Senate Committee.
Program for Clarence Thomas' Swearing-in ceremony.

Record Series 8: Organizations.

Box 2 Organizations, 1956-2000.

Folder:

- 7 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Correspondence, 1963-1968.**
- 8 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Correspondence and Programs, 1970-1996.**
Special Item: Program for the "In Honor of Your Honor, A Tribute to the Warrior, The Honorable Jack E. Tanner," July 19, 1991.
- 9 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Northwest Articles, 1956-1970.**
- 10 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Articles, 1960-1966.**
- 11 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), School Discrimination, 1960-1967.**
Note: Articles about Tanner's charge of discrimination in Tacoma Schools.
- 12 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Housing Bill, 1962-1967.**
Note: Articles about the Tanner's opposition to the Washington State Board Against Discrimination (WSBAD) Housing Bill.
- 13 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Kennewick, 1963.**
Note: Articles about the exclusion of Negroes from residence in Kennewick.
- 14 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Open Housing Referendum, 1963.**
Note: Articles about NAACP's opposition to Open Housing Referendum No. 4.
- 15 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Leadership, 1965-1968.**
Note: Articles about the "Young Turks" trying to oust the NAACP leadership and replace it with younger leaders.
- 16 **Organizations, National Association for the Advancement of Indian People (NAAIP), 1963.**
- 17 **Organizations, Loren Miller Bar Association, 1986-1999.**
- 18 **Organizations, National Bar Association, 1993-2000.**
- 19 **Organizations, Just the Beginning Foundation, 1996.**

Record Series 9: Awards and Tributes.

Box 2 Awards and Tributes, 1975-2001.

Folder:

- 20 Awards and Tributes, Certificates and Programs, 1975-2000.
- 21 Awards and Tributes, Tribute Correspondence, June 6, 2000 - March 26, 2001.
- 22 Awards and Tributes, Tribute Congratulatory Correspondence, March 24, 2000 - June 30, 2000.
- 23 Awards and Tributes, Tribute Congratulatory Certificates and Resolutions, 2000.
- 24 Awards and Tributes, Tribute Program, June 10, 2000.
- 25 Awards and Tributes, Tribute Notebook, June 10, 2000.

Record Series 10: Photographs.

Box 2 Photographs, 1903-1999.

Folder:

- 26 Photographs, Jack Tanner, 1920s-1950s.
- 27 Photographs, Jack Tanner, 1960s.
- 28 Photographs, Jack Tanner, 1970s-1990s.
- 29 Photographs, Family, Ernest Tanner.
- 30 Photographs, Family, Ernest Tanner, Sports, 1903-1908.
- 31 Photographs, Family, Ernest Tanner, Longshoremen.
- 32 Photographs, Family, Emma Tanner.
- 33 Photographs, Family, Siblings.
- 34 Photographs, Family, Spouse.
- 35 Photographs, Family, Grandchildren.
- 36 Photographs, Sports, Football.
- 37 Photographs, Army.
- 38 Photographs, Bob Satiacum.
- 39 Photographs, Politics, Washington State Politics, 1960.
- 40 Photographs, Politics, President John F. Kennedy, 1961.
- 41 Photographs, Politics, Senator Henry M. Jackson.
- 42 Photographs, Politics, Hubert Humphrey.
- 43 Photographs, Politics, Democratic National Convention, 1975.

- 44 **Photographs, Politics, Representative Norm Dicks, 1970s-1996.**
- 45 **Photographs, Politics, President Jimmy Carter, 1979.**
- 46 **Photographs, Judge, Investiture, June 2, 1978.**
- 47 **Photographs, Judge, Law Clerks.**
- 48 **Photographs, Federal Judges.**
- 49 **Photographs, Organizations, 1957-1992.**
- 50 **Photographs, Organizations, NAACP, 1959-1998.**
- 51 **Photographs, Organizations, National Bar Association, 1980-1998.**
- 52 **Photographs, Organizations, Loren Miller Bar Association, 1986-1999.**
- 53 **Photographs, Awards.**

Record Series 11: Scrapbooks.

Box 2 Scrapbooks, No Dates.

Folder:

- 54 **Scrapbooks, Career.**
- 55 **Scrapbooks, NAACP Career.**
- 56 **Scrapbooks, This is Your Life.**
- 57 **Scrapbooks, This is Your Life.**

Record Series 12: Miscellaneous.

Box 2 Miscellaneous, 1969-2000.

Folder:

- 58 **Miscellaneous, Red Rose Cotillion, 1969-1971.**
- 59 **Miscellaneous, Video, June 10, 2000.**
Note: Video of "Triumph of a Native Son" Tribute.

Record Series 13: Oversized Items.

Box 3 Oversized Items, 1978-2000.

Folder:

- 1 **Oversized Items, Photograph, June 2, 1978.**
Note: Photograph of Judge Tanner taking his oath of office.
- 2 **Oversized Items, Photograph, June 2, 1978.**
Note: Photograph of Don McGavick placing the Judicial Robe on Judge Tanner.
- 3 **Oversized Items, Certificate, July 5, 1983.**
Note: Honorary Deputy Civil Sheriff of Orleans Parish certificate.
- 4 **Oversized Items, Certificate, May 19, 1984.**
Note: Honorary Citizen of the City of Austin, Texas certificate.

- 5** **Oversized Items, Certificate, July 30, 1984.**
Note: City of New Orleans Certificate of Merit.
- 6** **Oversized Items, Certificate, July 16, 1991.**
Note: City of Tacoma proclamation of Judge Jack Tanner Day, July 20, 1991.
- 7** **Oversized Items, Scrapbook, June 10, 2000.**
Note: “Triumph of a Native Son” Tribute scrapbook.
- 8** **Oversized Items, Photograph, June 10, 2000.**
Note: Photograph of Judge Jack Tanner and his law clerks.