

Alabama Supreme Court Awards Harper Lee Honorary Special Membership

Alabama icon Harper Lee was recently awarded an honorary special membership in the Alabama State Bar at a ceremony conducted by Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Sue Bell Cobb at the Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building.

The presentation was made during the induction of four new members of the Alabama Lawyers' Hall of Fame. Lee was recognized as the author of one of the most widely read and internationally honored books of popular fiction ever written, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

ASB President Sam Crosby said, "The character of Atticus Finch has become the personification of the exemplary lawyer in serving the legal needs of the poor and those no one else would represent. He epitomizes the type of professional, and person, lawyers strive to be every day."

Lee studied law at the University of Alabama from 1945-1949, but was unable to complete her studies and sit for the bar examination. The idea for presenting this one-of-a-kind honor originated with



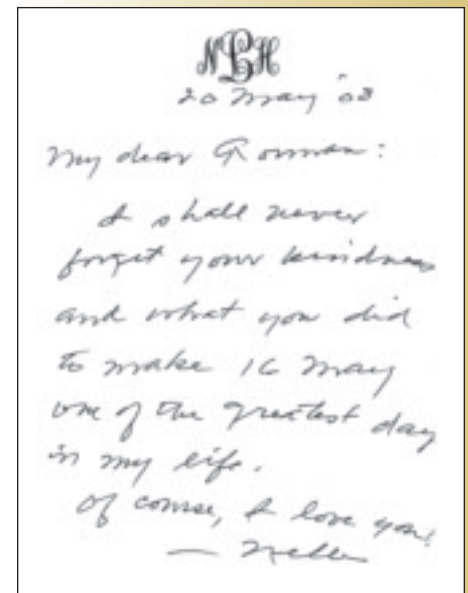
Harper Lee (in wheelchair) is awarded an honorary special membership in the state bar. Supreme Court Chief Justice Sue Bell Cobb, ASB President Sam Crosby and Associate Supreme Court Justice J. Gorman Houston (behind the wheelchair) participated in the joint presentation.

Associate Justice J. Gorman Houston, Jr., who discussed it with Associate Justice Champ Lyons, Jr. Justice Lyons presented a resolution to the entire supreme court which unanimously voted to approve taking the action.

In 2006 Lee received the state bar's Award of Merit, presented for outstanding constructive service to the legal profession in Alabama. ▲▼▲



Noted author Harper Lee autographs a copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird* for Bar Commissioner Kelly Lee (no relation) at the special ceremony conducted during the induction of new members of the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame.



Photos by Thomas Ryan, Jr., bar commissioner, Huntsville, and Robert Fouts, Fouts Commercial Photography, Montgomery



Members of the Board of Bar Commissioners pose with noted author Harper Lee at a special ceremony conducted during the induction of new members of the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame. She was honored with a one-of-a-kind honorary special membership in the Alabama State Bar which was unanimously approved by the supreme court. After receiving the award, Lee remarked, "I'm opening an office, tomorrow!" In 2006, Lee received the state bar's Award of Merit, presented for outstanding constructive service to the legal profession in Alabama.