

The First 50 Women in

LINE No

Linda Jean Cook was born in a farming family in Ririe, Idaho. After high school, Cook attended Ricks College in Pocatello, Idaho, where she earned her M.S. in social psychology from Walla, Washington, where she was the first woman in her class. Cook was the first woman to be elected to the Idaho Bar operation.

After two years at the prison, Cook spent time at the United States Court of Appeals. She decided to go back to school for her law degree beginning in 1970. (At the time, there were only a few women law students.)

There were five women law students in her class, but only four graduated. Two took the Idaho Bar and on November 1, 1974, Dolores Cooper and JoAnn (now Cook) of the College of Law) – took and passed the bar.

After graduation, Cook returned to Idaho to start a general law practice which she later joined with Dolores Cooper. She was appointed to the position of Justice of the Peace in 1978. Cook has been re-elected every two years since then to Idaho's judiciary.

Aside from her duties on the bench, Cook has been professionally involved in civic affairs. In 1993, she was appointed to the Idaho Traffic Safety Commission, which reviews and awards grants for safety projects including bicycle helmets and equipment for rural paramedic units. In 1995, she became a member of the Idaho Supreme Court's Fairness and Equality Committee, which addresses issues of bias such as race and gender in the courts and legal system. In 1995, she was appointed by Governor Phil Batt to the Governor's Task Force for Children at Risk and was subsequently reappointed by Governor Kempthorne. She continues to serve in these positions. Cook previously has been involved in local organizations including H.E.L.P., Inc. a child abuse agency, the Domestic Violence Intervention Center, and on the board of directors of the Bonneville Historical Society.

Cook is interested in history and enjoys traveling to historic sites, including battlefields of the Civil War and the Nez Perce War and following historical trails across America. She also has traveled abroad, especially in England, Scotland, Bosnia and Poland. Cook enjoys reading about places and cultures, and then traveling to these places for a first-hand experience.

