

# WILLIAM McILWAIN ROBINSON III



Bill died in Presbyterian University Hospital early Monday, September 11, 2023, some 30 hours after a fall at home. He was 82 but went to the office every day when he wasn't on the golf course. To the end, Bill celebrated life with his wife, Sharon Semenza, their son, Will Robinson, and his legion of devoted and, in many cases, lifelong friends. Bill was born June 30, 1941, at Shadyside Hospital to Joseph G. and

Frances K. Robinson. Over the course of his life - ranging from Shadyside Academy to Andover to Princeton to Penn Law School to a long partnership at the Reed Smith law firm and to ongoing service as a fiduciary trustee - Bill never lived permanently more than a mile from his boyhood home on Amberson Avenue in Shadyside. But outside that mile, Bill enjoyed the family home at Ross Mountain and traveling extensively with Sharon, Will, and family and friends. He was passionate about all things genuinely Pittsburgh. Steel, for example, Bill bought only cars made with American steel produced by Ford Motor Company. There was also Iron City beer (before heart problems prompted him to switch to Sauvignon Blanc), the Steelers (a 50-season ticket holder), the Penguins, the Pirates, and also, importantly, the many Pittsburgh families he served with devotion as counsel and trustee.

Bill was a third-generation, highly regarded Reed Smith lawyer and partner, specializing in Wills and Trusts. He was valued for his long-term perspectives and his absolute lack of a personal agenda. He hadn't a client who wasn't also a friend. Their interests, to him, came first. Bill's family in addition to Sharon and Will was always at the front of his mind: sister, Ann (Jay) Stevenson, and their children, Quint, Catherine, and Chris (Jenny); brother, Jerry (Susie) Robinson, and their children, Jay (Jen) and Lynda; brother-in-law, Al (Janice) Semenza, and their children, Stephen and Aleca; and mother-in-law, Norma Semenza.

Bill was very involved in the community, whether the cause was Shadyside Hospital, the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, local literature and poetry, or the myriad of causes he supported because his friends asked for help. He was a consistent supporter of politics and politicians who put the welfare of less fortunate people first, and he had limited patience for the politics of privilege or the politics of exclusion. As to that legion of friends, where do we start? Grade school, high school, and college classmates, lawyers he practiced with, those he mentored, their spouses, their kids, Will's buddies, Sharon's friends -all were, at 82, central to his life. There was a reason for this. Bill listened to you and cared, always. His sense of humor, both dry and intelligent, warmed those around him. Beyond this, Bill was unpretentious, insightful, competitive but gracious in both victory and defeat. He was a great reader, of endless curiosity, quick to pass along his latest favorite mystery. His foul moods were reserved for when the Steelers lost.

Fundamentally, Bill was gentle, kind, generous, non-judgmental, and unwaveringly loyal. All who knew him were the better for it. Godspeed, Billy. There will be no visitation and a Memorial Gathering will be announced in the future. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Pittsburgh Cultral Trust. Arrangements by **JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS, INC.** ([freyvogelfuneralhome.com](http://freyvogelfuneralhome.com)).

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