

SAMUEL LESTER DOUGLASS



Age 90, of Upper St. Clair, PA, passed away peacefully on Monday, January 15, 2024. He was born June 10, 1933, in Pittsburgh, son of the Rev. Willard M. and Agnes Stoughton Douglass.

Sam graduated from McKeesport High School in 1951 and the University of Mount Union (formerly Mount Union College) in 1955. He recently celebrated 66 years of marriage to his wife, Judith, a college classmate.

He earned his L.L.B. at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law being admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar in 1959.

For 49 years Sam's law practice focused on corporate real estate and mineral law, including coal, oil, and gas, at the law firms of Rose Schmidt Hasley and DiSalle, and Rothman Gordon. In the eve of his career, he took particular satisfaction in representing the rights of landowners with respect to Marcellus and Utica shale gas leases. In 1979, he envisioned the creation of an educational organization focusing on mineral law in the eastern half of the United States, and ultimately co-founded and served as the first president of that organization, the Energy and Mineral Law Foundation (formerly Eastern Mineral Law Foundation). Sam also served the Upper St. Clair Township School District as its solicitor for 28 years.

In 1990 Sam received the coveted "Distinguished Service Award" from the National Coal Association. He has been recognized in The Best Lawyers in America for real estate, mineral law and natural resources for many years, and also as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer.

Sam volunteered with Wesley Family Services (formerly Wesley Institute) including service as president of the Board. He was later recognized, along with Judy, with Wesley's lifetime volunteer service award. Additionally, Sam served as a board member of the Horticultural Society of Western Pennsylvania, where he was instrumental in the development of the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.

Sam was a man known for his honesty, integrity and generosity. He was a long-time member of Christ United Methodist Church in Bethel Park where he sang bass in the Chancel Choir and served on various committees. He was known by the congregation both as "the origami bird man" and "the balloon man" for sharing these treasures with children of all ages. Sam loved to invite conversational sparring among colleagues and family alike! He enjoyed singing, gardening, and doing jigsaw and crossword puzzles, and above all else Sam valued his family.

In addition to his parents, Sam was preceded in death by sisters Mary Delle Hale and Jane Staley. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, Heather Burtch (Gary), Kevin Douglass (Pam), and Shannon George (Chris), all of Pittsburgh, and Shawn Douglass (Jean) of Chicago. He was the proud grandfather of Kelly (Ryan), Luke (Katie), Kathryn (Andrew), Julia (Chris), Margaret, Duncan, Lincoln and Violet; and great-grandfather of four.

A service of remembrance will be held at Christ United Methodist Church, on February 17, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. All attending are invited to stay for a light lunch following the service. Those who wish to remember Sam in a special way may make gifts in his memory to Wesley Family Services, 615 Alpha Drive, Suite 250, Pittsburgh, PA 15238 (<https://wfspa.org/give/>) or the University of Mount Union, 1972 Clark Ave., Alliance, OH 44601 (<https://www.mountunion.edu/giving>).

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