

RICHARD "DICK" DRAKE HAYES JR.



Age 96, of Providence Point and a long-time resident of Mt. Lebanon, passed away peacefully on Monday, February 19, 2024.

Dick was born on May 28, 1927 in Bronxville, NY to Richard Drake Hayes Sr. and Helen (Justa) Hayes. He was an only child who was spoiled by his parents and relatives. His favorite memories growing up were skating on the frozen lake next to his house, being involved with

the boy scouts, working as a summer camp counselor for disadvantaged children, and caddying at a local country club where he was thrilled to see the boxing champ, Joe Louis, play a round of golf.

After graduating from Tuckahoe high school in 1945, he was drafted into the Army and was sent to Camp Wheeler for infantry training to prepare for a possible ground invasion of Japan. Thankfully for him, WWII ended and Dick served his time in post-war Germany. While there, he was able to observe the Nuremberg Trials in-person for a day. He was honored to have served his country and proudly wore his WWII Veteran cap up until the time of his death.

Dick then took advantage of the GI bill and received a BS in Civil Engineering in 1952 from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY. His favorite memory from college was winning the school softball independent league championship with an undefeated season and he could still recite every player's name on his team (and he retained all the scorebooks from that season and 73 years later still enjoyed reminiscing about each game). After graduating, he accepted a position with Alcoa in North Carolina, where he could work outdoors with hydro-electric dams.

His co-worker and college friend introduced him to his future wife, Ruth Wilkens, on a blind date in Maryville, Tennessee on July 4th weekend in 1956. They were engaged at Christmas and were married on May 26, 1957. His future father-in-law famously said "What is the hurry?" and Dick jokingly responded "I need to get the show on the road; I'm almost 30 years old." Dick and Ruth relocated for a "short assignment" to Pittsburgh with Alcoa in 1957. They ended up spending the rest of their lives here.

The highlight of Dick's Alcoa career was working on the construction of the massive Afobaka Dam in Suriname in South America. He spent many years on this project and took numerous trips there for its design and construction and then for maintenance and inspections. He loved to talk about it to anyone who would listen. He retired from Alcoa in 1988 after 36 years of service.

Dick was a sports enthusiast, especially enjoying tennis, badminton, and golf. He played tennis several times a week well into his 80's and had a wicked slice shot. For many years, Dick volunteered at the National Amateur Clay Court Championships in Mt. Lebanon. He also closely followed his Pittsburgh sports teams.

Dick and his wife were renowned pranksters and played lots of jokes on their many friends. He also loved eating and really appreciated his wife's great cooking skills. He often said "the way to my heart is through my stomach". Dick and Ruth traveled extensively and enjoyed their trips throughout the US and Europe, which included major tennis tournaments (Wimbledon, US Open and French Open).

In 2009, Dick and Ruth moved to Providence Point and had frequent dinners with their friends, enjoyed movie nights and played "competitive" cornhole (in fact he won several championships).

The family would like to thank the staff at Providence Point for the compassionate care provided to Dick for the last two years.

Predeceasing him in August 2023 was his cherished wife of 66 years, Ruth. Surviving are son Richard (Lynn) Drake Hayes III; daughter Susan (Paul) Earley; and son, Frederick (Annie) Hayes; as well as several furry grandchildren. Dick always said that his three biggest accomplishments in his life were his three children, and he was so very proud of each of them.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church, 975 Washington Road, Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, March 23 at noon in the chapel at Providence Point with a reception immediately following. All are invited to attend. Burial at the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies will be private.

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