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**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
UPON THE DEATH OF JOHN ALEXANDER ROE**

Our friend and colleague, John Alexander Roe, died on August 19, 2014. In his passing, the Bar has lost a distinguished practitioner and a well regarded, generous and high-minded companion. Born August 9, 1927 in Torrence, California, John was the only child of Frederick and Edna Roe. His father's career with the Pittsburgh Plate and Glass Company led the family back to Pennsylvania where John enjoyed his youth at their home in Sewickely. He spent much time on the family farm in Moon Township where his parents and his three bachelor uncles doted on him, sharing and teaching their love of the land. He always remembered how fortunate he was to have had a wonderful childhood at a time in this country when things were difficult for so many after the depression.

In later youth, John moved with his family to Johnstown, Altoona, Hollidaysburg and finally Camp Hill. John excelled in baseball as a pitcher (he was a southpaw), tennis, and was an enthusiastic participant in school plays and musicals. No doubt his good looks, athleticism, intelligence and certainly his size, served "Big John" well when he entered William Penn High School. He made many friends in that year that have endured to this day.

Following his high school graduation at 16, John entered his beloved Dickinson College where he was a proud Phi Delta Theta and where he played on the school's tennis team. His education was interrupted by service in the Korean War. John never talked about the war, but he recently wrote of his experience. The ship that was his transport traveled through a typhoon with waves so high that he had to wedge himself between a gun and a captain's bulkhead to stay upright. He wrote "when we arrived in Yokohama, we went ashore, the entire city had been leveled and cleaned up, there was nothing left." John was 18 years old!

After his service, John returned to Dickinson College where he played on the first tennis team organized after the war and where he earned his B.A. in English in 1948. He then matriculated at the Dickinson School of Law

where he became associate editor of its law review and where he graduated in 1951.

When a middler at the Dickinson School of Law, John was required to have a preceptor. John's father, who had gone to law school until the depression, was able to arrange a preceptorship with William S. Middleton who practiced in a three-person firm on the third floor of the Keystone Building on Third Street in Harrisburg. In those days, you served two months in the summer of your second year of law school, as a clerk, usually without pay. John recalled, however, that the firm took him to lunch almost daily, usually at the Alva, and always picked up the check. John and preceptor Bill Middleton kept a close association for nearly 40 years.

In 1950, John was introduced to Joanna Norris, a beautiful redhead and a graduate of John Harris High School and Lebanon Valley College, with whom he fell in love at first sight. They married on August 18, 1951 at the Market Square Presbyterian Church. After, they moved to Susquehanna Township where they lived until John's passing.

Joanna was a music major and John was proud of her beautiful voice and listened to her sing each week with the choir at the Market Square Presbyterian Church. He supported her when she became deeply involved in the Church's mission for the Cambodian and Vietnamese refugees. John often helped refugees with their legal issues and concerns. Their families became, and remain, a part of the extended Roe family.

John's first paid law job was as clerk to the Honorable Karl E. Richards, also an elder at Market Square Presbyterian Church and president judge of the Orphan's Court and president judge of the Commonwealth Court, which consisted of the Dauphin County Court.

After a year's clerkship, Judge Richards called P.W. Fetterhoff, Esquire and in John's presence stated "P.W., I understand you are looking for a good young man." Thus began a four-year stint in private practice where John searched titles, handled criminal matters and any civil case that came along.

He was given office space and secretarial service and paid one-half of any client-paid fee. When P.W.'s nephew finally passed the bar, John was out of a job and shortly after returned to Attorney Middleton's office where they practiced together for 35-plus years. Several years later, John approached Earl Richard Etzweiler, Esquire, a young attorney employed by the District Attorney's Office and with Middleton's blessing, John asked him to join the practice; thus began Middleton, Roe and Etzweiler.

Around this time, Huette Dowling was district attorney and described by John as a "great lawyer." He asked John to become an assistant district attorney provided John could get Senator Harvey Taylor's okay. Senator Taylor's note to Dowling stated "Hewey, I would appreciate anything you can do for this young man." John claimed his years with the District Attorney's Office as the most educational of his life.

After leaving the DA's Office, a job which ran concurrent with his private practice, John handled a number of high profile criminal cases. He gradually developed a personal injury and estate practice.

After hurricane Agnes, John acquired and restored the historic McCormick Mansion at 101 North Front Street in Harrisburg where Middleton, Roe and Etzweiler took up residency. John proudly occupied the front office looking out over the Susquehanna River. Many will recall John sweeping the front steps and sidewalk, a daily ritual.

John recently wrote in private notes entitled *In Appreciation of the Bar* that "the Dauphin County Bar Association was really good to me." He served as secretary for a number of years, sat on its Board with friends Frank Haas, Irv Benjamin, Fred Bolten and Thomas Caldwell. He eventually was asked to be president and took office the year that the Bar Association acquired its new and current headquarters. He moved onto the PBA House of Delegates and was eventually asked to become active in the PBA Conference of County Bar Officers. He later served as its president.

A position that John held for over 50 years, and was very proud of, was as the Naturalization Officer for Dauphin County. His bi-annual naturalization ceremony was known as the finest in this Commonwealth and that was by no accident. He insisted that each ceremony be a welcoming and joyous one for our new citizens and that the food served at the post-ceremony reception represented each of their cultural traditions. John remained the County's Naturalization Officer until his passing.

In his *In Appreciation of the Bar*, John wrote of the days when tax rates were high and of his using all the deductions he could get. Through the Pennsylvania and American Bar Associations, John, Joanna and their three daughters took "deductible vacations" to New York City where Justice Harlan spoke at the New York Stock Exchange, to San Francisco where John played Pebble Beach and Spy Glass with Irv Benjamin, to Montreal, to Atlanta, and London where he attended the Queen's Garden Party, the Inns of Court Dinner and days in Paris, Zurich, Lake Lucerne, Lake Como, Milan, Florence and Rome. All of this was blessed by CPA Irv Yaverbaum and tested by the IRS which insisted only that John take 90% of his dues to Harrisburg Country Club as a deduction rather than a full 100%!

John Alexander Roe, "Big John," a man who was raised in a male-dominated family and who worked a farm, was the father of three daughters. Did John know how to raise three little girls? What is known is that he led, and they followed. They learned to play basketball, tennis and golf, to ride the waves in the ocean John loved so well, to work along with him in the yard, raking, trimming and clipping. Following in John's footsteps, they remain steadfast Pittsburgh Pirate fans.

John was blessed with six grandchildren and five great grandchildren. All but two are boys. Family was important to John; and cherished Thanksgiving dinners, always under his roof, where packed with family from near and far. John attended countless baseball, basketball and softball games to watch daughters, then grandchildren. He selflessly attended many swimming meets which he really never understood. For John, it was about

winning and in a field of 100 contestants, that didn't always happen. But he never quit asking, "Did he win?"

John was as a loyal friend to many though his commitments extended beyond personal relationships. He was a steadfast advocate for the Dauphin County Bar, our Court, Dickinson College, his law school and Susquehanna Township. Contributing to the wellbeing of these institutions satisfied a basic tenet of his core beliefs.

John also recognized that he was blessed by those who supported him in his law practice and other commitments. Shortly before his death he penned a page of notes entitled *To My Secretaries in Appreciation*. In it he recalls that when he began practice with Bill Middleton he also gained a secretary that John referred as the "dean of Dauphin County secretaries," Katherine "Kitty" Yarwood. She could handle corporate books, was an expert on preparing estate accountings, took testimony and typed masters' reports. Kitty was with the Middleton firm for over 50 years and worked into her 80s.

John's last secretary, Anne Robinson, came to work for John in 1995 on Front Street. She helped move John's practice to his home and continued to run John's office until his death. She was invaluable to John's practice and remains so as she prepares for this County's upcoming naturalization ceremony.

The Country Club of Harrisburg also became a big part of John's life when he joined as a single member at the age of 16. He remained a member until his death. He went looking for clay tennis courts and found lifelong friends, some here and some not, though none ever forgotten.

John's civic life began as one of the founders of the Wedgewood Hills Civic Association and its swim club in Susquehanna Township. John became a Susquehanna Township Commissioner, serving for eight years, and later serving over 30 years as its solicitor. John was a member of the Euclid Lodge, Harrisburg Consistory, Zembo Shrine, American Legion and

Veterans of Foreign War. He is a past president of the March of Dimes, the Tri-County Blind Association and Sons of the American Revolution.

A thread that connected many facets of John's life was the Market Square Presbyterian Church where he was a member from 1952. He served as an elder and trustee for many years and secretary and vice president of its Board. He taught Sunday school for 60 years with his last class only one month before his passing. He was president of the Men's Missionary Society and president of the Presbyterian Men, and helped to establish the Church's radio station, WMSP.

John and Joanna shared a love of music and attended and supported the Harrisburg Symphony for many years. John loved traveling to New York for Broadway shows whenever the opportunity arose.

John's hold on life was tenacious. He was fiercely loyal to his friends and friendships only ended as a result of death. He played tennis and golf into his 80s. One daughter cherishes a voicemail she retains where John, at 85, asked if she was free to play golf. His appreciation of a good martini outlived his golf. Only months before his death, John drove to Maryland to pick up several bottles of the "only good vermouth" suitable for a martini and one that was not sold in Pennsylvania.

Big John died as he lived, with strength, courage and independence. He persevered a fight with esophageal cancer for over two years. He was never heard to complain and those who saw him would not know of his predicament. He died at home; a practicing lawyer and with a surplus of continuing legal education credits.

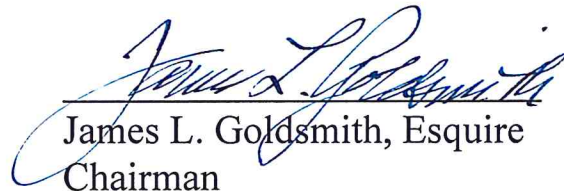
Big John's passing brings a large emptiness. He is survived by his loving and devoted wife, Joanna, with whom he marked his 63rd wedding anniversary one day prior to his passing. He also leaves behind three daughters: Louise Annetta Roe of Houston, Texas; Cynthia Roe Goldsmith of Dauphin, Pennsylvania; Amanda Norris Roe of Boston, Massachusetts; six grandchildren; five great grandchildren, in-laws; nieces and nephews.

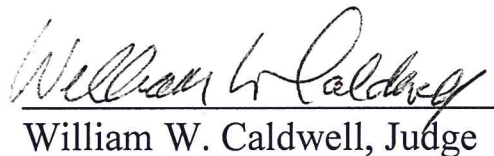
Therefore, be it resolved, that in the passing of John Alexander Roe, the community has lost a true gentleman and respected citizen, the Bar has lost one of its able practitioners and the family has lost an affectionate and devoted father, husband, grandfather and great grandfather.


And resolve further, that the members of the Dauphin County Bar Association, in meeting assembled, mourn the death of our esteemed colleague, John Alexander Roe, and tender our sympathy and condolences to his widow, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, in-laws, nieces and nephews.

And further resolved, that copies of this Memorial Resolution be spread upon the records of the Dauphin County Courts and Dauphin County Bar Association, that the original copy be filed in the Office of the Prothonotary, and that copies be transmitted to his widow and family.


Respectfully submitted,



James L. Goldsmith, Esquire
Chairman

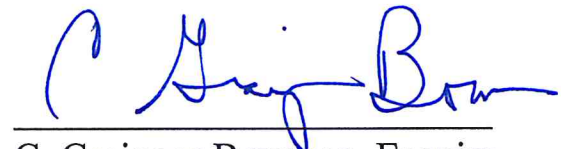

William W. Caldwell, Judge


Richard L. Placey, Esquire


Earl Richard Etzweiler, Esquire


LeRoy S. Zimmerman, Esquire


David E. Lehman, Esquire


C. Grainger Bowman, Esquire