

## Memorial Resolution Upon the Death of Bonnie Douglass Menaker

Bonnie was born in Harrisburg, the daughter of William Tyler Douglass, Jr., M.D. and Mary Hicks, Douglass. She is survived by her husband of 52 years, J. Thomas Menaker, J.D., and her siblings, Jill M. Douglass, Kim A. Douglass and William T. Douglass, III.

She was a graduate of the Shipley School (Bryn Mawr), University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), and Dickinson School of Law (Carlisle).

Bonnie's first exposure to the legal field was her clerkship to the late James S. Bowman, then a common pleas court judge and later the first President Judge of the Commonwealth Court. In 1965 Bonnie began the practice of law as an associate of H. Joseph Hepford for whom I also worked. We shared offices with LeRoy S. Zimmerman and Walter H. Compton, the venerable referee in bankruptcy before the office was elevated to a judgeship. She later became a partner.

From the very beginning she displayed a keen sense of aptitude for understanding legal problems and worked in many areas of practice, including the estate field where she became quite proficient.

To the best of my knowledge, there were only five female members of the bar in Dauphin County at the time and only two of them actually practiced privately. Thus, Bonnie fortified the profile of the woman lawyer in Dauphin County.

She quickly won the respect of the older attorneys and the admiration of the younger attorneys. By example, she encouraged newly-admitted attorneys to become members of the Bar Association and to actively participate in all Bar activities. For the new attorneys, she was a willing resource on the political happenings of the City of Harrisburg.

She immediately became an attraction with the lawyers and judges even before they came to realize how good a lawyer she would become. Tall, blond and beautiful, she made a big impression at the summer picnics where she demonstrated great diving form.

We all handled family law cases in those days, but in the early 1970s Bonnie began to specialize in that area and rose to become one of the foremost authorities on the subject in Pennsylvania as she was elected to the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and was chairman of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Family Law Section.

Joe Hepford, Roy Zimmerman, Bonnie, Jim Morgan and I formed a partnership which practiced at 111 North Front Street for many years. Prior to Bonnie's retirement, Roy had left to become Attorney General and the firm's name was changed to Hepford, Swartz, Menaker and Morgan.

Bonnie served on Pennsylvania's statewide Appellate Courts Nominating Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the committees that drafted the Pennsylvania Equal Rights Amendment and the Divorce Code of 1980. Her civic contributions included service on the boards of the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, Harrisburg Human Relations Council, American Red Cross, American Lung Association, and the American Civil Liberties Union. She was a founding member of the National Women's Political Caucus and the Monday Club. Bonnie proudly encouraged and mentored other women entering the legal profession at a time when gender equality was not taken for granted.

In 1989 Bonnie retired from her law practice, moved aboard a 40-foot sailboat, and spent the next 11 years circumnavigating the world with her husband, visiting 63 countries on six continents, and crossing three oceans in the course of their 62,000 mile passage. Upon completion of that odyssey in 2000, they moved to their home on Marco Island where Bonnie spent five years walking the beach daily, and taking frequent cruises and driving tours.

F. Scott Fitzgerald, in *The Last Tycoon*, wrote "there are no second acts in American lives." This was before Bonnie Menaker.

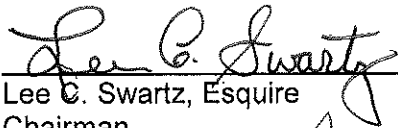
Bonnie's and Tom's 11 years of sailing was truly a second life encountering its joys and hardships. It wasn't for the faint of heart. Included along the way were pirates, an arrest of Tom in Eritrea and some tough passages. On one leg of the trip they weathered a storm by battening the hatches and staying underneath the deck. Bonnie was thrown around and broke a couple of ribs. Her comment was that all their adventures were still better than practicing law.

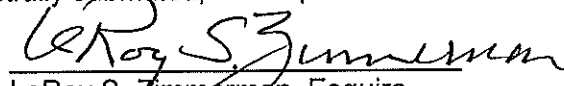
Bonnie was a faithful, caring friend to all of us. With her keen wit and engaging smile, she made you feel better when she entered the room. She uplifted those around her with her vibrant personality and enthusiasm.

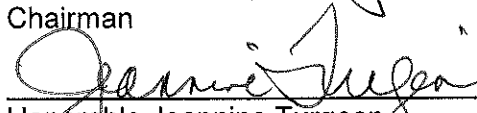
Bonnie was diagnosed with Alzheimer's dementia at the end of her journey. She treated this misfortune with grace and determination. She died on September 11, 2012, after a long struggle with this terrible disease.

She made an impact on those who knew her and will not be forgotten.

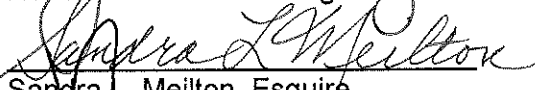
Respectfully submitted,

  
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Lee C. Swartz, Esquire  
Chairman

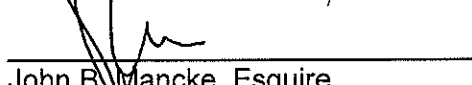
  
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LeRoy S. Zimmerman, Esquire

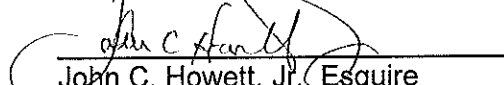
  
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Honorable Jeannine Turgeon

  
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James G. Morgan, Jr., Esquire

  
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Sandra L. Meilton, Esquire

  
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Stephen M. Greecher, Jr., Esquire

  
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John B. Mancke, Esquire

  
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John C. Howett, Jr., Esquire