

MEMORIAL FOR
JOHN A. RICHIE
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY
HELD IN THE
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
OCTOBER 24, 2003
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION

FILED

OCT 24 2003
Dianne Doughty
DIANNE DOUGHTY
DEPUTY CLERK OF COURT

We are here to commemorate and honor the life of our colleague and friend John A. Richie, born at Provencal, LA May 31, 1925 and died October 21, 2002.

John attended Byrd High School where he met a fellow band member Elizabeth Woodall, who later became his wife. He went to LSU where he earned every academic honor offered in his undergraduate, graduate work, and the law school. For his Master's thesis he authored, "New Orleans Studies", project of a Constitution for the State of Louisiana with notes and studies contained in Vol. IV, Louisiana Law Institute, 1954.

His honorary fraternities and affiliations were president of ODK, Order of the Coif, Law Review, Phi Delta Phi,; Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Gamma Mu, Delta Kappa Psi, Mortor Board, and Student Honor Court. After the war, the law school was inundated with a flood of students. We all know the mortality rate. In a starting class of about 150 students, John was graduated the fifth in his class with a wife, a baby, and a job which is quite an admirable fete if all one has to do is study.

Two years ago, I was visiting with the dean of my law school who told me the better students made the most successful lawyers; without question John made this come true. But the truly admirable thing is when he finished school he had no outside help; he rose to the top on the wings of his hard work and the good word of those who knew him. All professions have their intellectual specialties; John had few limits. This writer regarded him as the lawyers' lawyer and the judges' lawyer.

John was as fine a title examiner as could be found. As testimony to this he did the base title opinion for Spring Lake subdivision. He gave more than one a liberal education in title work. For a period of time John worked at city court as a part time District Attorney. For more than forty years this writer never saw one as diligent or so well prepared as a city prosecutor as was he. In his own practice he would lose money before his work would leave his office less than perfect.

He had a life long love for music. He played the trombone in the Shreveport Symphony, several bands including the Centenary Summer Band, the Shreveport Metropolitan Band, and as of late in the Shreveport German Band. He also was, what is known as, a call musician which means he was one of a select few musicians who are called on to expand the ranks of a traveling orchestra or band. In his case he was called to play with the Lawrence Welk Orchestra, the Ice Capades, Ringlin Brothers Circus, and the rodeo when they came to town. He said the circus was hardest of all because they played one fast number after another with no rest.

John had one of the finest and most extensive libraries of brass music and collection of recordings of brass music as could be found anywhere.

John spent long hours at the office; he was there before day light and worked long weekends. The former District Attorney John Richardson told this writer he was the most organized lawyer he ever knew. Yet despite his diligence and long hours, he found time to take Elizabeth and their sons Vernon, Byron, and Allen camping, sight seeing all over the West, and to several worlds' fairs.

John was by no means one dimensional. He was a skilled wood worker, and was as much at home discussing Brahms or Mendelsohn or Nietzsche, or great events of history as the law.

His personality was totally honest; he had no pretense and was to the core everything he appeared to be. He was intelligent, kind, thoughtful, generous, tolerant, and never a critical malicious fault finder. I never heard him utter a curse word, a vulgarity, tell an off color joke, or make a disrespectful remark about a lady. No matter the setting, he knew the proper thing to say. His wife said he was a gentleman and a gentle man. These things may sound too good to be true, but they are all true, and that is the truth.

The English language contains more words than any other and it is known for its precision, but this writer cannot find the words that contain him. I blame the English language. If there is one word that describes him, it is loyalty. As I look back over life, he is, without question, the most loyal and companionable friend I or anyone ever had. He lived life the way he wanted to be remembered. He lived life the way we all want to be remembered. He left the greatest legacy of all; to his friends, fine memories of friendship, and to his family a reputation and a name they can be proud of.

On behalf of the Shreveport Bar Association, I submit this memorial to the memory of John A. Richie, and move that it be inscribed in the permanent records of the First Judicial District Court, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and that appropriate copies be presented to his family.

Respectfully submitted on this 24th day of October, 2003, in Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana.

H. Dan Sawyer
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