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In Memoriam: Rich Klaber



Richard D. Klaber
1933–2019

Richard D. Klaber, who devoted his entire 50-year career to Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, passed away on Friday afternoon. He was 86.

Colleagues knew him to be a venerable man with unparalleled congeniality, humility and professionalism.

“He was an excellent lawyer, the consummate professional, a mentor, and most of all, a good man,” recalled Jeffrey T. Wiley, Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer of Dickie McCamey. “He believed strongly in maintaining the Dickie McCamey culture, which he continued to foster in different ways even after his retirement. He was one of those rare individuals who made us all better people for knowing him.”

Mr. Klaber, at age 28, joined Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C. on New Year’s Day in 1962. Ted Struk joined the firm three months later to complete the class of 1962.

At the time, the firm leadership was familiar with Mr. Klaber’s father, Elmer G. Klaber, a district claim manager of an insurance company who was a regular client. “Having been well trained at an early age by his father-attorney in the art of advocacy ... Mr. Klaber was placed in rotation to handle bodily injury lawsuits,” Larry McBride wrote in the *History of Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C.: A Pittsburgh Law Firm With a Tradition of Service For Over a Century*.

Mr. Klaber later became a shareholder and continued to concentrate his practice in the areas of general liability, product liability, railroad litigation, FELA, municipal liability, civil rights, insurance coverage, and bad faith litigation.

“Rich, of course, was one of the pillars on which the splendid reputation of our firm was grounded. What set him apart more than anything, at least to me, were his indomitable spirit and uplifting good humor, no matter the

circumstances,” said John C. Conti, President and Chief Executive Officer of Dickie McCamey. “His love of the firm and all those who (as he would put it) had the good fortune to work here, is a remarkable legacy ... In truth it was our good fortune to have known Rich Klaber.”

Before retiring in 2011, Mr. Klaber was a member of the Pennsylvania, Allegheny County, West Virginia, Ohio County, and American Bar Associations. He was admitted to practice before the Appellate Courts of Pennsylvania, the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Courts of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the Fourth Circuit, United States Tax Court, Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia, and United States District Courts in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. He was also a member of the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania Defense Institute, Defense Research Institute, International Association of Defense Counsel, and National Association of Railroad Trial Counsel.

Mr. Klaber graduated from Bucknell University in 1955 with a B.A. in Political Science. He received his J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 1961. He served in the U.S. Army as a lieutenant from 1956–1958.

Dickie McCamey shareholder James R. Miller laments the loss of Mr. Klaber: “Dickie McCamey lost a true icon in every sense of that too-often-used word. I had the honor and pleasure of knowing Rich since 1974. I NEVER heard him say a bad word about anyone. He seemingly never had a bad day. Like many of you, I will miss him greatly.”

Last year Mr. Klaber expressed gratitude to the firm for the condolences after the death by his wife of 61 years, Judith Beattie Klaber: “Knowing each of you for so long I consider to be one of the privileges and blessings I received through my association with Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote — more by grace than by deserving. So 'thank you' for enriching my life.”