

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PA
CIVIL MINUTES

RE: MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR :
RALPH W. BARTHOLD, ESQUIRE, :
ROBERT UNGERLEIDER, ESQUIRE, :
RUSSELL KOWALYSHYN, ESQUIRE, :
DANIEL F. JOELLA, ESQUIRE, :
WAINWRIGHT E. H. DIEHL, ESQUIRE, :
GEORGE J. BLASCO, ESQUIRE. :

Memorial Services held in Courtroom No. 1 in the Northampton County Government Center, Easton, Pennsylvania, on Wednesday, September 7, 1988.

HONORABLE ALFRED T. WILLIAMS, JR., PRESIDENT JUDGE
HONORABLE RICHARD D. GRIFO, JUDGE
HONORABLE MICHAEL V. FRANCIOSA, JUDGE
HONORABLE ROBERT A. FREEDBERG, JUDGE
HONORABLE WILLIAM F. MORAN, JUDGE
HONORABLE F. P. KIMBERLY McFADDEN, JUDGE

JUDGE WILLIAMS: The Court en banc is specially convened this morning to recognize those members of this bar who have passed away during the last year. The Court recognizes the President of the Northampton County Bar Association, Charles Peischl.

MR. PEISCHL: May it please the Court, Your Honors, ladies and gentlemen. We are here this morning to remember, to eulogize and to honor the members of the Northampton County Bar Association who have passed away during the last year.

There are six of our colleagues who have died during that time. Those six are Ralph W. Barthold, who died on October 23, 1987; Wainwright E. H. Diehl, who died on December 22nd, 1987; Robert Ungerleider, who passed away on April 6th, 1988; Russell Kowalshyn, who died on April 17, 1988; Daniel F. Joella, who died on May 16, 1988; and George J. Blasco, who passed away on May 26, 1988.

The purpose of this morning's memorial service is to remember and to pay a final tribute to our deceased colleagues. In offering this final tribute, we are recalling as a profession what each of these colleagues has contributed to a mutual calling and to the general public it has served. In eulogizing these six individuals, we are paying our respects to their assembled family members and thanking them for the support that they gave to their husband, their father, their son or brother during his years of practice. In a much broader sense, we are recognizing and celebrating the richness of their lives and their unique and varied careers, talents and interests which make our profession and also the individual and collective associations within it so meaningful.

On behalf of the Northampton County Bar Association, I want to thank our judges for setting aside this specially designated time this morning for this memorial service and for your full participation in it. I want to acknowledge, welcome and pay our respects as the Bar Association to the families and the friends who are here today, and I want to thank the six members of our Bar Association who are serving this morning as eulogists. Those six individuals are the Honorable Carleton T. Woodring, Keene Jabbour, Edward G. Ruyak, Frank W. Yandrisevits, Morris Mindlin, and Lorenzo W. Crowe, Jr.

JUDGE WILLIAMS: The Court recognizes Lorenzo W. Crowe, Jr., Esquire.

MR. CROWE: Thank you, Your Honor. May it please the Court.

JUDGE WILLIAMS: Mr. Crowe.

MR. CROWE: Members of the bar, relatives and friends of George Joseph Blasco, Esquire.

George Blasco died at the age of thirty-five on May 26, 1988. He was born in Easton on October 23, 1952. He graduated from Notre Dame High School in 1970. George received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Villanova University in 1974. He received his Juris Doctrate in January 1980 from Northern Illinois University College of Law. George was admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1982 and was admitted to the Courts of Northampton County May 16, 1982.

He only practiced law for eight years. He married Sue on August 12, 1978; and from that union; he had two children, Rachel, who's five, and son David, who's two.

During the last two years of George Blasco's life, we became extremely close. That is because in March of 1986 he was appointed to the Northampton County Public Defender Staff as a Public Defender; and at that time he joined me on the staff, and we became partners.

Our schedules in our private practice and duties as Assistant Public Defenders had to be correlated in a manner to permit us to effectively compliment each other. Also, we were assigned to two separate homicide cases. Thus, we spent a great deal of time together.

George Blasco was a good person. He was a loving person. He saw some good in everyone. His love and devotion to God was his first priority. He had a special bond of love for all of his family, especially his mother Grace, his sister Rose, his brother Tony and his friend Jim Narlesky.

George Blasco had a tremendous capacity for compassion, forgiveness and understanding. He wanted the world to be perfect and believed that if everyone loved each other, that this could be accomplished.

George was a skilled carpenter. He raised and nurtured plants, and they were exquisite. He had a green thumb.

Death. At first I could not associate the word death with George, but now I can. The weeks following his death I went to one of my duties in Juvenile Court as Assistant Public Defender. It was the first time in two years I was without my partner. As I left the Court that morning and walked back to my office, I felt this deep sense of loneliness and this deep emptiness, for George was not with me.

Shortly thereafter, I visited his gravesite, and a sense of confidence and newness came over me; and I knew though George had died in body; his spirit must live on. And I believe at his death with his prodigious love for his God that George was at peace with himself and that his spirit has reached the ultimate reward.

I am no longer maddened by his death. I rejoice to know and feel and believe that George Blasco is at peace and is experiencing true happiness. Dying at the age of thirty-five is oh, such a short period of time in life . . . and yet, one will not see his name on a landmarked case nor see his name or picture or a portrait on these courthouse walls; but every time I come to this Court and I hear the Court Crier strike the gavel and hear this Court called to Order, I will always feel the spirit of George Blasco.

And to that end, in his name, George J. Blasco, Esquire, extraordinary his memory, and his spirit will always be in my heart.

JUDGE WILLIAMS: The Court appreciates very much the efforts of each of the eulogists as well as the members of the bar who are with us today. Judge Grifo will speak on behalf of the Court.

JUDGE GRIFO: President Judge Williams, my colleagues on the bench, members of the Northampton County Bar Association, and family and friends of Ralph W. Barthold, Wainwright E. H. Diehl, Robert Ungerleider, Russell Kowalyshyn, Daniel F. Joella and George J. Blasco.

Once again, it is my melancholy duty, yet privilege, to represent the bench in paying tribute to the deceased members of our bar. Although I am honored to have been selected by President Judge Williams to speak on behalf of this Court on this, the occasion of memorializing the passing of our deceased members, I must confess humbly and candidly that I do so with diffidence and with a sense of total inadequacy.

How does a Court, as opposed to a Bar Association, do justice to closing the final chapter in the book of the lives of these men? Mere words cannot express the deep sense of loss which we always feel on occasions such as this. The sense of loss has been recorded, and their many achievements have been recounted in the resolutions that have been prepared and offered for adoption by the members of the bar composed of their intimate associates. The Court is grateful for these appropriate and deserved tributes. We concur and join in the sentiments expressed; and we, of course, will not repeat what has been so well said by their associates.

My duty requires me to go beyond the content of the resolutions. I must memorialize with the annals of the history of our County Court, the contributions these men have made as sworn officers of this Court and as advocates in this, our judicial forum.

Ralph W. Barthold took his oath of office in the well of this very room on November the 11, 1935.

Bob Ungerleider took his oath of office in the well of this courtroom on July 1st of 1940.

Russell Kowalyshyn took his oath of office in the well of this courtroom on December 3rd, 1951.

Daniel Joella took his oath of office in the well of this courtroom on the 13th day of December of 1954.

Wainwright Diehl took his oath of office in the well of this room on the 6th of February, 1956.

George Blasco took his oath of office in the well of this courtroom on the 16th day of May of 1980.

That familiar ancient oath that reads as follows: I do solemnly swear that I will support, obey and defend the Constitution of the United States and the

Constitution of this Commonwealth and that I will discharge the duties of my office with fidelity as well as to the Court and as well as to the client, that I will use no falsehood nor delay the cause of any person for lucre or malice.

Each of them fulfilled that oath and did that with distinction, bringing credit and honor not only to the bar of this County but also to this Court; and not to be overlooked, to the credit and honor of the bar associations and courts across this state and nation. What more can any person do than to bring credit and honor to his profession? Especially in this day when all professions are under such close scrutiny by the public and by the world. As a Court, we salute them and memorialize in the annals of our history their accomplishments. I knew each of the deceased members well and was in this very courtroom as a lawyer when four of the six took their oath as lawyers.

The list of those to be honored this morning is a long one. It includes some whose careers were ended early and some whose careers were long and active. It includes trial lawyers who loved the arena and excitement and drama of a jury trial, who were involved in significant civil and criminal litigation, as well as solicitors; in the English sense, who preferred an office practice representing and involved with business, real estate and estates. Their number includes a wide variety of government services as legal advisors, as well as an outstanding record of voluntary service on the boards of a multitude of community agencies and educational institutions, but they shared a common pride and goal, and that was remembering the oath that they took and being a good lawyer.

The Court is proud to record our admiration and deepest respect for each of them. Each had his own special claim to the affection and esteem of the judges of this Court as well as the lawyers of this county as well as the citizens.

The judges of this Court feel a deep sense of sorrow and loss, but there is a measure of consolation in the knowledge that theirs were useful and active lives. Their records stand unblemished and will forever bring honor to them, to their families and to this Court which they served with fidelity and unflinching devotion.

In recognition of the distinguished careers of Ralph W. Barthold, Robert Ungerleider, Russell Kowalyshyn, Daniel Joella, Wainwright E. H. Diehl and George Blasco, the resolutions presented by the several committees of the Bar Association are unanimously adopted. The record of these proceedings is ordered transcribed and filed and made a part of the Court Minutes of this Court. Copies thereof shall be sent to the families of each of our deceased brethren.

This Court now stands recessed in honor and out of the deep respect for Ralph W. Barthold, Robert Ungerleider, Russell Kowalyshyn, Daniel Joella, Wainwright E. H. Diehl and George Blasco; and when the Court adjourns this day, it will do so in honor of these distinguished members of our bar.

JUDGE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Judge Grifo. Court will stand in recess so we might meet the members of the families who are with us today.

(Memorial service concluded.)