

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

MEMORIAL SERVICE

NOTES OF PROCEEDINGS

BEFORE THE COMMON PLEAS JUDGES OF  
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT,  
EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA, in COURTROOM NO. 1 ON  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2011, THE HONORABLE CRAIG  
A. DALLY PRESIDING.

 COPY

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HONOREES

WILLIAM P. COFFIN, ESQ.

ANDREW L. HERSTER, JR., ESQ.

KARL L. LaBARR, ESQ.

I N D E X

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1 JUDGE MCFADDEN: Good morning,  
2 ladies and gentlemen.

3 JUDGE DALLY: President Judge  
4 McFadden, my colleagues on the Bench, members of  
5 the Bar and friends and family of William P.  
6 Coffin, Andrew L. Herster, Junior, and Karl K.  
7 LaBarr.

8 with great sadness and great  
9 respect, this Court convenes today to reflect  
10 upon the life and work of three of our esteemed  
11 members who departed this life within the last  
12 year. As a Court, we are honored to have in our  
13 presence the family, friends and colleagues of  
14 our deceased members for this memorial service  
15 to share in this timely remembrance, reflection  
16 and recognition.

17 The Court now recognizes for  
18 remarks Victor E. Scmillio, Esquire,  
19 President-elect of the Northampton County Bar  
20 Association

21 Mr. Scmillio.

22 MR. SCOMILLIO: May it please the  
23 Court, members of the Bar, family and friends of  
24 Karl LaBarr, William Coffin and Andrew Herster.

25 We meet here today to remember the

1 lives and careers of three valued members of our  
2 Bar. Family and loved ones have mourned and  
3 grieved. Today we, as a Bar, take time to share  
4 in the loss and mourn the pasting of these  
5 gentleman.

6 Passing of one of our members is  
7 not only a loss to our association and to our  
8 Courts but is also a loss to our community which  
9 was so nobly served by Mr. Coffin, Mr. LaBarr  
10 and Mr. Herster. Their service to the  
11 profession and to the community is worthy of our  
12 recognition, worthy of a pause in our schedule,  
13 a break in the court session, to honor them and  
14 to remember their careers.

15 It is always remarkable on days  
16 like this to realize the wonderful relationships  
17 that members of our Bar share with the  
18 Association, the community, and even our  
19 country.

20 Today the gentlemen we honor are  
21 shining examples of the far-reaching impact of  
22 our Association.

23 Andrew Herster was an honored war  
24 veteran from World War II, saving lives of men  
25 in the Pacific Theater. He continued to serve

1 our country as District Attorney and as County  
2 solicitor.

3 Karl LaBarr, in the midst of a  
4 busy civil practice, took time to mentor a young  
5 family friend who chose the profession of being  
6 an attorney and became one of our Presidents of  
7 our Bar Association.

8 William Coffin is a third  
9 generation Northampton County attorney who took  
10 time from his schedule to sit with those who are  
11 inflicted with cancer.

12 These men are examples to us all,  
13 examples of service and sacrifice. And we will  
14 hear of their lives and careers from three  
15 members of our Bar Association today.

16 To the families and loved ones, we  
17 grieve with you, but we also celebrate and honor  
18 the careers of these gentleman. We rejoice in  
19 praising their efforts to the profession, to the  
20 Court and to the citizens they served.

21 Judge Dally, I would move that the  
22 record of today's proceedings be held in honor  
23 of Karl LaBarr, Andrew Herster and William  
24 Coffin.

25 JUDGE DALLY: That motion is

1 granted, Mr. Scmillio. Thank you.

2 Presenting remarks on behalf of  
3 our honoree, William P. Coffin, the Court  
4 recognizes his friend and colleague, Brian M.  
5 Monahan, Esquire.

6 Mr. Monahan.

7 MR. MONAHAN: Thank you, Your  
8 Honor.

9 May it please the Court, Bill  
10 Coffin's family, Marge, Bill, Junior, and Frank,  
11 members of the Bar, and guests and litigants.

12 We are here to honor the life of  
13 Bill Coffin. Bill has passed on now, but for  
14 those who knew him he is still here in our  
15 memories.

16 Bill was a brilliant man that  
17 bridged a gap through three generations of  
18 members of the Bar of Northampton County. His  
19 grandfather George was a bankruptcy referee in  
20 the early Twentieth Century. His father George  
21 was a District Attorney in this county who  
22 worked tirelessly to remove the influences of Al  
23 Capone's gang and the thugs from the streets of  
24 Easton. His father and grandfather appear in  
25 the 1932 composite of members of the Bar. It's

1 in the corridor on the way to Courtroom 2 and 3.

2 Bill was brilliant. He attended  
3 Mercersburg Academy and ran cross country for  
4 the famed Olympian coach, Jimmy Curran. Bill  
5 was fond of his times at Mercersburg.

6 Apparently Coach Curran had a huge influence on  
7 his life. Bill could spend hours relating the  
8 times and technique of running in that moment.

9 Later on Bill went on to graduate  
10 from Catawba College in North Carolina and from  
11 one of the finest law schools in the country,  
12 Washington and Lee University School of Law.

13 Bill returned to Northampton  
14 County and practiced law with his father for a  
15 few years in the firm of Coffin, DeRaymond and  
16 Griffo. Yet Bill was somewhat of a maverick.  
17 He was too independent to rise through the slow  
18 advancement to become a partner. So he formed  
19 his own practice.

20 When I first met Bill in 1983, his  
21 practice focused on real state. He had staffed  
22 offices in Easton, Allentown, Stroudsburg, Jim  
23 Thorpe and a satellite office in Wellsboro,  
24 Tioga County. Bill had the ability to make  
25 innovative business decisions. He coupled the

1 practice of law with writing title insurance  
2 policies. He was a successful pioneer in that  
3 regard.

4 Moreover, Bill was honest, kind  
5 and a mentor. He spent time with many young  
6 lawyers in the practice who have gone on to be  
7 successful. He knew how to communicate and  
8 teach others in the law. Leonard Mellon of our  
9 Bar worked for him and mentored with him.  
10 Jeanne Engler, the First Assistant District  
11 Attorney of Carbon County, mentored with him.  
12 They all learned from him.

13 Combined with his success, which I  
14 believe was much understated, Bill never forgot  
15 his profession. He always had time for his  
16 clients. He always made the best of each case  
17 and acted pro bono on many occasions. Bill  
18 succeeded often in many legal matters and always  
19 felt pride in representing the poor and  
20 unfortunate. Yet his hard work bore fruit. In  
21 the last decade he had a multimillion dollar  
22 settlement of a personal injury case.

23 Bill was one of the strongest  
24 individuals I ever met. In his early forties he  
25 suffered lung cancer and had his lung removed.



1 He had a cardiac event and a triple bypass. Yet  
2 he never let these disabilities work against  
3 him. He helped others believe that they, too,  
4 could thrive after a cancer diagnosis.

5 Bill is still here with us. He  
6 lives in our memories each day. I still see him  
7 smiling and walking down the corridor of the  
8 courthouse on his way to the law library. He  
9 spent many hours on the second floor of that law  
10 library in solitude studying the law. It's a  
11 sacred place to me and to many others here in  
12 our Bar. May we all remember him and respect  
13 the difference that he made for his clients and  
14 the Northampton County Bar in his 44 years of  
15 practice.

16 Thank you very much.

17 JUDGE DALLY: Thank you,  
18 Mr. Monahan.

19 Presenting remarks on behalf of  
20 our honoree, Andrew L. Herster, the Court  
21 recognizes his son-in-law and former law  
22 partner, Henry R. Newton, Esquire.

23 Mr. Newton.

24 MR. NEWTON: Thank you.

25 May it please the Court, members

1 of the Bar, friends and family gathered here  
2 today.

3 I am here to say a few words in  
4 memory of Andy Herster, my father-in-law and law  
5 partner and also the law partner of Bill Murphy,  
6 my brother-in-law, and the grandfather of our  
7 law partner, Attorney Henry Newton, Junior.

8 I'd like to give you a little  
9 history of the Herster family to illustrate  
10 their community service to Easton. The original  
11 Andrew Herster, the first Andrew Herster,  
12 arrived in Easton in 1766 and established a  
13 business here. Ten years later the outbreak of  
14 the American Revolution had taken place, and  
15 Andrew had had a son named John who was 18 years  
16 old who mustered out into the Center Square of  
17 Easton with other young lads in the community to  
18 serve in the militia to fight the British. When  
19 Andrew saw his son there, he said, "John, you're  
20 too young. Give me your musket. I will go in  
21 your place. You stay home and take care of your  
22 mother and your brothers and sisters." Andrew  
23 did go and fought in the battle of Long Island,  
24 which took place in the late summer of 1776. He  
25 was captured by the British and imprisoned on a

1 British ship that was kept in New York harbor  
2 that they used as a prison ship. Apparently the  
3 conditions were horrible, and many prisoners  
4 died. He died Christmas Day, 1776.

5 His son John, who had remained in  
6 Easton, went on to become a successful  
7 businessman, owning a grist mill, saw mill and  
8 oil mill on the Bushkill Creek. John was also  
9 very community minded and served as the County  
10 Treasurer of Northampton County, was an  
11 incorporator of the Delaware Bridge Company and  
12 Easton Water Company. All of this took place in  
13 early eighteenth hundreds.

14 The reason I mention all this is  
15 to indicate that that tradition was carried on  
16 by the Andy Herster that we knew, the tradition  
17 of public service.

18 Andy was Assistant District  
19 Attorney of Northampton County and served a term  
20 as District Attorney, was a solicitor for the  
21 Palmer Township Zoning Board, served a term as  
22 Palmer Township Solicitor, was the Northampton  
23 County Solicitor during the old commission form  
24 of government and then during the transition to  
25 the present form of government. But I think the

1 thing he was most proud of was that he was  
2 solicitor to the Community College of  
3 Northampton County. He was instrumental in  
4 serving the original board at their meetings  
5 that took place in the old Renninger jewelry  
6 store down at Northampton Street in Easton. He  
7 was instrumental in obtaining the charter for  
8 the college, of negotiating the operating  
9 agreement for the college with eight separate  
10 school districts, which, as you can imagine, was  
11 no easy task. He participated in the  
12 acquisition of the land for the college, the  
13 building of the original buildings and, of  
14 course, stayed with the college until his  
15 retirement. He saw the college become one of  
16 the premiere community colleges in the  
17 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

18 In addition to the public  
19 professional services, he was the chairman of  
20 the Easton Red Cross during and after the 1955  
21 flood in Easton. He was a director of the Minsi  
22 Trails Council of the Boy Scouts of America. He  
23 received the Northampton Community College  
24 Distinguished Citizen Award. As was alluded to  
25 by Victor, he served in the Armed Forces in

1 World War II in the Navy in the Pacific Theater.  
2 And, in fact, after one ship that he was on was  
3 torpedoed, he saved a sailor's life who couldn't  
4 swim. I think one of his proudest moments that  
5 he told us about was that he was able to smuggle  
6 some whisky back onto the American ship. When  
7 he left the British ship, the British officers  
8 stuck some whiskey bottles in his duffel bag,  
9 which was permitted on British ships but,  
10 obviously, not in the American Navy. I think he  
11 sweated that out until the war was over.

12 All through Andy's career I think  
13 everyone that knew him will remember him as a  
14 gentleman who practiced law with courtesy,  
15 integrity and honesty. We will all miss him  
16 very much.

17 Thank you.

18 JUDGE DALLY: Thank you very much,  
19 Mr. Newton.

20 Presenting remarks on behalf of  
21 our honoree, Karl K. LaBarr, the Court  
22 recognizes his friend and colleague, James L.  
23 Zulick, Esquire.

24 Mr. Zulick.

25 MR. ZULICK: May it please the

1 Court, fellow members of the Bar, honored  
2 guests.

3 I am here today to talk about Karl  
4 K. LaBarr. And in formulating my notes for  
5 these comments, I was puzzled by how you capture  
6 somebody's life in five minutes and communicate  
7 to the rest of you something meaningful that you  
8 can carry with you today. So with apologies in  
9 reference to family and friends, I will say that  
10 most of my comments are personal in nature,  
11 directed to Karl and Karl's family.

12 To give you a little bit of  
13 background on facts, Karl was born in Easton in  
14 1925. He died this year on May 10th at the age  
15 of 85. Karl was predeceased by his wife, Anne  
16 Lewis LaBarr, in 2008. Karl is survived by  
17 three children, Lisa, Paul, and Jill. And Karl  
18 was a lifelong Eastonian. And I think it's  
19 interesting, with the eulogy for Andy Herster  
20 and for Bill Coffin, that the Hersters, the  
21 Coffins and the LaBarrs represent Easton's  
22 society probably from 1900 through to 2000 and  
23 beyond. These are impressive people in Easton  
24 society.

25 I was talking with my father, who

1 is a lifelong friend of Karl LaBarr, and he was  
2 recalling playing on the March School  
3 playground. And the LaBarr house is right next  
4 to the March School playground. And he said he  
5 remembered seeing Karl LaBarr chasing somebody  
6 who scattered across the playground, ran through  
7 the LaBarr house and ran out the other side of  
8 the LaBarr house. And he said, "It must have  
9 been one of the Updegroves," because the  
10 Updegrove house was just on the other side. But  
11 it's indicative that this was a time in our  
12 society that community was very important,  
13 family was very important, and Karl was part of  
14 that on College Hill.

15 Karl graduated from Lafayette  
16 College. Very common for someone who grew up in  
17 the Easton area. He also graduated from  
18 Dickinson Law School. He was admitted to  
19 practice from the Northampton County Bar on  
20 December 1st, 1953. He is one of our 50-year  
21 members of the bar and served a lifetime as an  
22 attorney in Northampton County.

23 Perhaps most of you remember Karl  
24 in his affiliation in the law firm of Brose,  
25 Poswistilo and LaBarr. And I just want to make

1 a comment on that, that it is an interesting  
2 contrast to have Jerry Brose on one side and  
3 Frank Poswistilo on the other side. I think of  
4 Frank as a gentleman, calm demeanor,  
5 straightforward, dependable. I think of Jerry  
6 as outrageous, pugnacious, always pressing the  
7 limit of any forum that he was in and always  
8 being in the forefront of focus by this court as  
9 to his behavior. In the middle was Karl LaBarr.  
10 And in speaking with Pres Moritz, who was a  
11 graduate of Brose, Poswistilo LaBarr, if you ask  
12 J. Stephen Kreglow, if you talk to Tom or  
13 Charles Elliott, I think they will all tell you  
14 a day the life of Brose, Poswistilo and LaBarr  
15 could be pretty darn exciting, because Jerry  
16 kept everybody on their toes. But some of the  
17 stories of what happened in that law firm are  
18 famous in the Northampton County history.

19 But I would like to point out that  
20 Karl's strong family contact and his contact  
21 with community is what served him in mainly a  
22 transactional practice. I believe that Karl  
23 felt such, as some of the other members of the  
24 Bar, including myself, feel, that you perhaps  
25 are doing your client the best service by



1 keeping him out of the courtroom and advising  
2 him and counseling him or her to avoid  
3 litigation. So most of Karl's time was in the  
4 office, business law, real estate law, and other  
5 matters that didn't always take him to the  
6 courtroom.

7 In my practice, which was and is  
8 mainly involved with real estate -- does anyone  
9 here still remember what a real estate  
10 transaction is -- I fondly remember that when  
11 Karl was in attendance at a real estate  
12 transaction he would bring with him his  
13 harmonica, and at the end of the real estate  
14 settlement he would play, to the delight of all  
15 those present, "Be it ever so humble, there's no  
16 place like home." And we would all rally around  
17 Karl and charge out, being lifted by his  
18 guidance at the real estate settlement.

19 As much as Karl was and is a  
20 respected member of the Northampton County Bar,  
21 he had other interests, as well, that were very  
22 interesting to note. He was a lifelong member  
23 of the Pomfret Club, a lifelong member of the  
24 Northampton Country Club, serving on the Board  
25 and also a Past-president. I cannot emphasize

1 to you enough how much the LaBarr family, the  
2 Herster family, the Zulick family and the Coffin  
3 family were all importance parts of the  
4 Northampton Country Club. And many a year was  
5 spent growing up there under the guidance of our  
6 parents and grandparents in leading us through  
7 this community here in the Lehigh Valley.

8 Karl loved social occasions. The  
9 visual image I get of Karl is quite similar to  
10 the comedian Ron White standing there with a  
11 drink in hand and Karl's ever present cigarette,  
12 and he would be recounting a story to you and  
13 always leaving you with a little nugget of  
14 knowledge, or he'd be teasing you or chastising  
15 you to do a little bit better than perhaps you  
16 were doing. But, nevertheless, he was happy to  
17 see you, and he enjoyed your company. He was a  
18 very compassionate gentleman.

19 He also served on the Easton  
20 Hospital Board and was Past-president of the  
21 Easton Hospital Board. But perhaps many of you  
22 know Karl was also an avid skier. He served for  
23 many, many years on the ski patrol in the  
24 Poconos, mainly at the time at Big Boulder and  
25 Jack Frost, but he also served in other

1 capacities at other ski resorts. But his  
2 fondness for skiing led to something on the part  
3 of Karl that may be very interesting to you.  
4 And Karl was a continuous tinkerer. And Karl  
5 was developing the most important new discovery  
6 on how to make snow at ski resorts, and he was  
7 always on the edge, that he was just about to  
8 perfect this science, and it was going to make  
9 him a millionaire, because he was going to  
10 perfect it. For those closest to Karl, after  
11 hearing that story a couple of times they began  
12 to roll their eyes. Anne LaBarr, a very strong  
13 individual, would sort of just dismiss this as,  
14 "Okay, Karl, you keep going." To the best of my  
15 knowledge I don't know that it was ever  
16 perfected.

17 But one thing that I do have to  
18 say, a dear friend of Karl is Michael Riskin of  
19 our Bar Association. And I talked to Michael  
20 about this, and Michael said, "Yes, we had a lot  
21 of discussion on this." But there are some  
22 other things that we discovered about Karl that  
23 I didn't know. For example, he and his dear  
24 friend, Nancy Foltz, a lifelong friend -- the  
25 Foltzes were neighbors to the Labarrs up on

1 College Hill -- owned a shopping center in  
2 Colorado, Grand Junction, Colorado, and Michael  
3 tells me he actually went there and saw it. So  
4 there is some truth to some of Karl's other  
5 business adventures.

6 But for me the most endearing  
7 remembrance that I have of Karl LaBarr was the  
8 time that he spent with my parents, Tom and  
9 Marie Zulick, Karl and Anne LaBarr, Jack and  
10 Barbie Lehr and Chutz and Jerry Lippincott.  
11 Those four couples, when they got together,  
12 purposely called themselves the Crazy Eights,  
13 and they used to have a blast getting together.

14 As a young kid watching all of  
15 this happen, listening to the sounds of Les and  
16 Larry Elgart, Designs for Dancing -- there's one  
17 that you might recall, Perez Prado. Does that  
18 ring a bell for anyone? But that was a time  
19 when Jack Kennedy was President. In the  
20 background you'd hear, "Ask not what your  
21 country can do for you; ask what you can do for  
22 your country." And I'm visualizing this group  
23 getting together. It was a time of hope. It  
24 was a time of a Camelot in the Easton area.

25 And when I finally went off to

1 school and came back as a grubby kid in the  
2 Lehigh Valley, I interviewed with Walter Peters.  
3 And Walter had had an experience before where he  
4 nabbed Preston Moritz from Brose, Poswistilo and  
5 LaBarr. So when I interviewed with him, Walter  
6 decided to call up Karl and says, "what do you  
7 think about this kid Zulick?" Karl supposedly  
8 said, "He's an okay kid. I think you ought to  
9 hire him." And they did, and it became a  
10 lifetime of service for me to the Nazareth  
11 community, all because of Karl. And when I  
12 would see Karl thereafter, he'd ask how I was  
13 doing and is there anything that he could do for  
14 me in serving as a mentor to me in the  
15 Northampton County Bar.

16 The other thing that I want to  
17 comment on -- I see that Lou Minotti is here. I  
18 want all of you to know that at a Bar  
19 Association function a number of years ago Karl  
20 and his good buddy Lou Minotti were there, and  
21 Lou started to show symptoms of having a heart  
22 attack. Through Karl LaBarr's quick thought and  
23 study, he grabbed my partner, Gary Brienza, and  
24 he and Gary took Lou to the Easton Hospital. If  
25 you ask Lou today, Lou will tell you Karl saved

1 his life.

2 That's the type of person that  
3 Karl was, compassionate, a good communicator,  
4 loved people, all of which served him well in  
5 his service to the community as a  
6 counselor-at-law.

7 So in the final summation when you  
8 ask yourself, "Did you make a difference? Did  
9 you have an effect on somebody else?" My answer  
10 is, "Way to go, Karl. You did. Way to go,  
11 Uncle Stubby," as he was known to me.

12 Thank you very much.

13 JUDGE DALLY: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Zulick.

15 Today we gather here in Courtroom  
16 Number 1, a room rich with tradition, to  
17 recognize and pay tribute to three distinguished  
18 members of our Bar, members whose careers,  
19 filled with many achievements and noble  
20 contributions to our community as lawyers of the  
21 Northampton County Bar, have been admirably  
22 recounted by our eulogists this morning and in  
23 which the Court joins in these sentiments so  
24 well expressed.

25 Each of those we honor today stood

1 in the well of this courtroom, took the oath as  
2 an attorney and committed themselves, as that  
3 oath requires, to behave themselves within this  
4 Court according to the best of their learning  
5 and ability and not to delay the cause of any  
6 person for lucre or malice. And William P.  
7 Coffin, Andrew L. Herster and Karl K. LaBarr  
8 fulfilled that oath with distinction. Each of  
9 these gentlemen understood that what mattered in  
10 their professional and personal lives was that  
11 act of integrity, compassion, courage or  
12 sacrifice that served to enrich, empower or  
13 encourage others.

14 To the families gathered here  
15 today, we share in your loss of our departed  
16 members and note that their records remain  
17 unblemished and will continue to bring honor to  
18 them, to each of you and to the courts they  
19 served with fidelity and distinction.

20 The record of this proceeding is  
21 ordered to be spread upon the minutes of this  
22 Court and copies to be provided to the families  
23 of our deceased members.

24 And when this Court adjourns this  
25 morning, it does so in honor of and out of deep

1 respect for each of them.

2 The families, guests and members  
3 of the Bar are invited to a reception to be held  
4 in the jury lounge immediately following this  
5 memorial service.

6 This Court is now adjourned.

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8 (The proceedings concluded.)

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CERTIFICATION

I.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me in the above cause and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2011

\_\_\_\_\_

Gerald F. Carr  
Registered Professional Reporter

\_\_\_\_\_

II.

The foregoing record of the proceedings in the within matter is directed to be filed.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2011

\_\_\_\_\_

Craig A. Dally, Judge