



Dr. James Albert Wilson

February 28, 1928 - March 3, 2017

Dr. James Albert Wilson passed gently away on Friday, March 3, 2017, three days after his 89th birthday, surrounded by his loving family. Born on February 28, 1928 in Wilkinsburg, James established a distinguished academic career at the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh, and proudly served his country in WWII.

Beloved son of the late Albert and Helen Wilson and preceded in death by his first wife Elsa Wilson, James is survived by his devoted brother David Wilson (Rene), loving children Shelley Whittier (Richard), Michael Wilson (Lavita) and Lori McMaster (Dave), niece Jacalyn Wolf Heintz (Bill), grandchildren Rachel Whittier, Caitlin McMaster, Morgan McMaster, Ethan McMaster, Maya Wilson, and his best friend, Dean Emeritus Dr. H. Jerome Zoffer (partner Sorel), and former wives Michelle Harrison and Patricia Wilson.

James left Wilkinsburg High School prior to graduation and enlisted in the U.S. Navy on March 15, 1946. James served on the USS J.D. Blackwood DE (Destroyer Escort) 219, the USS Tidewater AD 31, and Sub Group Five, FLA. Upon his honorable discharge on January 21, 1948, James returned to High School and later obtained his B.A. and Master's degrees from Duquesne University, and his Ph.D. from Queens University Belfast, Northern Ireland. During this time, he again served his country in the Air Force Reserves.

James forever changed the course of his family's lives by taking the courageous step of moving to Belfast with his wife Elsa and his young children in 1962 to pursue his doctoral thesis on the Emigration of British Scientists. By doing so, James cemented his family's devotion to education, and to being global travelers and learners. While in Belfast, the family lived in an "integrated" neighborhood of Catholics and Protestants, all of whom lined up outside of the family's home to extend their condolences after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. During the summer of 1969, James once again moved with his family to Dublin, the Republic of Ireland, while conducting research at St. Patrick's College.

James served as a Professor at the Graduate School of Business for 30 years, working initially in the Cathedral of Learning, which his father, Albert Wilson, a carpenter, helped to build. James taught Business Ethics, Organizational Behavior and Social Performance. While teaching as a full-time professor, James also practiced as a private Clinical Psychologist, and worked as a business consultant specializing in organizational development for corporations including IBM and the Bell Telephone Company.

While a student at Duquesne University, James converted to Catholicism, and remained a life-long student of the history and theology of the Catholic Church, Catholic social activism, American, Scottish and Irish history, and the Navajo Nation (where he volunteered as a teacher). Throughout his life, James protested against gender, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination. He had hoped to live to see the first woman elected as President of the United States. James was a fierce individualist and a powerful intellectual presence who adored dogs, typewriters, the New York Times, the Dave Brubeck Quartet, Laurel & Hardy, W.C. Fields and Monty Python.

Visitation will be on Sunday, March 5 at Simons Funeral Home, 7720 Perry Hwy, Pittsburgh, PA 15237, from 2-4 PM and 6-8 PM.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday, March 6 at 10 AM at Saints John & Paul Roman Catholic Parish, 2586 Wexford Bayne Road, Sewickley PA 15143. Interment with military honors will be at Allegheny County Memorial Park in Allison Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to the Sewickley Community Center, 15 Chadwick St, Sewickley, PA 15143; Autism Connection of PA, 35 Wilson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15223; or the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, 1 N Linden Street, Duquesne, PA 15110.