

**J. Byron Hayes**  
**October 22, 1920 – January 11, 1986**

We meet today to honor our friend, J. Byron Hayes, whose fighting, Irish heart finally wore out on January 11, 1986, after an illness of many years.

Byron was the son of one lawyer, the father of another and himself a prominent member of our Bar for many years.

He was born in Fort Wayne on October 22, 1920. He attended Cathedral Grade School and went from there to Central Catholic High School where, as "Jughead Hayes", he was a fine versatile athlete. After high school, he went to Notre Dame and received his A.B. in the fateful year 1942. He went into the Navy. He spent thirty-seven months on a destroyer in the South Pacific and attained the rank of Lieutenant. During this period he married Barbara Roth, whom he loved deeply until her death nearly two years ago.

After the war, he returned to Notre Dame where he received his L.L.B. in 1948. He served as an Assistant United States Attorney from 1950 to 1953, and he practiced for many years with his father, C. Byron Hayes.

He and Barbara had four children who were born in the early days of his law practice, Sheila, Linda, Neil and Mary Beth. He was always a devoted husband and father. He is remembered by his children for his kindness and sound advice, for his always being there and most important, for making each child feel special. No matter how busy his day, his feet were always under the dinner table in the evening.

Just as he cared for his family, so he cared for his clients, and for the whole human race. Although he never articulated this, maybe not even to himself, he saw the practice of law as a means of helping others. He was a wise and patient counselor, and he was tireless in seeking to right injustices.

He served as Allen County Prosecutor from 1959 to 1963 and then, out of loyalty to his party, selflessly assumed a thankless job as County Chairman of a shattered party.

Throughout his life he was a devout Catholic. His was a warm and loving Catholicism, and he kept his faith until the day he died.

He was honored for his various activities by being named a Sagamore Of The Wabash. In 1975, he was appointed to the Committee Of Character And Fitness Of The Supreme Court, a position he held until he died.

He had a big heart, figuratively and literally. Physically, it was twice the normal size; figuratively, it was even larger. This courage stood him in good stead, because his later years were burdened with illness; his own and his wife's. He suffered a heart attack in 1981 and

never recovered. In 1983, Barbara was diagnosed as having terminal cancer. He spent every possible moment with her until her death.

Despite these afflictions, he continued to face the world with courtesy and without complaint. He enjoyed his nine grandchildren, and he enjoyed lunches with his hunting and fishing companions from the old days. He enjoyed his time in the office with his clients.

To the end, he exemplified the good father, the good counselor and the good Christian.

It is appropriate to close with a passage from the Book of Isaiah:

“He shall swallow up death in victory;  
and the Lord God will wipe away tears  
from off all faces”

IT IS MOVED that his Memorial Resolution be approved and adopted by the Association, with appropriate copies to the Court Records, and to his family.

Respectfully submitted,

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

---

David B. Keller, Esquire

---

Judge James W. Jackson