

# JUDGE JAMES D. CLYNE, retired

A great man who rose to become one of the most liked and respected judges and mediators in New Jersey, Judge James D. Clyne, 78, of Lambertville, NJ passed away suddenly in Hereford, England on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2023. His daughter Heather was by his side.

The youngest of nine, Jim was born in Bradford, PA on May 20, 1945 to Lyman Alson Clyne and Esther Julia Carlson Gage Clyne. His humble upbringing shaped his character, gave him a deep appreciation for doing what is right, and the drive and strength to succeed.

Jim received his B.A. in American History from Hobart College in Geneva, NY in 1967 where he emerged as a natural leader, becoming president of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity. He received his J.D. from Rutgers Law School, Newark, NJ in 1971 and was editor of the Law Review. He practiced law in Ocean County soon afterwards, representing clients in a wide variety of matters for 12 years.

Becoming a judge was Jim's calling, his purpose and lifelong ambition. His strong sense of duty, his unerring fairness and integrity led him to the bench, and he received his judicial appointment in 1984, at age 38. Judge Clyne was the youngest Superior Court Judge sworn to the New Jersey judiciary at the time.

Judge Clyne was very proud to serve as a New Jersey Superior Court Judge for over 22 years. During his ten-year tenure as Ocean County's Civil Presiding Judge, he was ranked in the New Jersey Law Journal as being among the top ten judges in the state in "ability to foster settlement" and "ability to handle complex cases."

During his judicial career, Judge Clyne participated in the resolution of thousands of cases involving complex, multi-party disputes and spent the last seven years of his tenure as Presiding Judge of the Chancery Division, Ocean County. He also served as Chair of the statewide Conference of Civil Presiding Judges, Chair of the statewide Conference of General Equity and Probate Judges and served in the Family Division and Probate Part.

Upon retiring from the bench in 2006, Judge Clyne founded Benchmark Resolution Services, LLC where he served as Mediator, Arbitrator and Discovery Master in well over 1000 cases. Judge Clyne completed mediation training at Harvard University, The National Judicial College and the Lincoln Institute in Cambridge, MA. Known for his uncanny ability to read a room and bring people together, he was consistently ranked in the New Jersey Law Journal as one of the Best Individual Mediators in New Jersey, right up until his passing.

Jim's commanding stature and distinguished voice made an impression on everyone who met him. But it was his warmth, compassion, and genuine curiosity and interest in the world and those around him that made him so unforgettable. Jim surrounded himself with excellent people and invested time and energy in maintaining those cherished relationships. His generosity, kindness and humanity made him not only a brilliant mediator but also a wonderful friend and the greatest father.

Coming from a family of builders, Jim took great satisfaction in designing and building his own home and his legacy survives in several homes in Ocean County. He was an avid skier and spent many days on the snow with family and friends. He loved travel, going to the theater, and long dinners filled with compelling conversation and laughter.

Deeply respected by his peers and adored by his family, Jim will always be remembered for his intellect, his ability to put people at ease, being a beacon of strength, his steadfast love for his family and for being a true gentleman.

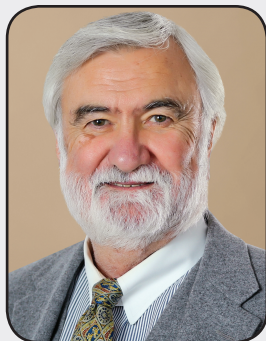
One of Jim's favorite quotes was by Abraham Lincoln: "Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. As a peacemaker the lawyer has superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough."

Jim was more than a good man. He was a great man. He is, and will be for many years to come, profoundly missed.

Preceded in death by his parents, sisters Nancy Francis, Betty Kohler, Phyllis Bess, Carolyn McCormick and brothers David Clyne and Wallace Gage.

He is survived by his daughter, Heather Clyne, son-in-law Owen Jones, and granddaughter Zelia Jones of Hereford, England; sister Ruth Smith of Douglasville, GA; sister Violet Wagner of Bradford, PA; stepson Jeffrey Robinson, step grandchildren Lillian and Bennett Robinson of Breckenridge, CO; stepdaughter Jennifer Cannon of Toms River, NJ and step granddaughter Ana Jones of Hampton, VA.

A celebration of Judge James D. Clyne's life will be scheduled at a later date. Remembrances or memorial contributions may be made to the charity of your choice.



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A Celebration of Life Service is being planned.  
To View Obituary: [www.benchmarkresolutions.com/JDCobituary.htm](http://www.benchmarkresolutions.com/JDCobituary.htm)