



## The Honorable Judge Maxwell E. Davison

July 10, 2024

Maxwell E. Davison of Allentown, died on July 10, 2024. He and his late wife, the former Barbara Seiden, were married 58 years, before her passing in May of 2016. Widely known as “the Judge,” he was a successful attorney and judge, and active in numerous community and professional organizations throughout his lifetime.

Born on September 4, 1932, in Shenandoah, PA, Maxwell was the youngest son of the late Leonard and Bessie Davison (Shapiro).

He was the first of the Jewish faith to serve as a judge in the Lehigh Valley. A graduate of Wyoming Seminary Preparatory School in 1950, he proceeded to Lafayette College, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1954 and served as Sports Editor of the Lafayette College Newspaper. He received his J.D. in 1957 from Dickinson School of Law, where he was Articles Editor of the Dickinson Law Review.

He engaged in the general practice of law in Allentown from 1957 until appointed to the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas by Governor Milton Shapp in December 1971, when he became the first person to be seated as the fifth Lehigh County Judge. Prior to his judicial appointment he served as a Special Assistant Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He achieved a full 10-year judicial term in 1973, when he became the first

governor-appointed judge to successfully cross file and be elected to the bench without opposition. Ten years later, in 1983, voters retained him for a second 10-year term. In October 1990, at the age of 58, he left the bench and joined Duane Morris LLP, a regional law firm headquartered in Philadelphia, and opened its Allentown office, where he served as partner until January 1, 2006. At that time, he and his close friend and law partner, Dennis McCarthy, formed the Allentown law firm of Davison & McCarthy, where he practiced law until 2021.

During his tenure on the bench, he served as Administrative Judge of the Lehigh County Courts and presided over hundreds of criminal and civil trials, as well as the Juvenile Court. He served as President of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges, representative to the National Conference of State Trial Judges, and as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges Commission. He lectured for the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges and was an adjunct faculty member at Cedar Crest College. He also served as Secretary to the Board of Trustees of Muhlenberg College, a member of the Board of Trustees of Cedar Crest College and President of the Jewish Community Center of Allentown.

Davison was an avid sports enthusiast and participant, as well as a life-long New York Yankee fan. In the early 1980s he played an exhibition tennis match with Don Budge, the first tennis player to win the Grand Slam and to win all four Grand Slam events consecutively overall, at Allentown's Oakmont Tennis Club, where he was a member. He was also a dedicated swimmer, and in later life successfully swam the (simulated) English Channel swim, an annual 20-mile swimming event at the Allentown Jewish Community Center. Also an avid golfer, he played regularly and was a member of the Lehigh Country Club. He was a 50-year member of Greenleaf Masonic Lodge, B'nai B'rith and the Pennsylvania Society. He was a member of the Lehigh County

Pennsylvania and American Bar Associations, a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, and was honored for his 50-year membership in the Pennsylvania Bar Association and the Lehigh County Bar Association. He retired from practicing law in 2021, at the age of 89.

Davison was a confidant of many in public life, and a keen observer and frequent participant in government and politics. Both before and after his tenure on the bench, he was active in many local, state and national election campaigns. He had an extensive campaign button collection and was for many years a collector of shelf clocks and pocket watches, and accumulated rare Dick Tracy books, radio scripts and related memorabilia.

He is survived by his three sons, Mark of Atlanta, Georgia; Andrew and his wife, Sahara Pradhan, of Poughkeepsie, NY; and Douglas and his wife, Lisa, of Bethesda, Maryland, as well as five grandchildren, Benjamin Davison, Jason Davison, Emma Davison, Allison Davison, and Shaiyan Lal Davison-Pradhan. A son, Richard, predeceased him at the age of 12.

A funeral service will be held on Sunday, July 14, 2024, at 11 A.M. at Temple Beth El, 1305 Springhouse Road, Allentown, where the Davison family have been lifelong members.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Maxwell's memory to the Barbara and Maxwell Davison Fund for Alzheimer's Care, to the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation, 840 W. Hamilton Street, Suite 310, Allentown, PA 18101.

# Cemetery Details

## Beth El Memorial Park Cemetery

Whitehall, PA 18052

# Previous Events

## Service

JUL **14**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Temple Beth El  
1305 Springhouse Road  
Allentown, PA 18104

# Tribute Wall



“ Dear Davison Family,

*I am so sorry to read of the passing of the "Judge". Our families spent many good times together at the JCC, swimming at the campsite and also swimming for the JCC.*

*I will keep you all in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.*

*Love,  
Debbie Unterberg and mom Jean*

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**Debra Unterberg** - August 02, 2024 at 05:27 PM

DS

“ Dear Andy & Family-

*I am so sorry to hear of Judge Davison's passing. I got to know your dad during the lineup and procession for Robert Rotberg's inauguration as President of Lafayette College where we discovered that our hoods and gowns were identical and that was because we had the same degrees from the same educational institutions (even Wyoming Seminary!) - Lafayette & Dickinson Law. He was a fine man and an excellent jurist. May his memory be a blessing and may he rest in peace.*

*David Schwager (Sem'80; Lafayette '84; DSL '88)*

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**David Schwager** - July 12, 2024 at 03:06 PM

TF

“ *The Lowe Swift Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maxwell E. Davison.*

**The Lowe Swift Family** - July 12, 2024 at 01:41 PM

TF

“ *The Lowe Swift Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of The Honorable Judge Maxwell E. Davison.*



**The Lowe Swift Family** - July 12, 2024 at 01:41 PM

TW

“ *My condolences to the Davison family - Mark, Andy and Doug - lifelong friends. Your Dad was amazing - always there, always with a graceful smile and engaging. I'm a better person for having him as a neighbor for the first 10 years of my life and being a parent to one of my best long term friends.*



**Todd Weinert** - July 12, 2024 at 09:05 AM

SM

*Our thoughts and prayers are with the Davison family.*

*You were an inspiration to many in the Lehigh Valley and I always enjoyed our conversations over the years.*

*Rest In Peace, my friend.*

**Scott & Linda Mitchell** - July 12, 2024 at 10:57 AM