



Howe Atwater

Howe Atwater, 82, of Lancaster, PA died on July 1, 2008 at the Lancaster General Hospital. Born in Wichita, KS on June 7, 1926, Howe was the son of Pierce and Althea (Heitsmith) Atwater.

For 32 years, he was the husband of Sylvia E. Atwater.

Howe was adored and loved by friends and family alike. His unique charisma made him an "everyman," popular with a large and diverse set of people from athletes to intellectuals, hippies to marines. He had a gentlemanly charm and wit that many admired.

Atwater was a graduate of New Trier Township High School in Winnetka, IL and the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA.

At 17, he enlisted in the United State Marine Corps and served with the 1st Marine Division in the South Pacific, including in the Battle of Okinawa where he was wounded in combat and subsequently awarded the Purple Heart. After the war, he continued his service with the Marine Corps stationed in China.

Beginning in 1976, Atwater was President of Oblender's Inc., a retail furniture operation founded in 1894 and also President of the A&S Realty and Investment Corporation. He was employed by the respective firms for over 50 years.

Atwater's passion was the sport of tennis where he enjoyed enormous success from his youth through his mid 70's. Among his many achievements, he won the Illinois State High School Championship in 1943. In 1947 and 1948, respectively, Howe was a starter on the William and Mary NCAA Division One National Championship team. Locally, Atwater won the Lancaster County Open 10 times. In 1986, Atwater won the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Men's 60's Singles Clay Court Championship. Along with close friend, J. Scott Calkins, Atwater was two-time Canadian National Senior Doubles Champion as well as individually winning the event. Among the legendary players with whom Howe competed and enjoyed friendships were Bill Tilden, Don Budge, Bobby Riggs, Gardner Mulloy, Fred Perry, Newt Meade and Jack Kramer.

In recognition of his tennis accomplishments, Atwater was inducted into the Minnesota State Tennis Hall of Fame, the College of William and Mary Athletic Hall of Fame, the USTA Northern Hall of Fame, the Lancaster County Tennis Hall of Fame, the Susquehanna Valley Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame and, most recently, the USTA Middle States Hall of Fame.

During his business career, Howe served in various capacities with the American Cancer Society, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, American Business Club, Sertoma, YMCA, Central Lancaster Development Corporation, Lancaster Downtown Merchant's Association, Pennsylvania Economy League, the Lancaster Cleft Palate Clinic and the Credit Bureau of Lancaster County. Atwater was also a member of the Hamilton Club.

In addition to his wife, Atwater is survived by three children, Charlotte Atwater Miller (wife of S. Douglas Miller), Richard Howe Atwater (husband of Michelle Atwater) and Pierce Atwater III (husband of Elaine Atwater) and two step-children, Denise L. Hall (wife of Thomas Hall) and Daniel Rutledge, all of Lancaster. He is also survived by five grandchildren, three step-grandchildren as well as two great-grand children.

The family will hold a memorial service in Howe's honor on SATURDAY, AUGUST 2, 2008 at the Groff Funeral Home, 234 West Orange Street, Lancaster, PA at 11:00 AM. The family will receive friends at Groff's from 10:00 AM until the time of service.

In lieu of flowers, please make contributions to the Lancaster Tennis Patrons Association, Underprivileged-NJTL, c/o Bonnie Kraybill, Treasurer, 151 Bushong Road, Leola, PA 17540 and ORCA, 601 North Lime Street, Lancaster, PA, 17602.

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