

IN MEMORIAM



**JOSEPH W. ROGERS**

(1921-2011)

A tribute to our  
Founding Partner

Extraordinary Trial Attorney  
Mentor, Colleague, Friend

ROGERS JOSEPH O'DONNELL

**Joseph W. Rogers (1921-2011)**

Joe Rogers, one of San Francisco's most loved and admired lawyers, died with dignity and grace after a brief illness on Friday, November 25, 2011. Joe practiced and taught law in San Francisco for nearly 60 years. He was a founding partner of Rogers Joseph O'Donnell where he maintained an office until his death.

Joseph W. Rogers was born in 1921 and grew up in San Diego. After graduating from San Diego State University in 1943, Joe volunteered for the U.S. Marine Corps. During World War II he saw service in the Pacific, including landing with the Marines on Iwo Jima where he was wounded. Returning from the War to the Bay Area, Joe entered Stanford Law School from which he graduated in 1949. After a stint as an assistant district attorney in Butte County, Joe spent over two decades as a trial lawyer with the firm of Bledsoe, Smith, Cathcart & Rogers. From 1974 to 1979, Joe was a partner at the firm of Pettit & Martin. In 1981 he joined with friends to form Rogers Joseph O'Donnell and Quinn (now Rogers Joseph O'Donnell). During the course of a long and distinguished legal career, Joe received many honors from his peers. He was a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates, serving as President of the San

Francisco Chapter in 1991, was named California Trial Lawyer of the Year in 1980 and awarded the Don E. Bailey Civility and Professionalism Award in 2002. He was a lifelong member of the Association of Defense Counsel of Northern California, of which he was elected President in 1968, and was a member of the National Board of Trial Advocacy, serving on its Honorary Board of Directors. He was a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Bar Foundation, and a member of the Edward J. McFetridge American Inns of Court. Joe was a generous educator of young lawyers: he taught trial advocacy at Hastings College of the Law from 1973 to 1981, co-founded the Hastings Center for Trial and Appellate Advocacy in 1971, and served on its advisory committee. He also lectured throughout the country on aspects of legal advocacy and insurance law.

Joe tried more than 150 cases to a conclusion before juries, served as an arbitrator and mediator, and handled more than 40 appellate cases. He was a consummate trial lawyer because juries sensed his innate decency and usually came to believe what he told them. But like all real trial lawyers, Joe lost some cases. Indeed, he met Millie, his devoted wife of 40 years, when she served on a jury for a trial at which his client lost. Replying to Joe's questions after the verdict, Millie told Joe exactly why he had lost the case and opined that the verdict against his client should have been much higher - and from that sprang their long and loving marriage.

Joe will be missed by all of us.