

IOWA JUDGES ASSOCIATION  
MEMORIAL TO THE HONORABLE  
JUDGE JOHN N. HUGHES, JR.

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Des Moines, Iowa  
September 3, 1910 – June 29, 2003

Judge John N. Hughes, Jr., of Des Moines died June 29, 2003.

John was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 3, 1910. His parents were John Newton Hughes and Sara Mabel Nichols. He enjoyed traveling with his parents and had a white Collie named Silver, given by Cedar Rapids relatives who bred them. He grew up in Cedar Rapids until the family moved to Des Moines in the early 1920s. He joined the First Methodist Church at that time and has been a member for over 80 years.

He attended Roosevelt High School and graduated in 1927. He subsequently attended the University of Chicago as an undergraduate and completed his law degree there as well. He practiced law with his father's firm in Des Moines and was admitted as a Counselor of the Supreme Court of the United States in October of 1941.

Before World War II, he completed officer training at Ft. Leavenworth and, after the outbreak of hostilities, volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army. He was assigned to the Judge Advocate General's Office and became the chief of the Civil Affairs Division Office of Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters, United States Armed Forces, Central Pacific. His rank was Lt. Colonel, and he was awarded the Bronze Star medal for his professional ability and devotion to duty. After the war, he belonged to the Army Reserves and the American Legion.

Upon his return to Des Moines, John continued to practice law with the same firm and worked with several railroads as their attorney. He was appointed to serve as a District Judge by Governor Harold Hughes in 1964 and served in this capacity until his retirement in late 1980. Judge Hughes later returned to the bench as a Senior District Judge until such point that he reached the maximum age allowed for District Judges.

John and Jeanne McArthur were introduced by a relative and were married on September 30, 1933, in Omaha, Nebraska. The couple enjoyed traveling throughout their married life, and John and Jeanne took trips to the Western parks and Canadian Rockies before their sons were born. They traveled throughout the United States and went to Europe several times. John particularly enjoyed England, and they visited the British Isles seven times. Their most memorable trips to England included driving with their friend and guide, Sylvia. Judge Hughes continued to read the "In Britain" magazine throughout his life and has long had a scholarly interest in English history and architecture. He took a trip with the family to the Soo Locks and Lake Superior in 1993 and enjoyed the "Lake Superior" magazine and books about shipping on the Great Lakes. John also held a lifelong interest in trains and railroads, showing his affinity for these subjects in books found in his library.

John and Jeanne have two children, John III and James. Jim has worked as an attorney in Des Moines. John has worked as an art teacher and psychiatric social worker at the Cherokee Mental Health Institute.

John and Jeanne moved into a fifth-floor apartment in the new building at Wesley Acres in the late 1980s where they enjoyed socializing with a number of friends. Several months after his wife's unexpected death in January 2002, John moved into the Health Center where he lived until a brief hospitalization at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines prior to his death. During his

months at the Health Center, John continued to move about the Wesley Acres campus and enjoy socialization because of the care and support provided by his enabling companion, Kathy. John was devoted to his family and was held in high regard by colleagues and friends.