



John W. Carswell

November 25, 1931 - February 23, 2022

Slingerlands, NY-John Watson Carswell, 90, of Slingerlands, NY, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, February 23, 2022, at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, New York. For the past 23 years, he was the beloved husband of Helen (O'Hanlon) Carswell. John was predeceased by his parents Watson Golder Carswell and Mary (Moore), his first wife of 37 years, Elaine (Kirby), his sister Catherine (Kay) Trotter (Hale), and sister-in-law, Mary Schuh (Ed).

Born in Ticonderoga, New York in 1931, John grew up in Glens Falls. He graduated from Glens Falls High School in 1949, received his BA at the University of Vermont in 1953, and earned his Master's Degree in Social Work at Boston College.

He and his first wife Elaine (Kirby) met in Lake George and soon married in 1959. They initially resided in Waterbury, CT where John was employed. He and Elaine moved back to New York when John accepted a position at the Albany Home for Children in the early 1960s- which later became Parsons Child and Family Center. John and Elaine had five children and lived in both Albany and Delmar. For many years, the family resided on Academy Road in Albany.

In 1979, John was appointed Executive Director. During his 16-year tenure as Executive Director of Parsons (1979-1995), John was a particularly effective

combination of social services visionary and practical builder. He redefined both the agency's mission and business plan, transitioning it from an orphanage-oriented organization into a modern multi-services center dedicated to helping children grow. He identified and advanced new therapeutic approaches and, he secured the private and government funding necessary to bridge the gap between vision and reality. Under John's leadership, Parsons developed a large therapeutic foster care and adoption program, community-based services designed to preclude the need for institutional care, and day treatment delivered within a large special education school. In 1982 he oversaw the merger of the Albany Child Guidance Clinic into Parsons, an action that underscored his foresight and creativity. The Clinic's Office of Mental Health license made possible, over the next 40 years, the subsequent design and implementation by Parsons of the wide range of mental health residential services, community-based clinics, and crisis-outreach programs that the agency now operates throughout eastern and central New York State. John's creativity and administrative competence were recognized regionally and nationally, and after his retirement, he served for many years as a peer review team leader for the Council on Accreditation, an influential review body operating across America and Canada.

John was a member of the Rotary Club of Albany where he served in various leadership positions. He was also actively involved in the parents' associations at The Albany Academy for Girls and Christian Brothers Academy. John, Elaine & their friends volunteered at CBA's BINGO nights until the last of the group's children graduated.

His favorite pastime with Elaine included traveling to Aruba with their dear friends the Allegrettis and to Cape Cod for summers with their kids. He loved playing cards, tennis and he was an expert downhill skier, racing for several clubs until his early 30s. He instilled in his children a deep love of skiing.

After Elaine passed away in 1997 John started a new chapter in his life with his wife Helen (O'Hanlon). Both widows, their families became what many would say could fill an Irish county. Helen and John traveled extensively- to India, China, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and their beloved Ireland- just to name a few countries. Along the way, they danced and Helen shared with John her love of Irish set dancing. They were longtime members of the Capital District Set Dancers.

John and Helen were very active in the Capital District Irish American Association (CDIAA). John's heart and soul were with the CDIAA. He worked tirelessly to provide cultural and educational programs at the Albany Hibernian Hall and he spearheaded the CDIAA membership program for years. He was always coming up with new ideas and loved being surrounded by his extended family and many friends at hall functions.

As he grew older, his favorite pastimes with Helen were golf, playing cards, large family dinners & big holiday celebrations. John especially enjoyed playing the card game 31 with his and Helen's grandchildren. He loved the game Mexican Train, watching Turner Classic Movies, and sipping coffee milkshakes with Helen. They loved an afternoon drive to anywhere.

He enjoyed visits with dear friends Joe Allegretti, Rita O'Sullivan, and Lenny & Janet Clickman. The family would like to thank the Clickmans for being neighbors in the truest sense of the word. John was a faithful member of St. Teresa Parish and Mater Christi Parish.

John was the loving father of five children, James Carswell (Kathleen) of Saratoga Springs, Sue Carswell of New York City, William Carswell (Ann Marie) of Delmar, Amanda Smith (Philip) of Peabody, MA, and Sarah Heffernan (Walter) of Dorchester, MA. A dear uncle/2nd father to Laurel

Colasurdo of Waterford. Cherished grandfather to Catherine, Allison and William Carswell, MaryBeth Carswell (Nick), Margaret Pohl (Mike), Megan Singleton (Matt), John, Madeline, and Mae Carswell, Matthew and James Smith, Kirby, Henry, and Lucille Heffernan. Uncle to Stephen (Rachel) Pallrand and Nannette Pallrand, both of Los Angeles, CA, and great uncle to Chelsea (Joe) Mazzariello of Troy.

John is also lovingly survived by Helen's five children Maureen Pease (Glenn), Timothy O'Hanlon (Laurie), Ellen Morreale (Carmine), Cynthia Herubin (Charles) and Eugene O' Hanlon, Helen's brother Geoffrey O'Hanlon, Helen's grandchildren Alison (Brendan) Woods, Brendan Pease, Devin O'Hanlon (Lauren), Deirdre O'Hanlon, Alanna Kauffmann (Todd), Michael Morreale (Brittany), Conor Morreale, Nicholas and Clare Herubin, Eugene and Nora O'Hanlon and three great-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with John's family Sunday, February 27, 2022 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm at McVeigh Funeral Home, 208 North Allen Street, Albany, NY 12206. Please enter the funeral home from the rear parking lot entrance only. Unvaccinated individuals must wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Funeral services Monday, February 28, 2022 at 12:00 pm at the Parish of Mater Christi, Albany, NY where his Funeral Mass will be celebrated. The Mass may be viewed at [YouTube.com/C.ParishofMaterChristi](https://www.youtube.com/C.ParishofMaterChristi)

The Rite of Committal will be held at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands, NY immediately following the Funeral Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of John W. Carswell may be made to either CDIAA , 375 Ontario Street , Albany NY 12208 or Northern Rivers Family of Services , % Development, PO 8899, Albany, NY 12208.

To leave a special message for the family please visit www.McveighFuneralHome.com

Cemetery Details

St. Agnes Cemetery

48 Cemetery Ave
Menands, NY

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 27. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.
208 N Allen St
Albany, NY 12206
(518) 489-0188
info@mcveighfuneralhome.com
<http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of John W. Carswell*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - February 27, 2022 at 10:15 AM



“ *John W. Carswell*

October 08, 2023 at 09:24 PM



“ *Thoughts and prayers on your loss of John. He was a good man, an excellent brother and member of the Albany Hibernians. He was wise and always had good advice. May he Rest In Peace. 🙏*

austin childs - March 05, 2022 at 02:15 PM



“ *So sorry to hear about the passing of John. Always have fond memories of Mr. Carswell. Great sense of humor, kindness and just a great human being. A life well lived. Thanks John for all the love and light you brought to this world. 🙏❤️👍😊*

Thomas Shields - February 28, 2022 at 02:04 PM

LL

“ As a former resident of Albany’s Helderberg neighborhood and as a former colleague of James Carswell, I would like to offer condolences on the passing of John W. Carswell whose lengthy and concerned leadership at the Parsons Child and Family Center on Academy Road served to greatly benefit not only the Parsons Center but also the surrounding Helderberg neighborhood.

Leo S. Levy - February 27, 2022 at 03:09 PM

TJ

“ Over the years, I’ve come to think of the Carswells as my second family—and John has always been such a big part of that. At times, he’s felt like a second dad to me. I’ll always remember skiing in Zermatt (John was always out in front—he and Billy and Jim were at the bottom of the hill before Sue and I were even halfway down!); dancing at the Irish Hall; and weekends at the house with John and Helen. John was so full of life—sharp, witty and always good for a laugh. I’m so glad I had the chance to know him. I’ll be keeping John and all the Carswells in my thoughts and prayers. Sending lots of love.

Tina Johnson - February 27, 2022 at 10:16 AM



“ 89 files added to the album LifeTributes



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - February 27, 2022 at 10:14 AM

JA

“ *John was a renaissance man. A man for all ages. And he was one of my very best friends. I am proud to have known him. I will cherish the many wonderful memories of adventure and fun that we shared. God bless him.*

Joe Allegretti - February 26, 2022 at 08:18 PM

RT

“ *So sorry for your loss. We are keeping John and all of you in our prayers. Our heartfelt condolences. May he rest in peace. From the Trotters - Rex, John and family.*

Rex Trotter - February 26, 2022 at 05:28 PM

MK

“ *To the Carswell Family
John, Elaine and all the Carswells were wonderful to me and my family throughout my life. i will never forget their kindness and good humor during our times together.
rest in peace, my friend.
Matt, Shirley and the Kirby Family.*

Matt Kirby - February 25, 2022 at 05:03 PM

DK

“ To the family of Mr Carswell i am so sorry for your loss, i knew Mr Carswell a long time ago He was such a good man and i did enjoying my time with him back in the early 60 he helped me tutn out the way i did i was a child at the albany home for children he was so good to everyone he came in contact he enjoyed us as much as we enjoyed him.

Again my condolences to the family.

Dan Koenig

Daniel Koenig - February 25, 2022 at 01:52 PM

RS

“ Rodney Smith lit a candle in memory of John W. Carswell



Rodney Smith - February 25, 2022 at 12:40 PM

WA

“ The few times I was lucky enough to be in John's company, I was struck by his vivacity and the decency beneath it. A joyous spirit. He brightened the days. Walter Owen

walter - February 25, 2022 at 11:04 AM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of John W. Carswell.*



February 25, 2022 at 10:58 AM



“ *Letricia McCLeary lit a candle in memory of John W. Carswell*



Letricia McCLeary - February 25, 2022 at 10:00 AM



James- May you be comforted by the loving memories of your Dad and knowing that his legacy lives inside of you. Peace be with you and your family. Letricia McCLeary

Letricia McCLeary - February 25, 2022 at 10:05 AM



“ *Helen - so sorry to hear about John's passing. May you be comforted by the memories of your many years of love and happiness.*

Anne Marie McGrath

Anne Marie McGrath - February 25, 2022 at 09:56 AM

IM

“ My condolences to you and your family James. May God comfort you. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Irma Machado

Irma Machado - February 25, 2022 at 09:53 AM

LJ

“ Sorry for your loss. My prayers were with BC Carswell, the family and friends.

Lucy Jones

Reentry Unit- Brooklyn, NYSDOCCS

Lucy Jones - February 25, 2022 at 09:48 AM

LS

“ Jim and family,

I am so terribly sorry for your loss. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers during this time. God bless his soul.

Lisa Sorriento

Lisa Sorriento - February 25, 2022 at 09:47 AM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of John W. Carswell.



February 25, 2022 at 09:47 AM

RL

“ Our heartfelt condolences to all of you. We will remember John's generosity, quick mind and liveliness. Our late parents Herman and Marianne cherished their friendship with John and Elaine, and enjoyed meeting him with Helen. I have especially fond memories of my last visit with John and Helen in 2016, where they opened their hearts and home once more to me, together with all of John's children. May you rest in peace, dear friend.
Renata, Annette and Christine from Switzerland

Renata Leimer - February 25, 2022 at 09:29 AM

CP

“ I am so sorry for your loss. I currently work for Northern Rivers Family of Services and want to thank John for his years of service and commitment.

Chris Parker - February 25, 2022 at 08:47 AM

RO

“ I was fortunate to have John and Elaine as my neighbors for many years. They were both such kind, gracious neighbors. I am glad that he was able to create such a rich, warm life with Helen. May he rest in peace. *Roseann Quinn*

Roseann - February 25, 2022 at 08:30 AM

MA

“ So sorry for your loss. *Maura Farrell Miller* 🍀

Maura - February 25, 2022 at 12:17 AM

K

“ *What a wonderful Man. Lot of fun card games 31 and Mexican train.. So many good times at the AOH ,Irish dancing and cruise's with the Irish set dance group. God Speed John. 🙏🍀*

kathleen Balfe` - February 24, 2022 at 08:28 PM