A LOVE FOR LAW
Legal Education and Practice Were Central to Maichel’s Life

By Rachel Wisdom

WARREN MAICHEL, AB ’50, JD ’52, had great affection for Washington University. When asked once about the impact the school had on him, he said simply, “It made my life.”

Maichel chose to make the university one of the main beneficiaries of his estate, leaving more than $5 million for unrestricted support of Washington University School of Law after his death in December 2010. He had served as an adjunct professor at the school for many years and was a longtime supporter of scholarships for law students.

Maichel’s affection stemmed from his love of the legal profession. “Washington University was where he became a lawyer,” says his friend and former colleague, Matt Perlow of Husch Blackwell LLP, “and Warren really loved being a lawyer. He had a passion for the law, and a passion for the intellectual pursuit behind the law.”

A native St. Louisan, Maichel was the recipient of a full scholarship to attend Washington University’s four-year combined Arts & Sciences and law school program. He served two years as the editor of the Law Quarterly.

He began his career at the law firm of Martin Peper Martin and was a founding partner of Peper, Martin, Jensen, Maichel, and Hetlage. Over his 50-year career, Maichel became known as one of St. Louis’s top experts in tax law and trusts and estates, with a legal knowledge Perlow calls “encyclopedic.”

Perlow also calls Maichel “one of the most insightful, practical lawyers I ever met.” Longtime friend Nadine Day suggests that it was partly his love of the practical and orderly that first drew Maichel to the law. “He always wanted to study law,” she says, recalling the 18-year-old she met more than 65 years ago. “I think he loved the order of it. He would say that the rules of law are what keep us from fighting with guns.”

Maichel considered Washington University School of Law an excellent academic unit. “He had a soft spot for the law school,” Day recalls. “He thought Washington University was a very, very fine school, and who could blame him? He thought the education he received there was terrific.”

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> Warren Maichel
>> Warren Maichel believed strongly in giving back to his law school.