



Ralph Brooke Sievwright

2011 Medal of Merit Recipient

Ralph Sievwright was born in 1924 in the then-active mining town of Jerome, AZ. After graduating from Jerome High School, he enrolled at the University of Arizona. Shortly thereafter, with WWII in full force, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps, where he served as a crew member on a B-17 bomber (Flying Fortress). Following his discharge from the military, he returned to the U of A, earning a bachelor's degree in Public Administration in 1948 and a LLB from the College of Law in 1952.

After graduation from law school, Ralph joined the law firm of Guynn & Twitty, a boutique practice specializing in public land issues and mining law. Howard Twitty, one of the firm's founders, was honored by the Mining Foundation of the Southwest in 2002 for his own contributions to the industry. In 1958 the firm became Twitty, Sievwright & Mills and continued to specialize in providing sophisticated legal advice to mining companies for the next 50 years.

Early in his legal career, Ralph began representing Magma Copper Company and its related mining and smelting entities in San Manuel and Superior, Arizona. He served as chief negotiator for the company in its labor negotiations with seven unions for over 40 years and advised the company on mining law and compliance with complex environmental laws, especially as they dealt with copper smelting operations. He is, and was, well-known as a leader in Arizona in these fields of law practice.

Throughout his career, in addition to Magma Copper Company, Ralph represented a wide range of mining industry clients, including Newmont, Molycorp, Unocal, Copper Range, Asarco, Placer, Hecla and others. His clients produced copper, molybdenum, gold, potash and rare earth minerals and their properties' locations extended from the Southwest to Alaska to Michigan; but

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his client base was in the Southwest, especially Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada. He presented legal arguments before the United States Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals – Ninth Circuit and other federal and state courts. He has been an active member of SME and has served on the Board of Directors of the Arizona Conference for many years, providing both legal and practical assistance and knowledge where needed. He is a member of the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation.

Over the years, Ralph declined opportunities to move from Arizona to enter the corporate structure of his clients. He preferred to remain in Phoenix as an independent practitioner, close to the mining operations that he loves. His deep knowledge of the industry and generosity of spirit have made him an invaluable resource for the mining law community. In addition, he serves as the institutional memory for clients in the wake of acquisitions and other restructuring within the industry. He is widely respected among Arizona lawyers and served as a judge pro tem for the AZ Court of Appeals in 1991.

Ralph resides in Phoenix with his wife of 63 years, Carolyn. They have two daughters, Jan Feltz (Phoenix) and Kim Mitchell (Menlo Park, CA), both of whom are attorneys. He has a grandson and three granddaughters.