



James Maurice Rogers, 1934 – 2018

James Maurice Rogers, 84, of Indianapolis, died August 8, 2018. He retired as a vice president for public relations of Hooks Drugs, Inc. in 1986, after 26 years. Jim then operated Rogers & Company Public Relations for eight years. Following that, he conceived Hook's American Drugstore Museum, a plan for a national museum of community pharmacy, which later changed its mission to life sciences education as Hook's Discovery and Learning Center. Jim served as president of both and retired in 2002. He then served as vice chairman of the board of the latter organization.

Rogers was a native of Frankfort, IN, where he graduated from Frankfort High School. He was a 1956 Radio & TV graduate of Indiana University Bloomington, where he was a member of the Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity. Upon graduation, Jim served on active duty as a commissioned officer in the United States Army for two years and was discharged as a First Lieutenant. From 1959 to 1960, he worked for the The Studio Press as a sales trainee and in 1960 he joined Hook's as public relations director. He also served as part-time PR coordinator for the (then) Central Indiana Council of the Boy Scouts of America. He later served as a board member of the council.

During Rogers tenure at Hook's he conceived and assembled Hook's Historical Drugstore & Pharmacy Museum at the Indiana State Fairgrounds in 1966, which remains today as a favorite Indiana landmark. Jim created Hook's All State Marching Band, which marched in eight consecutive 500 Parades, each year with a new crop of Indiana's best high school band musicians. He also innovated many chain-wide programs for child safety, poison awareness and healthcare information for all ages.

While at Hook's he became active in a number of community organizations and served on the boards of the Children's Bureau of Indianapolis, the Historic Landmarks Foundation, and the Indianapolis Chapter of the American Red Cross. He served two years as president of the Indianapolis Speech & Hearing Center. In 1978 Rogers co-founded the Indiana Poison Center, a statewide 24 hour emergency poison information hotline now housed at and sponsored by Methodist Hospital.

In 1970, then Mayor Richard Lugar appointed him to the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission. He became its president in 1973, serving in that position until 1980. During those seven years, funding was obtained for the first staffing of the group that continues to oversee the development and maintenance of legislated historic districts.

The first four Historic Districts in Indianapolis were established under Rogers' leadership and included Lockerbie Square, The Old Northside, Herron Morton Place and Fletcher Place. After being re-appointed by Mayor William Hudnut, Chatham Arch was underway, but after seven years at the helm, in 1981, Rogers resigned because of disagreements and concessions of preservation standards to political pressures from the administration of Mayor Hudnut. Nevertheless, the preservation movement was well underway at that time and the results remain as a model for the entire nation. Rogers was on the committee that selected Reid Williamson, who retired in 2005 after 30 years as executive head of the Historical Landmarks Foundation. In 1981, Rogers co-founded Historic Indianapolis, Inc., an activist group charged to deter demolition of the built environment. The group helped save and redevelop the Indiana Theater, much of Lockefield Gardens, the Wilking Building façade, now part of the Circle Centre Mall, as are nine other historic facades.

Rogers was a past president and 15-year member of the Indiana University College of Arts & Sciences Alumni Board. He also served as that group's liaison to the Executive Council of the IU Alumni Association. Jim served on the Indiana University National Public Affairs Council from 1990 to 1996. He was director of the Science Foundation of Indiana, Inc., and the Indianapolis Zoological Society during the building phase of the new Zoo. He founded and chaired the Lt. Governor's Indiana Tourism Advisory Board for Lt. Governor John Mutz.

Rogers was a past chairman of the Administrative Board of the Church of the Saviour, United Methodist in Indianapolis and was a director of Dance Kaleidoscope from 1978 to 1982. He served on the Indiana Public Health Foundation board and became in a momentum to relocate the drugstore artifacts to a new community pharmacy museum in Greenfield, Indiana. In 1991, Rogers conceived, named and co-produced the first Indy Jazzfest for the Indianapolis Firefighters. For several years it was staged on the grounds of the main downtown Indianapolis Firehouse and since has become an Indianapolis tradition each June.

Rogers was named a Sagamore of the Wabash by former Governor Robert Orr in 1985 and the Indiana Ambassador of Tourism that same year (for leadership of tourism promotion in Indiana). He was cited with a Life Achievement of the Year award by the Indiana Public Health Foundation in 2001. He was given a special Certificate of Commendation for the creation of Hook's Drugstore Museum by the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy in 1967. Upon his departure from the Preservation Commission, he was cited in an Indianapolis Star editorial for putting life into the historic preservation commission and providing momentum to save old buildings, especially in downtown Indianapolis. He was a 30-year member of the Hoosier Chapter, Public Relations Society of America.

Mr. Rogers was the son of the late Maurice and Mary Sims Aughe Rogers, of Frankfort, Indiana, where he was born January 1, 1934. In 1957, he married Julia (Judy) Morrow of Indianapolis, who preceded him in death in 2003. He is survived by two sons, Evan M. and Alexander B. Rogers (Sheri); and five grandchildren, Patrick, Brittany, Colin, Ethan and Hannah Rogers. He is also survived by a great-granddaughter, Paige Rogers; a sister, Mary Ann Snyder (Bob Spencer); two nieces, Linda Freeman Wilsey and Amy Snyder Spencer; three nephews, Mark, Andrew and Daniel Freeman; and two cousins, William E. Hiatt, Jr. and Ann Hiatt Moore.

Visitation will be Saturday, August 11, 2018 from 11:00 a.m. until the time of the Memorial Service at 1:00 p.m. at Shirley Brothers Fishers-Castleton Chapel, 9900 Allisonville Rd.