



George Arthur Laigle

March 26, 1930 - April 15, 2026

On Wednesday, April 15, 2026, George Arthur Laigle, age 96, passed peacefully into the Presence of the Lord with his daughter, Ruth, by his side.

Raised near Manvel, Texas, George always knew exactly what he wanted to do: make things. One of his earliest memories at age three was the smell of gasoline and grease in his French grandfather's barn, where George played on the Model T truck used on the dairy farm.

Growing up, from the ages of three to 17, in a house without insulation, running water, indoor plumbing, or electricity, made George unafraid of work. When asked near the end of his life to name the hardest task he had ever been given, he said, "I've never been asked to do anything very hard." For him, work was not a burden or a "choice": it was a gift. This early life gave him astonishing strength. At age 94, he bemoaned the fact that he could no longer climb a ladder, walk more than a mile, or use a bandsaw to cut metal pipe for more than three hours without becoming exhausted. At the end of his life, he astonished his doctors by remaining animated and coherent for 20 days with a heart rate below 30.

The second child of Ruth Lofgren and George Louis Laigle, George left the farm at 17 for the Rice Institute where he majored in mechanical engineering. After WWII, all engineers were required to take German because many

significant mechanical engineering and technical texts were in that language only. The young, long-haired German professor who preferred holding class out on the lawn told the group of young men that if they really wanted to learn German, however, they needed to get themselves German girlfriends.

Fortunately, in 1949, George met a French major instead, Elisabeth McGinty, Class of 1953. They were married for 69 years until her death in 2021. During his life, George worked for Shell Chemical (where he was on the team that invented liquid soap), Houston Natural Gas, Hildebrandt Engineering, PI Components, and Air Liquide. In the early 1960's, George turned down a two-year Executive training program at The Hague in The Netherlands which would have subsequently sent him to Shell Headquarters in Manhattan, because he knew "he could not survive apart from the soil." Referred to by some as Old Man Thoreau, George always had a country place with fruit trees, a garden, and workshop. On one of his last visits to his Rock Island ranch, he said, "As long as I can plant squash, I'm okay." He agreed with C.S. Lewis's observation that "no amount of falling will really undo us if we keep picking ourselves up each time," and "it is when we notice the dirt that God is most present in us."

Over the course of his life George was a Boy Scout Leader, Child Advocate for Harris County Juvenile Courts, a volunteer at DePelchin Faith Home, and Sunday School teacher at St. Martin's Episcopal Church. In his last years, he enjoyed reading to his daughter, Anne's, kindergarten class at St. Mark's Episcopal School and teaching the children to make paper airplanes.

The guiding principles of his youth were "Honor thy Father and Mother, have a family, and work as hard as you can at whatever you do." In his later years, he maintained that the best way to improve society was to make sure that every high school student had a clear understanding of the laws of physics.

After George became a Christian in 1977, his faith informed the rest of his life. In spite of his concrete, engineering mindset and rough exterior, he believed in miracles, forgiveness, and gratitude. Unafraid of death, Dad never doubted God. “How else do you explain,” he said, “the amazing life I’ve led?”

Deaf for many years, he nevertheless heard, in his last days, “heavenly music.” He considered it a last, earthly miracle.

Predeceased by Elisabeth and his son, George Milton Laigle, George is survived by three children: Ruth Holmes (John), David Laigle (Tomi), and Anne Jackson (John). He is also survived by five grandchildren: Isabel Sachs (Dave), Lauren Laigle, and Johnny, James, and Elisabeth Jackson, as well as many beloved nieces, nephews, cousins, their children and grandchildren, and his beloved friend of 50 years, Dennis Kocian.

He was especially thrilled about the arrival in October 2025 of his first great-grandchild, Elliott Holmes Sachs.

A memorial service will be held in the chapel at St. Martin’s Episcopal Church, 717 Sage Road, Houston, Texas 77056, on Friday, May 1, 2026, at 2:00 pm.

For those desiring, memorials may be made to St. Martin’s Episcopal Church, www.stmartinsepiscopal.org/give-main/.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAY 1. 2:00 PM (CT)

St. Martin's Episcopal Church
717 Sage Road
Houston, TX 77056
<https://www.stmartinsepiscopal.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ 3 files added to the album *George Arthur Laigle*



Distinctive Life Cremation and Funeral Services - April 20 at 04:53 PM