

In Memoriam: Former Hinshaw Partner Ronald E. Mallen

A Leading Authority on Legal Malpractice and Ethics

Press Release | 4 min read

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It is with great sadness that Hinshaw announces the passing of longtime firm partner Ronald (“Ron”) E. Mallen, who practiced with us from 1997 until his retirement in 2018.

A California lawyer, Ron practiced in the field of legal malpractice and ethics for more than 40 years. He was a towering national authority on the subject, widely regarded as one of the foremost voices in the “law of lawyering.” Throughout his distinguished career, he helped shape the field through his practice and scholarship.

Ron co-authored the seminal five-volume Thomson Reuters treatise, *Legal Malpractice*, first published in 1977 and long considered the leading treatise in its field, an essential resource for practitioners and courts alike. He was the editor of the annual Law Office Guide to Purchasing Legal Malpractice Insurance and wrote over 70 articles on a variety of topics on lawyers’ liability.

His influence extended to the Hinshaw Legal Malpractice and Risk Management (LMRM) Conference—now in its 25th year—which was inspired by his vision, leadership, and commitment to advancing the profession.

Ron chaired the ABA Standing Committee on Lawyers Professional Liability and the ABA Special Committee on Medical Professional Liability and was a member of the ABA Standing Committee on Lawyer Competence. He was a fellow of the American Bar Foundation and a member of the American Law Institute, where he was a member of the consultative group on the Restatement (Third) of The Law of Lawyering. He was Chair of the Editorial Board for the ABA/BNA Lawyers Manual on Professional Conduct and was selected as a Fellow of Litigation Counsel of America. He also served as President of the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers (APRL) and chaired a variety of committees of the International Association of Defense Counsel.

He was first listed in the then-U.S. News & World Report’s annual list, The Best Lawyers in America, in 1995, and in 2014 was named Lawyer of the Year in the Legal Malpractice Law category for San Francisco, while also being recognized in the category of “Ethics and Professional Responsibility Law.” He was also honored with the 2018 Kettlewell Award by APRL.

Before joining Hinshaw, Ron practiced with Long & Levitt LLP from 1967 to 1997, building a nationally respected practice. He then continued his impactful work at Hinshaw for 21 years.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Ron will be fondly remembered for the lasting impact he had on his colleagues, clients, and the broader legal community. He served as a mentor, thought leader, and trusted advisor to many and leaves behind a legacy defined by excellence, generosity, and dedication to the highest standards of the legal profession.

A Tribute to Ron Mallen Published by *The Daily Journal*



Ron's contributions as a friend, colleague, and leading member of the legal profession were celebrated in an official notice, [published by *The Daily Journal*](#) on June 2, 2026.

Here are excerpts of testimonials given by some of Ron's former Hinshaw colleagues:

"Ron was a long-time partner at Hinshaw. Ron loved being a lawyer, and he loved representing lawyers. He also taught thousands of other lawyers and judges how to practice law at the highest level of ethics and integrity and, simply put, how to be a better lawyer. We will miss you, Ron, and we thank you for your significant contributions to the law of lawyering and helping all lawyers be better."

—**Peter D. Sullivan, Hinshaw Chairman**

Ron was a brilliant attorney with a rare combination of superior intellect and practical wisdom. While he "wrote the book" on legal malpractice, he also acted as lead trial counsel on many serious cases, often defending high-profile firms in high-stakes litigation. He was a great partner and friend who was in many ways responsible for the expansion of the Hinshaw firm into both California and New York. He was a trusted advisor to me during my years as Chairman of Hinshaw. Ron's fondness for birds was also legendary — whether at dinner at his home in Napa with his pet macaws on his shoulder or even in New York on a trip together when he commandeered a macaw from a fellow patron during dinner!

—**Donald L. Mrozek, Hinshaw Chairman-Emeritus**

"I met Ron when I was a young summer associate at Long & Levitt almost 40 years ago; we also worked together at Hinshaw. Ron has been a friend, mentor, and someone who generously provided countless opportunities to me and many others. He was always generous with his time and wise counsel. Ron shared a genuine passion for the practice of law. He will be missed by me and his many colleagues from all parts of the world. I am eternally grateful for the kindness and friendship he always showed me and my family. My three now adult daughters fondly remember the firm picnics he and Penny graciously hosted at their beautiful Napa Valley home."

—**Robert J. Romero, Partner-in-Charge of Hinshaw's San Francisco Office**

For several decades I was privileged to be Ron’s practice partner after he joined Hinshaw. We traveled the country together giving “roadshow” lectures to lawyer and insurer groups, speaking at professional forums and tending to the development of our practice. His teaching method never compromised. He insisted on providing the profession with the most current and deepest understanding of the evolving law, along with his forward-looking insights into its future development. It was widely known that Ron was a credentialed foodie of the highest magnitude. (Was he a Zagat reviewer? Nobody was sure.) A Napa resident and peerless wine expert, he taught us to enjoy our time together. And as to his hometown, Napa, he once observed to me that “you know, Switzerland is indeed the most beautiful country...but it’s not Napa.” Ron’s presence remains in the books he wrote, the lessons he taught, the reputation he built, and friendship, he gave so generously. I will remember him with deep respect, genuine affection, and enduring gratitude.

—Thomas P. McGarry, Retired Hinshaw Partner and Former Chair of the Firm’s Professional Responsibility, Professional Liability & Risk Management Practice

[Read the full Daily Journal tribute](#)

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