

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY- ALUMNI AWARDS TO BUNN AND BOARDMAN

The 1973 Alumni Association awards to an honored Law School Faculty member and an honored alumnus were presented this year to the late Professor Charles Bunn and Wade Boardman, Class of 1930, at the reunion luncheon on April 7.

Professor Willard Hurst presented the award to the Bunn family, which includes the present Dean of the Law School. Walter Bjork (Class of 1937), General Counsel of the Dairyland Mutual Insurance Company, made the presentation on behalf of the alumni to Mr. Boardman.

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Professor Hurst: (in part)

Charles Bunn—who to a generation of students and colleagues at this law school was "Bob" Bunn—gave his strength, wisdom and humanity to the school from 1934 to 1961. To a generation of students he conveyed a full dimensioned demonstration of the man of law at his best—as a man thinking; but, too, as a man feeling for the other, while holding such detachment as would let him serve the other man's need; as a man keeping his legal learning in working balance to concerns that law serve life.

Bob Bunn was a fine and learned teacher. But he taught nothing more important than the working attitudes he conveyed to his students by his own bearing and approach to problems. One thing that stands out to me is the effectiveness with which he demonstrated that learning and acuteness of mind

come across best with unpretentious simplicity and directness of analysis. A good deal of his flavor comes through in some things he wrote about the everyday flow of a lawyer's work. "No one not a lawyer can imagine how much time a lawyer must put in getting information; he wrote. "I do not mean information about the law. Of course he must get that, but he will get it out of books. I mean information about the client's problems and the facts connected with them. A lawyer's work is very seldom *about* law. Once in a blue moon he may serve on some committee to improve some statute or the like. (As, indeed, Bob Bunn himself did on many occasions, notably in helping shape the Uniform Commercial Code.) Most of his work, though, starts with his client's problem, which may concern anything. Whatever it is, his first job is to learn about it; not only the specific thing his client is concerned about, but the whole factual background. And by *factual* I mean everything bearing on the problem except law. When my grandfather was practicing in upstate New York more than 100 years ago, the situation as he reported it much later, was that almost all litigation was about horse trades. The lawyer needed, principally, one book, 'The Points of the Horse' . . . "

Lawyers advise, they negotiate, they persuade, they record agreements. What Bob Bunn hammered at in regard to all these roles, as well as that of the teacher, was the importance of knowing what one is about, and then communicating it accurately and without fancy impediments. "Whatever the lawyer's professional use of speech, the essential thing is that it reach, in the sense intended by the speaker, not only the eardrum of the hearer, but his mind. This can best be done by talking about concrete things and actions whenever that is possible, and avoiding the abstractions. How many kinds of 'democracy' exist in people's minds? Beyond that, the best de-

vice I know is to make it a discussion, not a monologue. Then, it is often possible, by careful listening, to detect where the other person has misunderstood what you have said. This is one of the reasons why, in teaching, a discussion is so often more fruitful than a lecture."

Bob Bunn conveyed to students and to colleagues the deep earnestness with which he sought to get a hold on reality. This was an attitude directed not only at the client-caretaking role. It was a concern as a man of law about the capacities and defects of the legal order. Salient here was his focus on the economy, as the aspect of the structure and workings of society with which law is most pervasively involved. "It is hard for a lawyer to be an amateur economist, but it is a necessary task." That we need to learn more in order to have more to teach was a precept at the heart of his idea of his job.

The strength of the law school must come from the contributed strength of the individuals who give it continuing life. To Charles Bunn this school owes debts which cannot be repaid, but which can be matched by devotion such as he gave the school. That is the testimony of this award.

Mr. Bjork: (in part)

Anyone who has practiced law in Wisconsin in the last several years knows Wade Boardman, either personally or by reputation. And simply to name him, is to know why the award is being made. But since the record must be protected, may I quickly review some of the achievements and contributions of this man.

Wade has been in the active practice of law in Wisconsin since his graduation from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1930. At that time he joined the firm of LaFollette, Rogers and Roberts. He is today senior part-

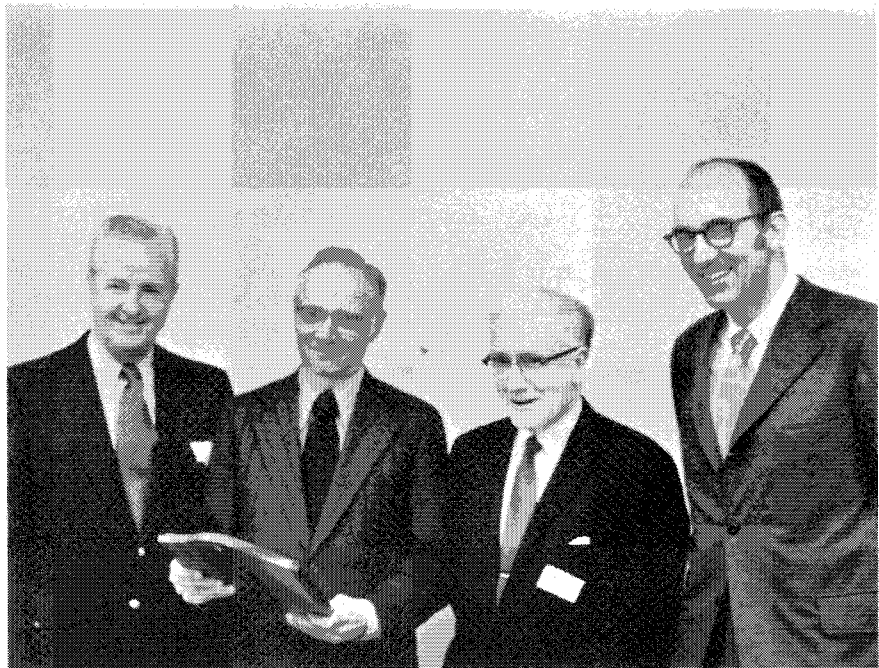
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Bjork, Continued

ner in the firm of Boardman, Suhr, Curry and Field, a firm of 17 lawyers. Shortly thereafter Wade began teaching a practice course at the law school which he continued for 12 or 13 years, preparing his own case book materials. It was as a teacher that I first knew him, and I still remember seeing him occasionally gulp a tablet at the end of class to ease the pain of his ulcer. I think we gave him that ulcer with which he was to suffer for a number of years. He was then, as he is today, a well-dressed man. He wore double-breasted suits which, with the then popularity of the vest, was an unmistakable badge of modesty for a Coif man.

During the forties and fifties Wade served on the Judicial Council, the Law School Board of Visitors and as President of the Dane County Bar Association. Of course, he is also a good dues paying member to all of the various Bar associations. He began his extended service on the State Board of Bar Commissioners in 1946. Last year the Wisconsin Bar Association presented Wade with a plaque as a tribute to the more than 25 years that Wade has served on the Board of Bar Commissioners. He still serves on that Board and has been its president since 1953. Knowing the time Wade devotes to Board activities, I believe this is an unprecedented record of service to the Bar. The award of special merit presented to Wade read: "In recognition of his inspiring leadership and dedicated services to the profession and the public." I should mention he is also a charter member of the Benchers Society.

Wade's talents have also been recognized nationally by his office of Regent of the American College of Probate Counsel and his selection as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.



Bjork, Boardman, Hurst, G. Bunn

So much for the record. As impressive as is this record of achievement and service, it is a most incomplete description of Wade Boardman. Like others that I see in this audience, I had the good fortune to start out in the private practice of law with Wade and came to know the great warmth of this man. As busy as he was and is, he has always found time to concern himself with the problems of others. I, for one, shall always be in his debt for the guidance and counseling he gave to me not only in the early formative years, but throughout our association. He is, in my opinion, the ideal practitioner. A man of integrity and a perfect blend of the scholar and a man of action. He likes people and people can't help but like him. He is a modest, unassuming man. He never tries to impress anyone with his knowledge. He has never had to. He has always *demonstrated* the quality of his intellect and his character as a gentleman.

He is a most dedicated individual and places almost unreasonable demands on the time he devotes to his practice, leaving little time for diversion. Up to a couple of years ago he would find time on Sundays to visit his farm in Mineral Point. Wade raised white-faced Herefords, and typical of the man, became an expert in the field of Hereford genetics. He probably knows by name every important Hereford bull in the country, its owner, ancestry and descendants. I know that for a while he carried in his wallet a picture of one of his own prize bulls, right along with the pictures of his grandchildren.

With the little change of pace he gets, I marvel at how he keeps the great sense of humor that he has. A great deal of the credit has to go to a very tolerant, understanding and devoted wife. I am pleased that Beth can be with us today.

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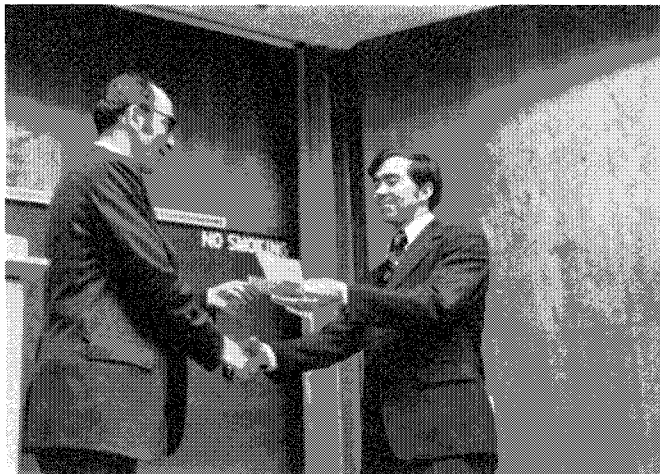
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