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2000]

## DEAN HAROLD GILL REUSCHLEIN

JAMES P. WHITE\*

**I**N 1974, I began my service as Consultant on Legal Education to the American Bar Association. One of the first contacts I had in my new position was a meeting with Dean Harold Gill Reuschlein. Dean Reuschlein was the chair of the Section's Accreditation Committee, the body responsible for the accreditation of law schools. He had been a member of the Committee when it was first created in 1970, and in 1972, he became its chair.

Dean Reuschlein had previously served as chair of the ABA Section on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar from 1969 to 1970. He had served with great distinction in that position. He was responsible for ensuring that the Office of the Consultant remained at a law school and that the Consultant be a legal educator. Under his leadership, Professor Millard H. Ruud of the University of Texas was appointed as the Consultant. Harold and Millard brought great vigor to the work of the Section. A number of new initiatives were undertaken.

The first set of Standards for the Approval of Law Schools by the American Bar Association was adopted in 1923. In the late 1960s, a three-person Committee, of which Dean Reuschlein was a member, began drafting a new set of Standards. Under Dean Reuschlein's leadership the final formulation of new Standards took place—standards that reflected the changing nature of both legal education and the legal profession.

Under Dean Reuschlein's leadership, the Section began a workshop for deans of ABA approved law schools held at the midyear meeting of the ABA. This workshop was conceived to be an off-the-record workshop limited to only deans, no substitute, with a program developed by deans for a discussion of current issues of interest and concern to law deans. This workshop continues each year and now is complimented by a workshop each summer for newly appointed deans of ABA law schools.

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During the year of Dean Reuschlein's leadership, the Section inaugurated the first of a series of monographs, *The Role of the American Bar Association in Legal Education: A Summary of the Chicago Symposium*.

Again, during his term as Section chair, the site evaluation process was reformulated to include the participation of more academics, judges and practitioners and to review each law school with greater comprehension.

Harold Gill Reuschlein was a man of firm convictions. He believed in students receiving quality legal education so that they might be prepared to give quality service to their future clients. He believed that a lawyer should not only be well versed in the law, but also in good food, wine, conversation, the arts and humanities. He wanted each law school graduate to be a person for all seasons.

These comments are about the public person, the founding dean of Villanova Law School, and a major contributor to the growth and strength of American legal education over six decades.

But I remember with pleasure Harold and Marcella on many happy occasions. When the Accreditation Committee held a celebratory dinner at our home to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. When the Frankino's had a marvelous dinner complete with Gilbert & Sullivan to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of the Reuschleins. When I came to Villanova and video-taped six hours of conversation with Harold as he reminisced on legal education from the late 1930s to the 1990s. I remember with fondness his thespian, terpsichorean, oratorical and chocaholic attributes. I remember at the home of Sandy Boyd, the president of both Harold's and my alma mater, his demonstration of his first theatrical role, the ice over which Liza crossed. I remember his poignant remarks when he received the Section's Robert J. Kutak Award, the highest award of the Section. I remember his love of life, his delight in good conversation, his joy in drinking Manhattans up, chocolates and fine cigars. I remember breakfast with Harold and Marcella, juice, fruit, oatmeal, eggs, bacon, toast and coffee—a hearty breakfast to begin the day. I remember his calling to task presidents and deans who were not fully committed to ever improving their law schools. I remember his love of good music, his directing skills and his view of the necessity of good liturgy as part of the worship service.

I know of no individual who has given more to the cause of American legal education than Harold Reuschlein. As a teacher, founding law school dean, as a member of, and Chairperson of, both the Council and the Accreditation Committee of the Section, as an active member of the Association of American Law Schools, and as a great human being, Harold Gill Reuschlein gave so much to the betterment of American legal education.

Those of us who worked with him are indeed the fortunate beneficiaries of all he did for legal education and the legal profession.