



UNC
SCHOOL OF LAW

NORTH CAROLINA LAW REVIEW

Volume 67 | Number 5

Article 2

6-1-1989

In Memoriam: Henry P. Brandis Jr.

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Recommended Citation

Robert Byrd, *In Memoriam: Henry P. Brandis Jr.*, 67 N.C. L. REV. 1013 (1989).

Available at: <http://scholarship.law.unc.edu/nclr/vol67/iss5/2>

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HENRY P. BRANDIS, JR.

ROBERT BYRD

When I think of Henry Brandis, my mind is filled with fond memories of him. He was my teacher, my dean, my colleague, and, above all, my friend. Further, in all that he did, there was nothing ordinary about him. Henry Brandis had a mind and spirit that made him a very special human being.

Over many years he provided leadership to the law school, the university, and the community. His fifteen-year tenure as dean seems truly remarkable today when the average tenure of deans is less than four years. Equally remarkable are the stability and success that were achieved in that period. His success in retaining faculty, whose abilities clearly opened many other opportunities for them, was such that those of us who came later and may now be approaching retirement are still considered intruders by some alumni. Under his leadership the school not only received national recognition as one of the top law schools in the country but also played a vital role in the life of the state. Its graduates assumed leadership roles in state and local government, the bar, universities, and across all of society. He anticipated the day when private funding would be needed to maintain the quality of a state-supported law school and together with a small handful of alumni established the Law Alumni Association and the Law Foundation. The dean's role in those early fundraising efforts was in many respects one of labor—but for Henry it was a labor of love. The dean was the secretary, the treasurer, the fundraiser, the investment advisor, and the accountant.

More than anything else, Henry was a leader. He gave the school purpose and direction. He instilled in faculty, students, and alumni a deep loyalty to and pride in the school and a positive view of its accomplishments and future.

Henry was a man of great integrity and strong will who spoke in a loud and clear voice for the things in which he believed. There was never anything fuzzy about what he said or the way he said it. He spoke eloquently against discrimination, bigotry, and threats to academic freedom. He showed great respect for honest views that differed from his own but had little regard for sham and pretense. He was sincere, but charitable, in his praise for others but quickly dismissed his own accomplishments. He generously shared his time and talents with all of us—giving advice, reading manuscripts, or simply providing encouragement and support.

He was always a good friend of students. He was never too busy to provide support and advice to them, whether their problem was personal, academic, financial, or in acquiring a job. For thousands of former law students, Henry Brandis was *the* dean of the law school long after he had stepped down from deaning and even after he had retired from the faculty. Whenever and wherever I met alumni across the state, they always asked about Dean Brandis and with

great warmth and fondness recalled some incident involving him. He was loved and admired by generations of law students and alumni in a way that few others are. I believe his faculty colleagues, both young and old, hold him in this same regard. They speak of him with the same warmth and admiration.

Henry Brandis brought a mind and spirit to everything he did that made him a very special human being.

Henry Brandis was many other things, an avid bird watcher, a marvelous storyteller, a writer of doggerel, and a mentor of young faculty. In all that he did, there was nothing ordinary. He had a mind and spirit that made him a very special human being.