

2014

Law School Names Reading Room for Noted Alumnus Harvey Chappell

David F. Morrill



Law School Names Reading Room for Noted Alumnus Harvey Chappell

By David F. Morrill

November 17, 2014

Members of the William & Mary Law School community came together on Friday, Nov. 7 to remember distinguished alumnus R. Harvey Chappell, Jr. '48, B.C.L. '50, LL.D. '84 and to dedicate the R. Harvey Chappell, Jr. Reading Room in his honor.

Located on the first floor of the Wolf Law Library, the Reading Room recognizes Mr. Chappell's service and generosity to the Law School. He passed away in December 2012.

"We are here to honor one of the truly great graduates of the College of William & Mary and of William & Mary Law School," said Davison M. Douglas, dean of the Law School, as he welcomed guests to the dedication.

Douglas went on to describe Chappell as "an extraordinarily loyal alumnus [who] served the College in so many different ways, and was truly an extraordinary lawyer."

As both an undergraduate and a law student at William & Mary, Chappell made a difference. Douglas described how in the late 1940s, Chappell decided that the Law School needed a Law Review. Managing to procure \$250 from then-President John Edwin Pomfret, Chappell launched the *William & Mary Review of Virginia Law*, now known as the *William & Mary Law Review*.

"It's appropriate that the Chappell Reading Room is pretty much right above the *William & Mary Law Review* office, which owes its existence to Harvey Chappell," Douglas said.

Also on hand with a number of warm reminiscences was President Taylor Reveley.

"The *Law Review* that Harvey started here is now one of the best in the country," Reveley said. "Harvey saw the need and met it. Typical, typical Harvey."

Reveley described Chappell as "one of the most loyal, effective, stalwart volunteer leaders" and "one of William & Mary's and the Law School's most powerful champions."



According to Reveley, Chappell was even instrumental in Reveley's decision to leave the practice of law to become dean of William & Mary Law School in 1998.

"Harvey began singing this wonderful song about the oldest law school, created by Jefferson and Wythe," Reveley said. "And then he said, 'Look, if you really want to do some good in the remaining years of your working life, you're going to do a lot more good if you come to William & Mary Law School than if you log thousands of more billables.'"

The dedication of the Chappell Reading Room began with a stirring rendition of the College's "Alma Mater" sung by Law Cappella, a student *a cappella* group, and was attended by friends, family, and the Law School community, as well as a number of Chappell Fellows. To date, the Law School has had more than 140 Chappell Fellows due to Mr. Chappell's generosity in establishing the Ann C. and R. Harvey Chappell Fellows Program.

Representing the Chappell family at the event were son Robert H. Chappell III J.D. '90, his wife, Karen Kay, and their daughter, Ann, of Richmond.

Robert Chappell said that if his father were attending the event, he'd be delighted with the Law School, but he'd still have a few things to say.

"He would tell you to keep working hard; he would tell you to judge people by their actions, not by their appearance; he would tell you how much he loved William & Mary and how rewarding he found it to be of service to the school," Chappell said. "He would ask all of you to serve and support the school."

Throughout his life and impressive fifty-year career with Christian & Barton in Richmond, Chappell made service and the College a priority. He was a member of William & Mary's Board of Visitors from 1968 to 1976, serving as vice rector from 1970 to 1972 and as rector from 1972 to 1976. He also served as president of the William and Mary Law School Association (1951-52)--which he created--and as president of the Society of the Alumni (1963-64).

He received the Alumni Medallion in 1968, an honorary Doctor of Laws from the College in 1984, and the Law School Association's Citizen-Lawyer Award in 2000.



WILLIAM & MARY
LAW SCHOOL

P.O. Box 8795
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

“Harvey has a firm place in the pantheon of the great William & Mary alumni, and we are all in his debt,” Reveley said. “We miss him very much.”

About William & Mary Law School

Thomas Jefferson founded William & Mary Law School in 1779 to train leaders for the new nation. Now in its third century, America's oldest law school continues its historic mission of educating citizen lawyers who are prepared both to lead and to serve.