The UW Law School's faculty and alumni were saddened to learn recently of the death of Emeritus Professor John E. Conway, a graduate of the Law School's Class of 1935, who taught at the Law School from 1953 to 1979.

Conway, described by a colleague as “one of the movers and shakers on the faculty,” was a longtime professor of Civil Procedure. He was noted for his extremely generous and courteous nature and high level of expectations for student achievement. The “military bearing” that one former student recalls may have been a result of Conway’s service in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II.

After the war, Conway became the Assistant Revisor and then Revisor of Statutes in Wisconsin before joining the faculty. In 1973, he was appointed Jackson Professor of Law, a chair he held until his retirement in 1979. That year he was also honored with the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association’s Distinguished Service Award.

The late G.W. (Bill) Foster, Jr., a Law School colleague, summarized John Conway’s dedication to education when he said, “I place John on a list with few peers and second to none in practicing the belief that education is a life process, never to cease while life continues.”

Conway’s first wife, Barbara, died in 1989; his son William Conway died in 2004. His survivors include his second wife, Audrey, and his son, Professor John B. Conway, chair of the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of Oklahoma College of Public Health, j.conway0347@sbcglobal.net.

Charles F. Luce ’41, CEO of Con Edison

Charles F. Luce of the Class of 1941 died in January 2008 at the age of 90. Luce was featured in the Spring 2006 issue of the Gargoyle as one of five energy industry CEOs who reflected on the usefulness of their UW law degrees.

He was Chair Emeritus of Consolidated Edison Company of New York, having joined the company in 1967 and led it through the 25-hour city-wide blackout of July 1977 and subsequent administrative changes. Previously he was Undersecretary of the Department of the Interior and director of the Bonneville Power Administration in Portland, Oregon.

In honor of his favorite law professor, Luce established the J. Willard Hurst Professorship in Legal History at the Law School. He later made another substantial gift to establish the Charles F. Luce Faculty Research Fellowship Fund.

Percy L. Julian Jr. ’66, Defended Civil Rights

Path-breaking civil rights lawyer Percy L. Julian Jr. ’66 died in February 2008 at the age of 67. During the Vietnam War era, Julian defended the rights of UW-Madison students to protest against the war and the corporations that profited from it. Both alone and working with the NAACP, he initiated employment discrimination suits and voting rights class-action suits across the country.

On learning of Julian’s death, Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz said, “Percy Julian’s work in the areas of fair housing, voting rights, school desegregation and First Amendment issues resulted in significant gains in preserving the rights of people of color in our state and our nation.”

Over the last decades Julian mentored dozens of law students as clerks in his offices, and traveled widely for his practice and work as a training consultant to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on the Fair Housing Act of 1988.

Julian’s father, the distinguished chemist Percy L. Julian Sr., was the subject of the recently aired PBS documentary Forgotten Genius.

Angie Brooks-Randolph ’52 Dies at 79, Past President of UN General Assembly

Angie Brooks-Randolph, a 1952 graduate of the Law School who went on to be elected the first and only African woman president of the United Nations General Assembly in 1969, died in Houston in September 2007 at the age of 79.

Brooks-Randolph was born in Liberia in 1928. In addition to presiding over the 24th session of the General Assembly, she was the first woman Liberian lawyer and served as Assistant Attorney General of Liberia. Her long career of government service and legal education also included the positions of Liberia’s Assistant Secretary of State, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia, Liberian Ambassador to the United Nations, and President of the International Federation of Women Lawyers.
Law School Remembers Professor Sam Mermin

UW Law School Professor Emeritus Samuel Mermin, who joined the faculty in 1951 and retired in 1979, passed away in August 2007 in Asheville, North Carolina, a few days after his 95th birthday.

For many years after his official retirement, Mermin remained active and productive as a scholar, maintaining an almost daily presence at the Law School. Until 2005, he lived at Oakwood Village in Madison. Many will remember his wife, Lora, who predeceased him by a few years.

Mermin received his undergraduate and law degrees from Yale University. He began his legal work in Washington, D.C., as a research attorney in the Departments of Labor and Agriculture, co-authoring publications in the area of consumer protection, and drafting a model consumer cooperative law, passed by Congress as the D.C. Cooperative Associations Act.

In 1943, he began a five-year stint in the wartime Office of Price Administration’s Enforcement Department and its successor agency, the Office of Temporary Controls, in various capacities, preparing numerous briefs and oral arguments.

After World War II, Mermin began his career in law teaching. After three years at the University of Oklahoma Law School, he moved to Wisconsin to spend a fellowship year researching aspects of Wisconsin’s legal-economic history. At the end of that year, Mermin was appointed to the law faculty, where he remained for almost three decades. He taught Administrative Law, Jurisprudence, Appellate Advocacy, Legal Process, and occasionally, Criminal Law.

Mermin was the author of numerous publications, and also took pride in his “Japanese connection,” which stemmed from a Fulbright lectureship at Japanese universities and a U.S. Information Agency lectureship in several Asian countries. His continuing friendships with numerous Japanese professors, graduate students, and their families (many of whom came to Madison to visit the Mermins and to conduct research at the law school) were “a major enjoyable feature of teaching at Wisconsin,” Mermin wrote.

In his 95th year, Mermin was still editing his last manuscript.

Survivors include his daughter, Katrina Whitfield, katrina@nwhomes.info, and son, Dan Mermin, djmermin@charter.net.

Clark Byse ’38, Famed Harvard Professor

Clark Byse of the UW Law School Class of 1938 died at the age of 95 in October. Byse, who grew up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, went on to a distinguished teaching career at Harvard Law School, where he taught contracts and administrative law to generations of students, including Supreme Court Justices Breyer and Souter.

He was considered by many to be the inspiration for John Houseman’s character, Charles Kingsfield, in the film The Paper Chase.

The December 2007 issue of the Harvard Law Review was dedicated to remembrances of Byse.

In Memoriam

John E. Conway ’35
Frederick C. Suhr ’35
Martin M. Lore ’36
Clark M. Byse ’38
Charles F. Luce ’41
Jerry R. Siefert ’42
Paul C. Konnor ’50
Robert W. Lutz ’51
Angie E. Brooks-Randolph ’52
Richard J. Steffens ’52
Robert L. Curly ’53
LeRoy L. Dalton ’53
Gerald Kybaluck ’58
James J. Murphy ’59
John W. Nielsen ’60
Lawrence W. Durning ’62
Edgar C. NeMoyer ’62
Daniel W. Hildebrand ’64
Percy L. Julian Jr. ’66
James G. Halverson ’70
Jane R. Henkel ’76
Daniel S. Strouse ’80