

Bruce Hubbard Stewart, M.D.

1929–1983

This issue of the CLEVELAND CLINIC QUARTERLY is dedicated to the memory of my dear friend and colleague, Bruce Hubbard Stewart.

This son of Louise and Samuel Stewart was born in Flint, Michigan, on November 3, 1929. As a boy, he spent his summers at the family cottage at White Lake, Michigan, where he made many lasting friendships.

Bruce attended the Taft School in Watertown, Connecticut, graduating cum laude in 1947. He continued his education at the University of Michigan. As an undergraduate, he was an enthusiastic member of Alpha Delta Phi. After obtaining his Bachelor of Arts degree, he entered medical school. At that time, he joined the Nu Sigma Nu fraternity, where I first met him in 1950. In recognition of his outstanding academic performance in both undergraduate and medical school, he was elected to membership in Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, and Alpha Omega Alpha, all honorary fraternities. As a medical student, he knew how to combine an outstanding academic performance with the real enjoyments of life. He loved to tell stories and limericks and to sing. Later, at medical meetings, he would meet former Michigan colleagues and would break into old college songs. Bruce loved the "Maize and Blue."

On June 12, 1952, after completing his sophomore year in medical school, Bruce married Virginia Persons of Birmingham, Alabama. The wedding was a gala event, not only for the bride and groom, but also for their friends. Bruce personally invited all his medical school fraternity brothers. The beautiful ceremony was the beginning of a marriage of two individuals absolutely devoted to each other.



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After receiving his medical degree in 1954, Bruce was a surgical resident at the University Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he served under the tutelage of Dr. Frederick A. Collier, one of the "giants" of the surgical world. In 1956, Bruce entered the Air Force and was stationed in Japan. Following his tour of duty, he

returned to the University Hospital to begin his training in urology under Dr. Reed M. Nesbit. Bruce was one of Dr. Nesbit's most talented residents and was invited to join the faculty of the medical school when he completed his training. The Cleveland Clinic was fortunate to lure the Stewarts to Cleveland in 1964. During this time, renal transplantation and renal vascular surgery were in their infancy, and the Cleveland Clinic was the site of pioneering work in both areas of endeavor. Bruce was an especially eager and untiring worker. He set an example by his unbelievable energy, his innovative and curious mind, and his unbounded enthusiasm for his work. He served on many important committees of The Cleveland Clinic Foundation, including the Board of Governors and Board of Trustees. In 1979, he became Chairman of the Division of Surgery, a position he held until his death.

Bruce was a member of all the prestigious urologic societies. He was an active member of the American Fertility Society and was president of that organization in 1972. The American Fertility Society has established the Bruce H. Stewart Lecture, which will be given at each meeting. Bruce was also a member of the American Board of Urology and was Chairman of the Examination Committee for several years. This was an important job to Bruce, and he gave it his usual all-out effort. He was also active in the American Urological Association, where he served on many committees and frequently participated in the programs. In 1982, he received the Mary Hugh and Russell Scott Award for contributions to urologic education, which was presented at the association's annual meeting.

Bruce served on the editorial committee of many urologic journals. He was a prolific writer and contributed 213 papers to the urologic literature and wrote 27 chapters for various textbooks. He had the unique ability to assemble data and produce a nearly completed manuscript with his first draft. His outstanding contribution was a two-volume edition, *Operative Urology*, which he personally edited with a great deal of help and support from his wife. In addition, his medical talks were masterful and were also spiced with a bit of humor, which put him in great demand in this country and abroad.

Cool under pressure in the operating room, Bruce was a highly skilled surgeon who loved the challenge of the more difficult operative procedures. He could operate equally well with either

his right or left hand. He was also compassionate and concerned about the total well being of his patients and set high standards for the quality of their care.

Bruce loved working at the Cleveland Clinic. He made significant contributions to the training of residents in urology, both as a role model and through his great interest in teaching young surgeons. He was a "team player" in every sense, was superbly organized, and possessed natural leadership skills. He was considerate and sensitive to the opinions of others and would compromise his viewpoint, but never his principles. Held in high esteem by surgical colleagues, he was also respected by the rest of the medical staff as a physician who believed in equal recognition for all staff members.

Bruce's hobbies included the study of automobiles and airplanes; he was an authority on various models. He fulfilled a lifelong wish in 1981 when he went with a group of friends to Rhinebeck, New York, to witness a demonstration of World War I airplanes. He was also knowledgeable about the strategies and battles of World War II.

In spite of his busy schedule, Bruce always managed to keep his priorities straight. His family came first. He loved his family, his home, and his garden. He was proud of his sons, Bruce Hubbard Stewart, Jr., and John (Jack) Persons Stewart, and both boys were close to their father.

Perhaps the most inspiring aspect of Bruce's remarkable life was how he handled his fatal illness, which was discovered in November 1980. Suddenly, in addition to being his associate and friend, I became his personal physician. When I met with the family to discuss the diagnosis and treatment, we all had a few tears, but no one doubted that somehow Bruce would win this battle. He knew as much about the management of the disease as I, but when a decision regarding therapy was to be made, he always said, "I will do whatever you think is best." We always maintained open communication, and although the 27 months of his illness were marked by "ups and downs," Bruce never uttered a discouraging word. His family faced the problem with courage and grace and was a vital source of strength and support.

During the last hospitalization, Bruce continued to do some work daily. Whenever we talked, we would discuss future plans. Bruce did not want to talk about his impending death, which we both

knew was imminent, but instead, he maintained his determination to survive.

Bruce died as he lived, with dignity and courage. He never complained and knew only one

direction in life—forward. He was loved by all who had the good fortune to know him. We all miss him, but gain strength for the days ahead by drawing on the memories of his productive life. He was a tower of strength to us all.

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