

UW's Distinguishe

By Steve Po

The Distinguished Alumni for 1980 are Ambassador Francois Dickman, BA '47; John Ellbogen, BA '48, LLB '50; Everett Lantz, BA '36, MA '39; and Harry T. Smith, BS '32. UW Alumni who have distinguished themselves throughout their professional lives and in turn brought honor and recognition to the University.

Francois M. Dickman

Few people could design a career more challenging or more fascinating than that of an ambassador. Yet how does one begin to prepare for life in the diplomatic service?

"It was something I thought about quite early in life," U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, Francois M. Dickman says. "Foreign affairs often were discussed at home, so you might say, I began to prepare for my work while I was young."

Ambassador Dickman came to Laramie as a child with his family in 1933. His father was hired by the University of Wyoming as head of the Modern Language Department.

Dickman graduated from University Prep in 1942, but before he could finish his college education, he was called to service in the Army for three years during World War II. He ultimately returned to UW and graduated with honors in 1947.

He thinks the Liberal Arts curriculum at UW helped him prepare for his career. He also discovered an interest in economics in graduate school and it became his foreign service specialty.

He can still recall his student days in 1943 when UW won the National Basketball championship, and how WW II changed campus life for him.

"I remember a lot of good times and an overriding interest in sports during my freshman year at UW," he recalls. "After the war there was a different attitude. People were keenly serious and there seemed to be a considerable degree of maturity on campus."

College pranks were passe he recalls, except perhaps, an isolated incident like the time a self-appointed welcoming committee of geology students raised a confederate flag over Prexy's Pasture to salute the hiring of George Duke Humphrey as university president and Bowden Wyatt as football coach — both were from the deep south. It was several days before the flag could be lowered because the culprits released the line and Laramie's famous March winds kept it out of reach.

As one who represents our country abroad, Dickman's work requires that he identify, protect and promote our national interests. Economic and political issues are the ambassador's chief concerns. He has devoted himself to the energy issue too, because he believes the U.S. is extremely vulnerable due to our reliance on imported oil.

"We must become energy self-sufficient through conservation and the use of alternative energy sources," he observed. "That's why Wyoming plays such a key role. The state's resources must be exploited and developed to strengthen our basic economy and give us time to develop other technologies."

Ambassador Dickman is accomplished in Arab languages and has worked and traveled extensively for the Department of State in the Arab countries of the Mediterranean and those of the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli conflict and the unresolved Palestinian issue are the primary sources of unrest in the area he said.

While diplomatic life may seem exciting, one inevitable drawback is the long periods away from home.

"You do miss the United States after you've served abroad for a while," he said. "You see the values of liberty and a democratic way of government."

He believes we have a pragmatic, successful system of education in the U.S. in contrast to educational methods he has seen elsewhere in his 28-year career.

Dickman, former ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, credits his wife, the former Margaret Hoy (BA '46), for her help in his success.

"Foreign service is extremely competitive and demanding. To survive in this career you need someone who will support you and help you," he added.

The Dickmans have two children, Christine and Paul, who has a master's degree from UW in Nuclear Chemistry.

John P. Ellbogen

If you wanted to write a modern western drama with a hero who symbolizes the post-World War II ambition and pragmatism of his generation, you could make Wyoming the setting and John P. Ellbogen the central character.

A lifetime resident of the state, Ellbogen received a bachelor's degree at the University of Wyoming in 1948 and his law degree in 1950. He was involved in oil exploration and went on to become a highly successful independent lease broker and oil and gas producer in Casper.

"It's a fascinating business, one of the last places the individual entrepreneur can still succeed," he says.

Because of the abundant resources in Wyoming, Ellbogen sees a bright future for the state. "Growth," he cautions, "must be accomplished in an orderly manner. Development should be balanced against environmental concerns."

To help solve the energy crisis, he would free the energy industry of bureaucratic shackles which are, in his view, costly to consumers and frustrating this country's energy self-sufficiency attempts.

"I'm not for unbridled capitalism," he says, "but I would like to see a freer expression of capitalistic ideals."

Ellbogen supports the development of nuclear energy for electric generation and increased use of coal as additional measures to help maintain the American standard of living.

Aside from his professional concern about energy policy and development, Ellbogen takes a special interest in the University of Wyoming. He established the John P. Ellbogen Meritorious Classroom Teaching Award Fund to encourage excellence in teaching.

"I've probably talked to at least 100 people who went to UW and most of them can only recall having had a few really outstanding teachers," he says.

"That's the biggest weakness in the system though it's not unique to UW or to higher education for that matter."

As president of the UW Foundation, a non-profit corporation which handles endowments to the university, Ellbogen is keenly aware of the university's importance to the state.

"The legislature has been very understanding over the years," he says. "We've been very fortunate. Now the challenge is to make an even more viable institution. In certain fields we should encourage graduate training, especially in areas like agriculture, petroleum and minerals which are so closely associated with the interests of the state."

"Our principle purpose is to serve the undergraduates and provide adequate training to our Wyoming high school graduates," he says.

An honest, industrious kind of man, John P. Ellbogen exudes the confidence and force of will that is reminiscent of the guys who always wear white hats.

Everett D. Lantz

Think of Wyoming pioneers and you may picture covered wagons and backs bent to the task of taming a rugged land. Since 1936 however another kind of pioneer has helped shape Wyoming life. Where the early settlers civilized a wild country, Everett D. Lantz cultivated the seeds of intellect, culture and achievement.

"My whole life has been like a pioneer," Lantz says, "doing things here that had never been done before."



Francois Dickman



J.P. Ellbogen

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This marks the 26th year that the University of Wyoming Alumni Association has presented the coveted Distinguished Alumni Awards. A ten-member award committee selected this year's recipients from more than 100 outstanding nominations.

Lantz received his bachelor's degree in 1936 and his master's in 1939, both from the University of Wyoming. In 1954 he received his doctorate in education from UCLA.

Among his accomplishments, Lantz speaks proudly about his establishment of the UW wrestling program in 1937 and how it became one of the best in the country for 14 years. Lantz was recognized in 1960 as the USA Wrestling Coach of the Year.

"I dearly love athletics and the opportunity to compete," he says, "but the problem now is that we are doing them only for entertainment. We're losing the concept of competing for the self."

As a world traveler and comparative education scholar, Lantz says, "I've been leading people all over the world since the late 1950's."

He was one of the first western educators invited to the People's Republic of China in 1974. During August, 1980, he returned to China as director of a 21-day educational seminar with Wyoming people. He has also traveled and studied culture and education in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the People's Republic of Mongolia.

"Our civilization is just a thin veneer," he says, "but we're really not so civilized. If we could accept one another... well, I'm doing everything I can to show people from these other cultures that we're really no different than they are."

Lantz thinks that the American educational system is one of the best in the world but that some destructive elements are present today.

"We are killing our school system because we think it is cheaper to keep kids in school than on the street. If education means we've got to keep people in school then we've taken away an essential element of the process, that is the opportunity to achieve and the chance to fail," he says.

Having achieved the pinnacle of a career in both coaching and scholarship makes Lantz unusual by today's standards. Incredibly, he has been recognized for excellence in teaching, too. He received the Alpha Kappa Psi Outstanding Faculty Award in 1965 and the George Duke Humphrey Distinguished Faculty Award for 1969-70. He established the Educational Foundations curriculum here and for seven years managed the UW Science camp.

Lantz has also been active in Rotary International, the Laramie Chamber of Commerce, the Ambassador's Club, and is a Past President of the Laramie Kiwanis, which gave him an Outstanding Citizen Award in 1969.

Lantz is an assistant to the president at UW and also the executive secretary of the Wyoming Council for Children and Youth. His innovative leadership has made the council prominent in the U.S.

His work on the council exemplifies his concern about youth and his belief that positive behavior should be recognized and praised. He launched the "Youth of the Month" and the "Youth of the Year" program to focus public attention on deserving youngsters.

"We must look for excellence and try to find people who build and encourage it," he says.

Reviewing his long, distinguished career at UW, Lantz explains that his wife Betty (Elizabeth Stratton, BA '36) has been his well-spring of inspiration.

"I should add however, that my father taught me to work," he says, "and what is amazing about that is, he taught me how to like it."

If commitment and devotion moved the early pioneers to successfully settle Wyoming, certainly it is that same

pioneering attitude that has been Everett Lantz's guidepost.

Harry P. Smith

Harry P. Smith has a simple formula for success: "Treat people well, treat them honestly, and try to do your best."

Owner of the Hitching Post Inn of Cheyenne, Smith is a man who has applied this dictum to establishing himself and his enterprise as the cornerstone of Wyoming's tourist and travel industry.

He actually began his career as a civil engineer after graduating from the University of Wyoming in 1932. He worked for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on such projects as the Seminole and Alcova dams and the Shoshoni Reclamation projects. When his father Pete Smith, died in 1938, Smith took over the 20 unit motel on Cheyenne's west side that his father had started. He built it into one of the largest, most successful lodging facilities in the state.

Born in Russia, Smith emigrated with his mother to this country in 1921 to join his father. He completed his entire primary and secondary schooling in just seven years before attending the University of Wyoming.

An astute observer who has seen many changes through the years, Smith thinks that further development of advanced education in the state should be concentrated at UW.

"Today it is one of the best universities in this part of the country. It is a good university and we must keep it that way," he says. "With the growth in the state now, we may be able to keep more of our graduates in Wyoming."

Growth in the state is not without problems he concedes. But Smith realizes that the country needs Wyoming's energy products and controlled development can be managed for the good of the state and America.

With respect to national values, Smith believes that many people fail to appreciate democracy. He was motivated to give his time to many civic, charitable and professional organizations as a result, he says, "of my appreciation for democracy and what this country and this state has done for me."

He is a past United Fund Director, former treasurer and president of the Laramie County Memorial Hospital Board of Directors, former board member of the Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, founder and past president of the Wyoming Motel Assn., a member of the Cowboy Joe Club, active in the Masons, Shriners, Lions, and Optomists, a life member of the UW Alumni Assn., and active in other religious, civic and philanthropic pursuits.

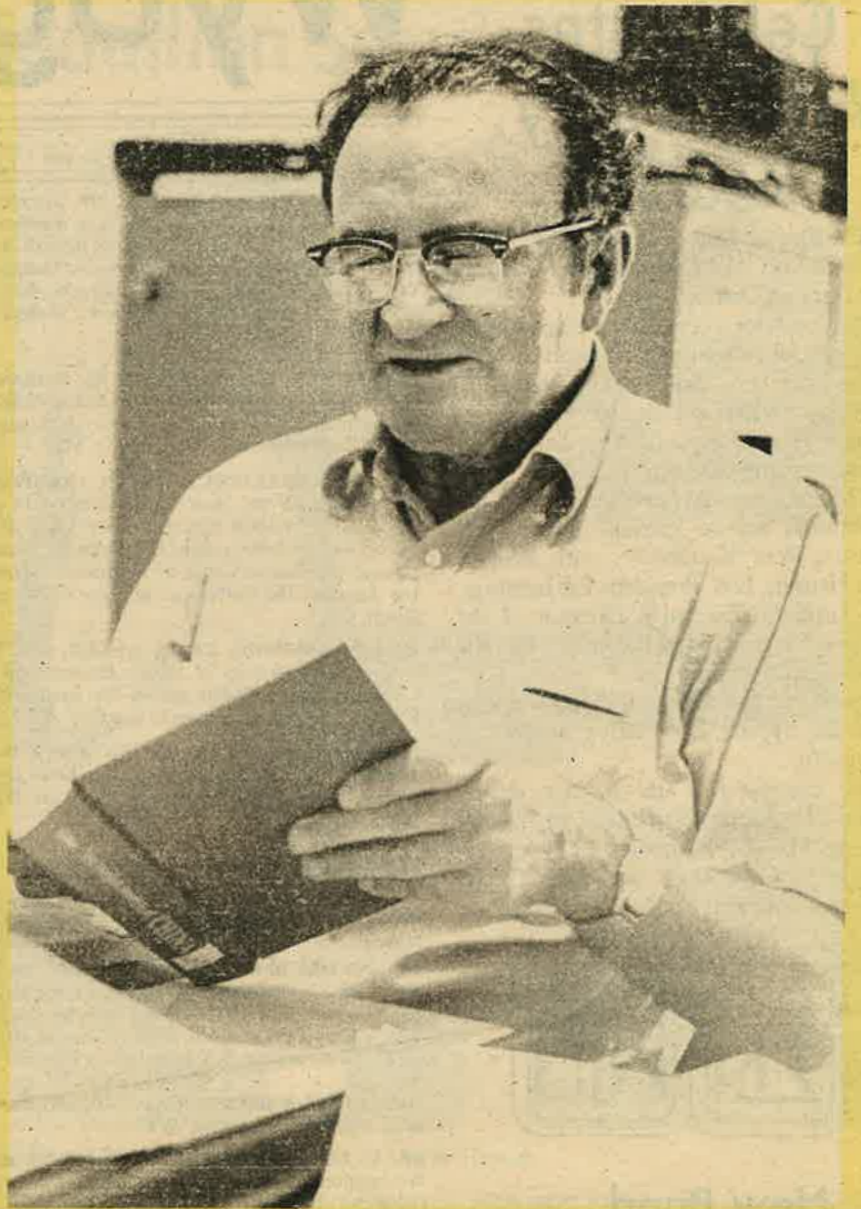
How can one man be so energetic in his devotion to his community?

"They say you can get more out of a busy than one who isn't. I guess that's how I've done so much. Yet, you can never do enough. It's not good to become satisfied, you must push ahead," he says.

Smith is still active in the Colorado-Wyoming Hotel and Motel Assn. and in tourism.

"As time goes on, gasoline continues to be a problem for the tourist industry. Air transportation is another. You'd be surprised how many Europeans are interested in Wyoming. They want to see the scenery and the cowboys here, but they're having problems getting to the state," he explained.

If ever there was a person who realized the much-touted American dream of opportunity and a chance to learn, grow and build, Harry Smith is one. Years of giving freely of his energy and enthusiasm have made him not only a distinguished alumnus, but also a well respected gentleman.



Everett D. Lantz



Harry P. Smith