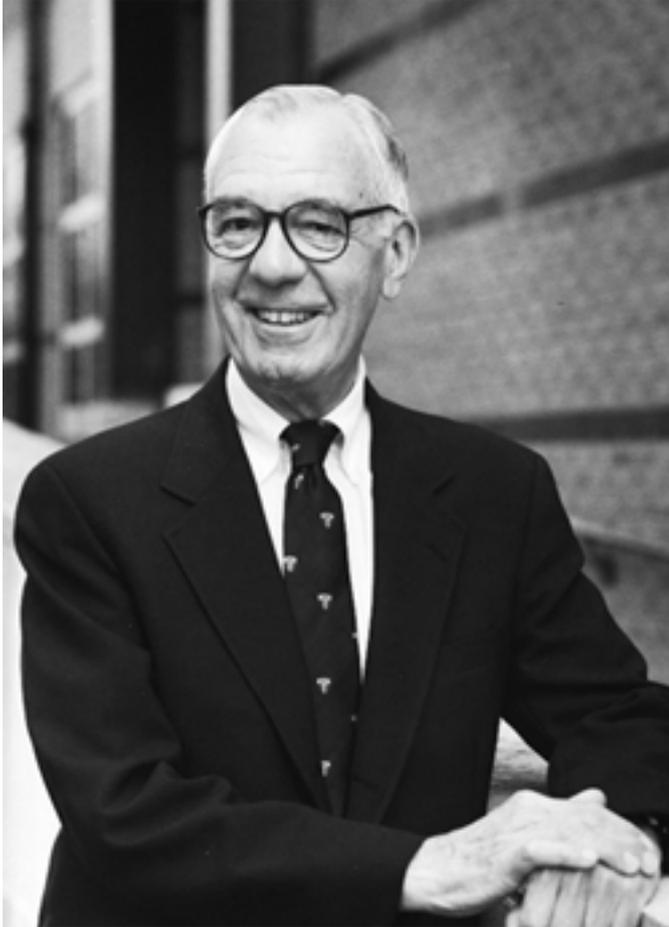


In Memoriam: Arthur Ebbert Jr.

Yale UniversityYale University



Dr. Arthur Ebbert Jr., professor emeritus of medicine at Yale who was widely regarded as the “soul of the medical school” during the more than three decades in which he served there, died on June 7 in Hamden, Connecticut. He was 89.

Ebbert joined the Yale faculty in 1953 as the assistant dean of postgraduate education and was promoted to associate dean in 1960. He became the School of Medicine’s first deputy dean in 1974 and served in that role — under five deans — until 1987. He also founded and edited the Alumni Bulletin — and later Yale Medicine — between 1953 and 1986. With one assistant, he assembled the important events and stories that were meant to keep alumni informed of the progress at the school and remain connected to it, recalls his successor as editor-in-chief, Dr. Michael Kashgarian ’58. Classes were small when the Alumni Bulletin was started, and Ebbert knew many of the alumni on a first-name basis, dating back to when he, along with Dr. Thomas R. Forbes, constituted the admissions committee for the school. His familiarity with alumni and their interests shaped the content of the Alumni Bulletin and later Yale Medicine and served as a stimulus for the success of the alumni association and class reunions, colleagues say.

Ebbert was also known for his uncanny knowledge and understanding of the

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workings of the School of Medicine, leading to the common response “Ask Art Ebbert” for many administrative queries, recalls Dr. John E. Fenn, who, as the chief of staff at Yale-New Haven Hospital, worked closely with Ebbert and was his neighbor in recent years at the Whitney Center in Hamden.

Dr. Gerard N. Burrow '58, former dean of the medical school, remembers Ebbert from the 1950s when he applied to the school.

“He interviewed for medical school, which formed a bond and friendship that strengthened [over the years],” says Burrow. “Serving as deputy to five deans, Arthur provided wise counsel on a background of profound institutional memory and was an anchor who stabilized the school during periods of change. On a personal level, he was the embodiment of a southern gentleman and a model citizen, in the very best sense.”

Another former medical school dean, Dr. Leon E. Rosenberg, recalls how he did his best to convince Ebbert not to step aside as deputy dean in 1987. “He turned me down with the same kind of grace, decency, and institutional loyalty that he exhibited in everything he did for the school,” says Rosenberg. “I missed his wise counsel, and told him so on many subsequent occasions.”

More than 600 faculty and hospital colleagues, university administrators, and friends attended a reception in his honor when Ebbert stepped down. There, Rosenberg referred to his 34-year career as the “Ebbert Era” and praised him as the “soul of the medical school.”

Born in 1922 in Wheeling, West Virginia, Ebbert grew up there, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and later in New Rochelle, New York. He received his B.A. and M.D. degrees from the University of Virginia. His academic honors included election to Phi Beta Kappa, the Raven Society, and Alpha Omega Alpha. After a year as an intern at the University of Virginia Hospital, he went on duty in July 1947 as an Army medical officer. He served almost two years in Japan, reaching the rank of captain. He was discharged from the Army in April 1949 and returned to the University of Virginia for post-graduate training in internal medicine. On completion of the three-year program, he joined the University of Virginia faculty as an instructor until coming to Yale.

Ebbert was designated an honorary member of the Association of Yale Alumni and served on the association’s executive board and as its representative to the University-wide Association of Yale Alumni. He was also a fellow of Silliman College and an active member of the Beaumont Medical Club. Shortly before his retirement from Yale, the third-floor lounge of the Jane Ellen Hope Building was designated the Arthur Ebbert Lounge in recognition of his lifelong contributions to the medical school. A scholarship fund in his name was established in 2004 for medical schools at the University of Virginia.

Ebbert loved the medical library at Yale and supported it in many ways. He established an endowment fund for the collections in honor of his parents, was a longtime trustee of the Associates of the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, and

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served as membership chair.

Memorial gifts to the Yale School of Medicine may be made to the Yale School of Medicine Development Office, P.O. Box 7611, New Haven, CT 06519 or to the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

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