

HISTORIC GIFT A LASTING LEGACY

THROUGH A DAUGHTER'S LOVE FOR HER FATHER AND HIS LEGACY, SCHOOL TO RECEIVE \$20 MILLION ESTATE GIFT HONORING CLASS OF 1917-GRADUATE DR. ARTHUR E. CORBY

ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR YEARS after alumnus Dr. Arthur E. Corby (D'1917) earned his dental degree, the legacy of this man from the past will have a transformative impact on Penn Dental Medicine's future. At the end of 2020, the School received an estate gift from his daughter, Carol Corby-Waller (CW'58), honoring her father – the first \$10 million of an anticipated \$20 million to support the School's highest priorities. The balance of the gift is expected to come to the School later this year.

“One cannot overstate the tremendous impact of this historic gift,” says Penn Dental Medicine's Morton Amsterdam Dean, Dr. Mark S. Wolff. “What makes it particularly unique and impactful for the School is that the gift is unrestricted, so these resources can help support a diversity of projects as needs arise.”

As an unrestricted gift, the funds will allow the School to seize opportunities that may need seed investment. It comes at a pivotal time in terms of new initiatives. Four new centers have recently been launched at Penn Dental Medicine: The Center for Clinical and Translational Research; The Center for Innovation and Precision Dentistry; the Care Center for Persons with Disabilities (see story, page 12); and the Center for Integrated Global Oral Health (see story, page 18). Funds from the Corby-Waller gift will help support the growth of these enterprises as needed, and more. The recently renovated B13 auditorium within the School's Levy building will be named for Dr. Corby, ensuring that a prominent space within Penn Dental Medicine will bear his name as a lasting tribute.

HONORING A FATHER'S PASSION

So who are the Corbys and what led to such a generous memorial? Carol Ann Corby-Waller was the only child of Dr. Arthur Corby, Penn Dental Medicine class of 1917. She was a Penn graduate as well, having earned her undergraduate degree in 1958 from the then College of Women. While she had little contact with Penn after graduation, it is clear she wanted to recognize her father's passion for dentistry and the school where he earned his degree and was significantly engaged during his lifetime.

Entering the Army dental corps of World War I upon graduation from Penn Dental Medicine in 1917, Arthur Corby went on to build a successful and prominent dental practice in New York City until his passing in 1954 at the age of 65. He retained strong ties to Penn throughout his career, notably serving as an alumni trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, elected to a 10-year term in 1948. He was among the small and prestigious ranks of graduates awarded Penn's Alumni Award of Merit for service to the University and its alumni. Among his achievements, Dr. Corby helped to reorganize Penn's

General Alumni Society and served on the University's Reconversion Fund Committee and the Bicentennial Committee (1940).

In addition, Dr. Corby led the Penn Dental Alumni Society as President (1948-49), served as editor of the *Dental Alumni Quarterly*, and held a term as President of the University of Pennsylvania Club of New York.

Active in organized dentistry, Dr. Corby served as President of the New York Academy of Dentistry and the First District Dental Society of New York (1951) comprising Manhattan and the Bronx. He was a fellow of the American College of Dentists and the International College of Dentists and was a member of the American Dental Association, the American Academy of Restorative Dentistry, and the Delta Sigma Delta dental fraternity, serving as grand master of its Graduate Chapter in 1944. Dr. Corby also served as the Chairman of the Greater New York Dental Meeting (1952). There, he organized a symposium on the relationship between smoking and lung cancer. That effort stimulated the formation of the Tobacco Industry Research Committee.

Dr. Corby's class yearbook reveals a record of active engagement while a student at Penn Dental Medicine as well. He served as editor-in-chief of the Senior Class Record and was Corresponding Secretary of the Matthew H. Cryer Society of Oral Surgery. In addition, he was a member of Delta Sigma Delta Fraternity, the Darby Dental Society, and the Penn Dental Journal Advisory Board.



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romantic side of the American virtue of thrift that captivated me. The important personal fortunes or business enterprise that had come into being because years earlier a small boy had a bank into which he slipped a part of the pennies that came his way.” Indeed, it appears his daughter, Carol, may have done just that — acquiring the philanthropic capacity to leave this transformative gift to Penn Dental Medicine in memory of a beloved father.

A PENNY SAVED

Outside the dental field, Dr. Corby developed what appeared to be an equally deep interest in collecting — specifically, in collecting penny banks of all sorts. In an archive from the Mechanical Bank Collectors of America, an article from 1942 noted that “Whenever the collectible under discussion is a penny bank, sooner or later the name of Dr. Arthur E. Corby of New York City will come into the conversation. He ranks as one of the big six of penny-bank collectors of the United States.”

Dr. Corby’s collection numbered more than 4,000 banks, which he reportedly displayed in a shelf-lined room adjacent to his dental office located in New York City’s Wall Street neighborhood, where he would enthusiastically share the collection with other collectors and visitors alike. It was one of the country’s most extensive private museums of the collectibles at that time.

When asked about his collection in that same 1942 article, Dr. Corby said, “I guess my particular interest in penny banks was the

The Penn Dental Medicine yearbook photo of Dr. Arthur E. Corby, Class of 1917.