

In Memoriam: Dr. Charles J. Burstone What He Meant to Me

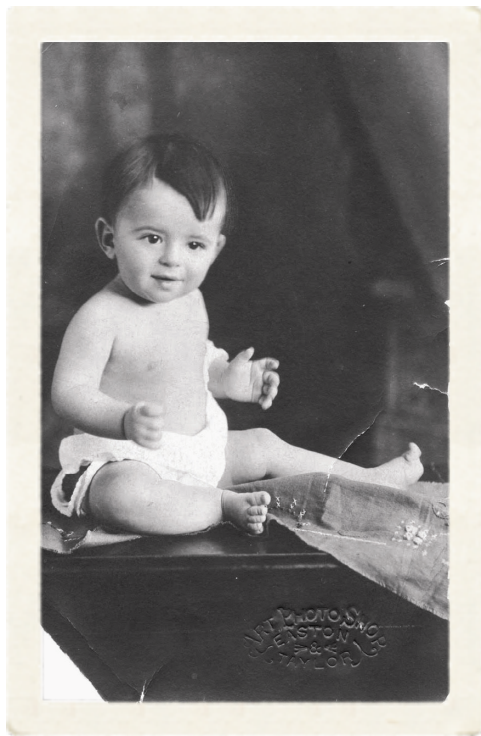
I have been asked to write about what Dr. Charles Burstone meant to me. I was fortunate enough to know him for more than 50 years. Dr. Burstone was exciting, interesting, down-to-earth and, also... the best teacher I've ever had.

When I was a sophomore at IU Dental School, I needed a job and asked him if he knew of any jobs available.

Dr. Burstone hired me to test springs for him. This began a long friendship. After I was accepted into the Orthodontic Program there at IU, he suggested that I apply for a 3-year NIH Postgraduate Teaching Fellowship, if I had any thoughts about teaching Orthodontics as a career. With his help, I applied for and received a NIH grant, which paid for all of my tuition and related expenses as well as providing me with a monthly salary.

After my tragic car accident in my third year of orthodontic residency, I literally didn't know what I was going to do with myself. Charlie took a chance on me and invited me to join him at the University of Connecticut, where he had just been asked to be the Head of the newly-formed Orthodontic Department. For this invitation, I am forever grateful.

Years later, after having proposed to my future wife, I asked Charlie to be the "best man" at our wedding. He was flabbergasted and said: "I won't know what to say." And, I ask all of you - when have you ever known Charlie to be at a loss for words? Anyhow, he became an intimate part of our family and, over the years, has been known as "Uncle Charlie" to our children and grandchildren. He had a regular seat at the Marcotte Dinner Table.



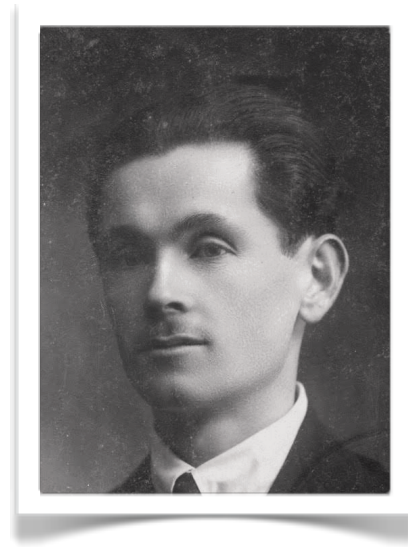
■ Fig. 1: CJ Burstone.



Michael R. Marcotte, DDS, MSD

Assistant Professor of Orthodontics, University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine

We all know that Charlie was a very private person. On occasion, he would pull back the curtain just a little bit and tell us stories of his growing up. He told us how his dad, Lester (Fig. 3), who was a great dental clinician (Fig. 5), did his own lab work at night in the basement of his home-office. He told us how he used to play in this lab as a kid. His dad was often paid with food, such as chickens, eggs, and vegetables; the Depression was a hard time. His mother, Rose (Fig. 4), could never understand why Academic Charlie didn't have an office like his father. And, what was he doing traveling all over the country and the world? He told us that she never quite understood what he was doing.



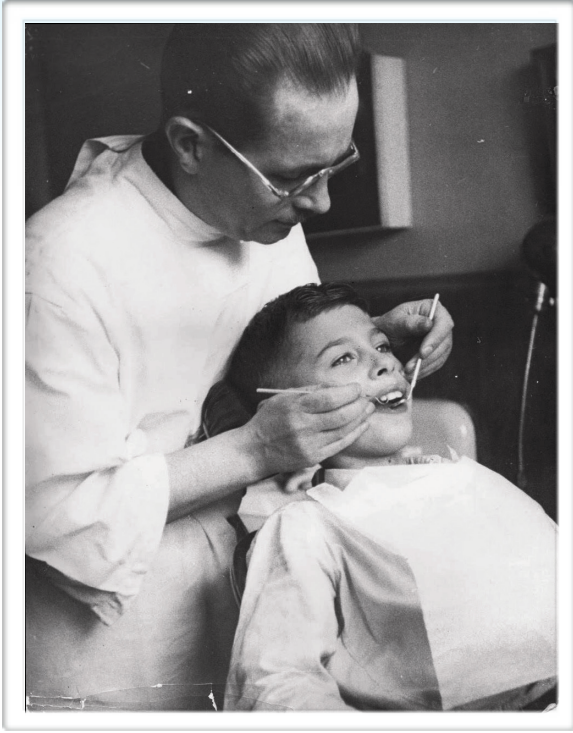
■ Fig. 3: Charlie's father, Dr. Lester Burstone.



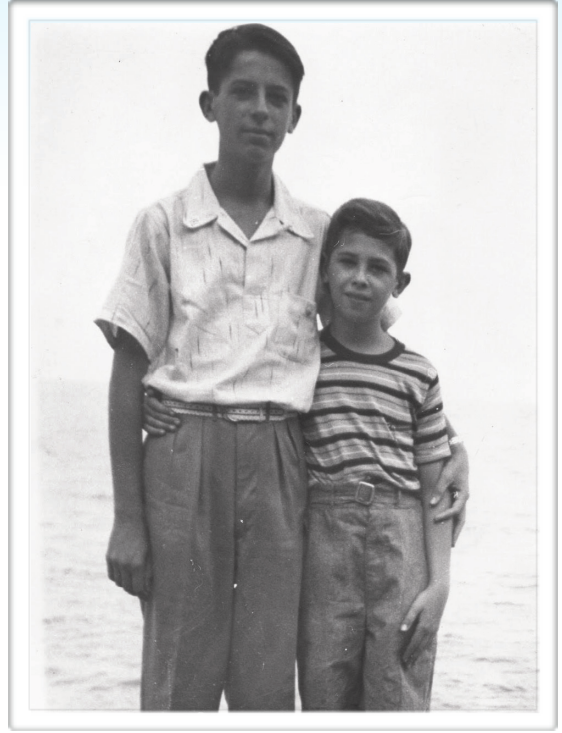
■ Fig. 2: Charlie's childhood



■ Fig. 4: Charlie's Mother, Rose Liberfarb.



■ Fig. 5: Charlie's father, Lester with Charlie in dental chair.



■ Fig. 6: Marvin, Charlie's older brother and Charlie.



■ Fig. 7: Charles Burstone's family: (from left to right) Charlie, Rose, Lester, and Marvin.



■ Fig. 8: Charlie at home.

Charlie was also very proud of his older brother, Marvin (Figs. 6 & 7, first from the right in Fig. 7), who was an NIH dentist-researcher and, according to Charlie, quite handsome. Charlie also taught Sunday School as a teenager and worked in a finger-nail polish factory in New Haven, where he lived with his aunt over a summer. He was a Boy Scout with his own Den of Cub Scouts. One of their projects didn't go as planned. He had the boys using plaster and he forgot to put the separating medium on the bowls that he had borrowed from one of the mothers. Much to their dismay, the bowls had to be broken to remove the project.



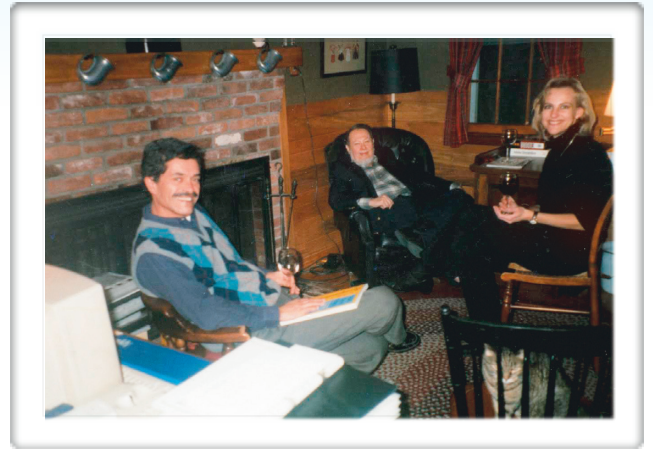
■ Fig. 8: Charlie's military life in Busan, Korea.



■ Fig. 9: Charlie (center) at Xian University, China in the early '70s.



■ **Fig. 10:**
Drs. John Lin and Charlie, and Prof. Tsai in Taipei, Taiwan in 1988.



■ **Fig. 11:**
Charlie at Dr. Mike Marcotte's house with Dr. Marco Enciso.



■ **Fig. 12:** *Charlie and Birte Melsen in the late '70s.*



■ **Fig. 13:**
Charlie spent his Christmas time with the Marcotte family in 1988.



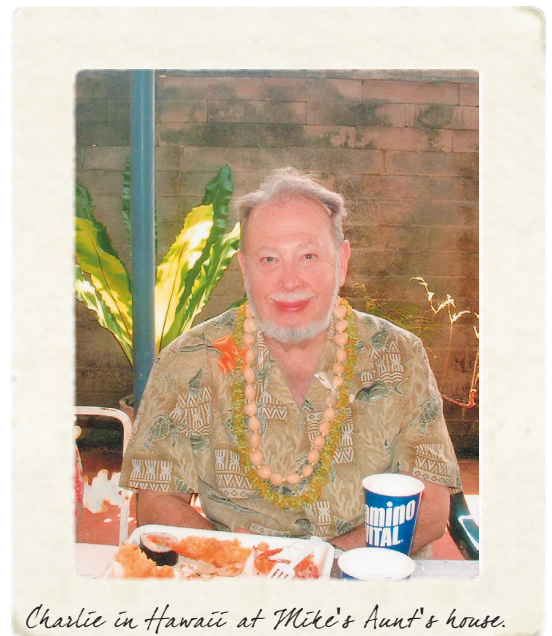
*Mike, Anita and Charlie in Vienna
(From left to right).*

He would always start his stories with "Stop me if I've told you this before." Of course we never did because the stories were just as good or even funnier the second or third time around.

Charlie enjoyed many things in life. He was a lover of Classical music, especially the Wagnerian Operas, which he would take us to in New York City. He enjoyed coming to our home everytime we would have a piano recital. He loved art and we visited many museums around the world, places which we would have probably never gone to without him. And, he could always tell us interesting facts about the artist or the artwork. He was also a Nature lover; the three of us (*my wife, myself and Charlie*) often hiked together in Connecticut and elsewhere. He



Charlie in Hawaii with Mike Marsotte.



Charlie in Hawaii at Mike's Aunt's house.

could identify plants and trees and was never, ever stumped. He loved to walk, whether it was in a city or in the countryside. Even toward the end of his life, he would take us walking on the trails of his retirement residence.

Charlie was always a welcomed guest at our home. Our children, grandchildren and "extended family" enjoyed his stories and sense of humor. Many of them mentioned to us, after he passed away, how he always tried to discover what was interesting to them and was never at a loss to find something to discuss with them.

Charlie on a trip to Asia.



■ Fig. 14: Charlie with Katherine Marcotte (Left) and Mike Marcotte (Right) on Thanksgiving, 2014.

When our 6-year old grandson, Nicholas, who is learning to speak Chinese in school, was told of Charlie's passing, he asked his dad, "Who's going to speak Chinese with me now?" Charlie had learned to speak Chinese on his first Sabbatical to China in the early '70s. Charlie mentioned to our daughter, Katherine (Fig. 14), that he enjoyed being at the table in her home because the place card at his seat, always said "Uncle Charlie" or even just "UC..." not Dr. Burstone. He especially enjoyed her "ice breakers" at the dinner table.

So you see, I can't just talk about what Charlie means to me because he became a part of our family and meant so much to all of us.

He will be sorely missed by all of us; our dinners and holidays will certainly not be as lively. We were fortunate to have him while we did and we must always keep that in the forefront of our minds.

We will always remember him for his honesty, kindness, humor, and generosity. These traits carried him well during his life. He was truly a "Renaissance man" - his was a life well-spent. Rest in peace, Charlie - you truly deserve it ...and... we miss you.

Farewell Charlie—until we meet again.

