

In memory of Charles Burstone

He has been missing almost two years, but it is still fresh.

I met Charlie in 1974. I had called the secretary in Connecticut and asked whether I could come and visit and give lecture to the graduate students. The answer was yes, but Dr. Burstone did not have time for me. He would introduce me and then leave for more important obligations. Charlie did not leave the lecture room, but sat down and after the lecture he invited me to dinner. This was the beginning of a friendship that lasted until his death.

I came to Connecticut regularly and always stayed at his home. That gave me a chance to get to know Charlie as a private person. It was not easy. He was always kind, but very protective about his private life. He was, to be frank, not very domestic. His house was wonderful in the midst of a plot with different trees. Once I suggested to invite friends for dinner, I realized that essential things as cutleries and a table cloth had to be purchased. He would invite people out and not at home although his home was beautiful and full of memories from all his travels. When we invited guests, I liked to cook and he enjoyed sharing his knowledge with friends.



■ Fig. 1: A view on Florence from Fiesole with Dr. Kraft.

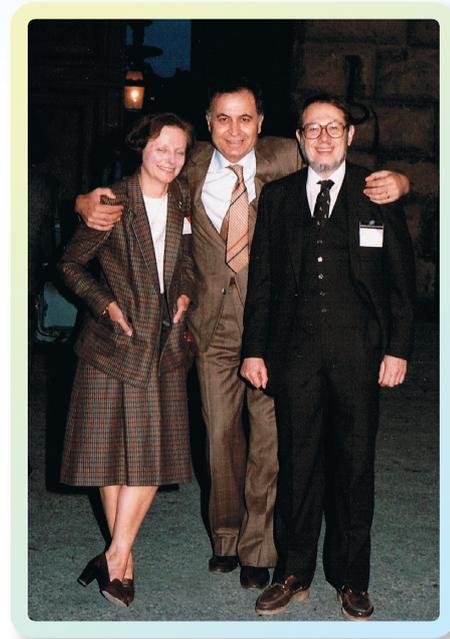


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■ **Fig. 2:** *Preparing for the five star dinner.*



■ **Fig. 3:** *On the street with the beloved Timberland accompanied by Dr. Fotis who also invited Charlie for a vacation on Rhodes.*

Charlie came to Aarhus, Europe the first time together with Dr. Nanda who had just joined the faculty. They gave a typodont course. In comparison with all the other courses I had taken: Tweed, Jarabak, Ricketts, Begg, the segmented approach made sense. I could use the mathematical logic and soon our department was dominated by the Burstone's thoughts and the six Geometries were eagerly discussed. But we shared not only orthodontics, but also philosophy and religion. He came to Italy (Figures 1-4) where we gave courses together and where he enjoyed the museums and the mountains. Sometimes he over-estimated himself and my younger son almost had to carry him



■ **Fig. 4:** *In Florence with friends: professor Houstone and professor Moss and wife are all no longer with us. Also Professor Prahl and professor Wenzel and Dr Fotis joined us.*



■ Fig. 5: Elegant dinner with Coca-Cola.

home from a mountain in Italy. We attended operas in Europe and US, but argued about whether he could go in the opera in Timberland shoes, eat with a fork only and drink Coca-Cola to the finest menu in a 3 star Michelin restaurant (Fig. 5). The appearance did not mean so much, but the discussion on philosophy and history were lively. Charlie was a great company also to my sons and he got a second family when he was on sabbatical in Göttingen in Germany (Fig. 6). To me Charlie was a friend and we got closer when we were away from orthodontics. He had no family, after his older brother passed away at a young age and he took good care of his sister-in-law. When she died, Charlie had no family left. The closest thing was the Marcotte family where he enjoyed being Uncle Charlie.

There was a side of Charlie not known by many; most likely due to the respect they had for him, the fear of intimacy. This Charlie knew about the family problems of his housekeeper. He played

with the children of his colleagues in Europe. He enjoyed visiting galleries, reading books on history and philosophy, but was also a person who kept people at a distance from his private life although he enjoyed telling funny stories (Fig. 7). He was, on the other hand, interested in getting to know other people and once he invited me to visit Sct. Petersburg before the "opening" of Russia. He had confidence in people and got cheated when he "bought" rubles at a good exchange rate. Rubles that proved to be outdated, but we had a good laugh, and enjoyed the fantastic art and the terrible food.

We passed his last days together in Seoul as an invitation by Dr. Park for combining lecturing and vacation. He had given 3 brilliant lectures in the morning. Following a photo session (Fig. 8) we were going for lunch. He said that he was not hungry and did not feel so well so I escorted him to his room which was next to mine. And we agreed on meeting for the dinner organized by our hosts.



■ Fig. 6: Charlie as father Christmas in Germany.



■ Fig. 7: Entertaining Professor Subtelny and other colleagues.

Half an hour before the dinner time there was a noise from his room. He is turning over his suitcase, I thought. His room was a mess. But he didn't answer when I knocked on the door. I called the porter of the guest house where we lived and the door was opened. He was lying on the floor and an attempt to revive him was in vain. Charlie died surrounded by people who loved him and in the midst of what he liked best lecturing on biomechanics. It was sad, but didn't he die the way we all want, to part from this life surrounded by those who care for us?

Let us pay tribute to his memory!



■ Fig. 8: The last picture. In Seoul, a few hours before Charlie left us.