

A MAGNET FOR LEARNING

By Cathy Welch

Retired lawyer, reform squad member and former James Cutler Professor of Law, Emerita, Jayne Barnard has taken multiple opportunities to move into entirely different roles in life. Today, she invests her time to work with a local educational association to enrich the lives of Williamsburg residents.

Born and raised in a suburb of Cleveland, Jayne Barnard earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism from the University of Illinois. "I spent the next 15 years finishing college, going to graduate school, jogging, having a life and becoming a lawyer," she explains. She received her Juris Doctor from University of Chicago Law School Urbana-Champaign in 1982.

"I ended my career in Chicago working for Mayor Harold Washington as part of his reform squad," she says.

After Mayor Washington died, Jayne decided to do something entirely different. She went into the job market for law school teaching. This led her to meet with the former Dean of The Marshall-Wythe School of Law at William & Mary, William Spong, in 1985. "He persuaded me that this is where I wanted to



Lisa W. Cumming Photography

come and he was right," Jayne says.

After 30 years of teaching, she retired in 2015. Today, she has four stepchildren, nine grandchildren and a five-year-old great grandson, all scattered around the United States.

While very much enjoying retirement, Jayne retains an office at the law school for her part-time position as Coordinator of Academic Events for the 100th anniversary of women. "Women students came to W&M in 1918, and we're going to celebrate that fact in a number of ways starting in 2018," Jayne explains. "My job is figuring out what those ways should be and making sure they happen."

She is still connected to the law school. She

attends lectures and colloquia. She also speaks around town when invited.

"I knew lots of people in the college and knew vaguely of the Christopher Wren Association (CWA)," she says. "A friend of mine was recruiting and said, 'Why don't you come and teach a course?' He was hard to resist and I agreed."

Beginning in 1991 as a volunteer organization, CWA's purpose is to provide learning and enrichment opportunities in a collegial environment for local residents to explore a wide range of topics. Classes are held in multiple venues around town. W&M supports CWA with classroom space, office space and account-

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ing support.

Jayne taught corporate law and securities law at the law school. Again she wanted to pursue something completely different. She decided to teach a course on impending Supreme Court cases. "I teach in September before the term begins on the first Monday of October," she explains. "This means you sit down in August and see which cases are in the pipeline."

This concept left her with no control over the cases she had to choose from. "You start from a blank slate and that's one reason I like the class," she says. "I pick five to ten cases that I talk about for three weeks. This took me way out of my regular niche."

"They get 6000 or 7000 petitions a year and take 65. Why they chose this one is always a mystery," she says. "We crowd source the answer because we've got a hundred people in the room, all of whom have some life experience and may have some instinct. They ask very fundamental questions about justice that sometimes get overlooked."

Her classes have covered civil rights cases, criminal cases, employment discrimination cases, water rights, admiralty law, etc.

"I had to delve into something new, try to figure out how to explain it, prepare it, teach it and be done with it. It was fun."

Jayne not only teaches for CWA, she is also a student. "I couldn't wait to retire so I could

become a Christopher Wayne student," she says. "So far I've taken a course in film, advanced PowerPoint and one on ISIS."

The first 26 years she was in Virginia, Jayne resided in New Kent County. Then she moved to the city. Jayne loves being able to walk to the Williamsburg Farmers Market. "I love the whole vibe," she says. "I volunteered there for a couple of years, serving vendors and shoppers and meeting the dogs. It's just a wonderful place to be."

She also has a regular calendar date with Second Sundays, doing yoga and bikes.

"I do a lot of casual walking which is easy to do in Williamsburg," Jayne explains. "I walk 5K's for almost any good cause."

Since her retirement, Jayne spends a lot of time traveling the globe. Last September she toured Spain. This February she visited sites in India for the first time, including the Taj Mahal. But it was the trip to Varanasi, a cremation city and Hindu pilgrimage site on the banks of the Ganges River that made an imprint. "I could have skipped the rest of the trip," she says. "We were acquiring skills and knowledge until we could deal with this at the end of our trip. It was amazing."

Jayne believes one of the main contributions CWA offers Williamsburg citizens is the opportunity for retirees to continue to grow and learn.

"Usually they've led very rich, complicated lives where they came from and are not ready to stop leading rich, complicated lives," she says.

In addition to the development of art festivals, good restaurants and great golf courses, Williamsburg is home to a major university where people can continue to learn. "There are lectures all the time, and most of them are open to the public," Jayne says. "Anybody paying attention can find international film festivals, Spike Lee festivals and ancient mosaics. And on top of what's offered by the university, CWA is designed for local retirees."

Jayne loves teaching her CWA classes.

"We have retired military and retired business executives in my classes," she explains. "I'm always happy to have retired lawyers and retired judges." She can always turn to a former prosecutor or judge and ask how they dealt with a particular topic. "But what's really nice for me are the people in the room who have never been lawyers or never thought about many of the issues we talk about in class," Jayne explains.

"I think that CWA is a great magnet for people," Jayne Barnard, who teaches her next class in September, says. "The fact that they've been able to build their student body so quickly and have developed so much loyalty is a tribute to the people who figured out how to do it." NDN

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