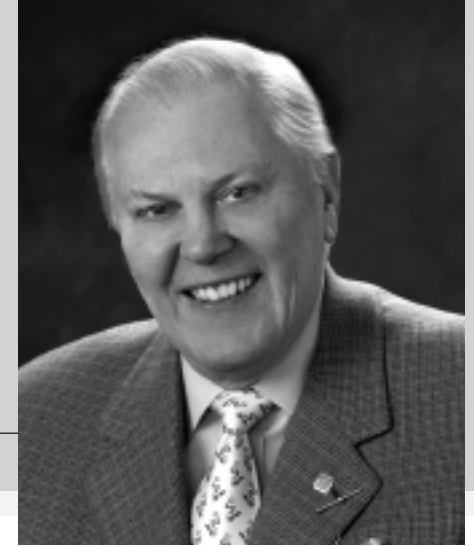




DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Ralph Bayard Evans '57



To Ralph Bayard Evans for his distinguished career in fine dining and hospitality and for his generosity in sharing his expertise with tomorrow's restaurateurs.

Ralph Evans literally grew up in the restaurant business started by his father, Bayard Evans '23, in 1939. "As a young kid, I ran around under the barstools, working there when I got older," Evans remembers. But one thing was certain: after graduating from Penn State's hotel administration program in 1957, he did not want to go to work right away at his parents' restaurant—by then the Williamsburg-inspired Evans Farm Inn in McLean, Va. Instead, he joined the U.S. Air Force.

"I thought I'd have a career in the Air Force first and then join my father after I retired," Evans says. He completed pilot training and flew a large variety of aircraft ranging from the De Havilland Beaver to the F-106, a Mach 2+ fighter interceptor. Evans was committed to his successful Air Force career. Then in 1967, his father called. "The business had grown so much that he couldn't handle it alone any longer," Evans says.

Evans learned quickly. By observing what other restaurants did well, he positioned the Inn, with its antiques and hand-hewn floors and beams, as a fine-dining restaurant. In addition to the main dining room, the Inn had a thriving banquet business. Then there was the popular Sitting Duck Pub, developed and run by his wife, Maria, whom he had met at the Inn. "Maria ran the pub, and I ran the rest of it. That's how we managed to work together for 35 years," Evans says.

Evans Farm Inn, with 650 seats, included a main dining room, five banquet rooms, an 86-seat pub, and 24 acres with beautiful gardens. The restaurant employed 110 people and served lunch and dinner every day except Christmas. Located just eight miles from the White House, the Inn played host to a loyal following and countless dignitaries.

Both Evans and the Evans Farm Inn were honored many times during his tenure as owner, president, and chief executive officer. In 1975, Evans was elected to the National Restaurant Association (NRA) Board of Directors, and in 1977, he was elected Restaurateur of the Year by the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington. In 1985, Evans was elected

to NRA's Fine Dining Hall of Fame, and in 1989, the restaurant received the prestigious Travel/Holiday Fine Dining Award as well as the Distinguished Restaurants of North America Fine Dining Award. In 1995, Evans was designated the Small Business Council of America's Small Business Person of the Year, and in 1997, he was recognized with the Restaurant of Metropolitan Washington's Duke Ziebert Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1999, Evans was inducted into the Distinguished Restaurants of North America Hall of Fame. Finally, Evans was designated NRA's Fine Dining Legend 2002, the "Academy Award" of the fine dining restaurant industry.

Evans closed the Inn in 1999. Throughout his career, he served on the boards of many national, state, and local associations and community organizations. He remains active with the boards of the NRA and Distinguished Restaurants of North America.

For Penn State, Evans has served as a Walter J. Conti Professor and was a past board member of the Penn State Alumni Association's Alumni Council. He and his wife have supported endowments at the University, including establishing two

scholarships. They are members of the Mount Nittany Society and life members of the Penn State Alumni Association.

Evans and his wife have three grown children and three grandchildren. They live in London, England, and McLean, Va.

