

The Bell

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"Just Bert"

Clemson University Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management

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PRTM 60TH ANNIVERSARY - PG 24

Department Recognizes Brantley as 'Father of PRTM'

CLEMSON, S.C.—Herbert "Bert" Brantley was the founding father of Recreation and Parks Administration (RPA) now known as the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management (PRTM) where he served for 21 years beginning the fall of 1966.

As former Department Head for Clemson University's RPA program, Dr. Brantley realized the need for student representation in the major developments of the growing program. In an excerpt from *The Tiger* published in November of 1969, Brantley expressed his view of students as "only a brief span away from being fellow professionals" and held that they "should be helped to grow not only professionally but also socially." His ideas of student involvement and care are still part of the foundations of the PRTM department today.



"Since RPA is basically a people-oriented service, the faculty has to reflect this same orientation... it has to be a student-concerned faculty."
- Dr. Brantley



Friends of Camp Sertoma,

We had a wonderful time at the ribbon cutting ceremony for Brantley Place, the newest, awesomest gathering area at Camp Sertoma honoring THE FATHER OF PRTM and the man who brought Clemson University into the picture for Camp Sertoma AND brought Charlie White to the Outdoor Lab.

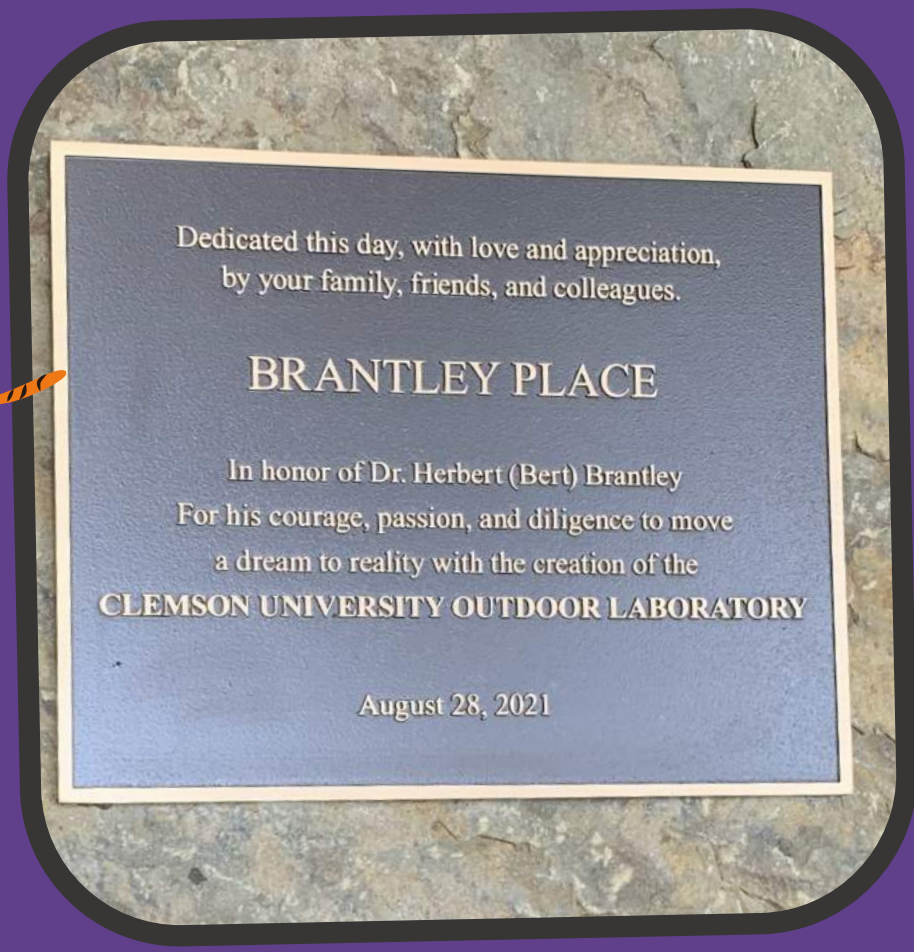
But Dr. Brantley doesn't want to be called the Father of PRTM or doctor. His humble request is that he's "Just Bert." I once made the mistake of trying to buy his lunch while visiting him in Bloomington. "Not in Bert's town." I have found Dr. Brantley to be a captivating story-teller with a contagious enthusiasm for life. His vision, determination, and passion for the development of the PRTM program including the Outdoor Lab has affected tens of thousands of people from students to staff to campers and counselors.

It was an honor to be present with him and his family for the ribbon cutting. I hope you enjoy this recap. Many thanks to Charlie White for his planning of the event, his leadership in the project and his continued relationship with Dr. Brantley and his family.

Dale



August 28, 2021, Camp Sertoma, Clemson, S.C. At high noon, Dr. Herbert (Bert) Brantley, at age 92, with both sons, three grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren standing behind him, and dozens of former students, colleagues, and friends facing him, cut the ceremonial ribbon. BRANTLEY PLACE became official. In between, it took over three years to raise the necessary funds and obtain various construction approvals. Sertoma of South Carolina provided essential dollars to the project.

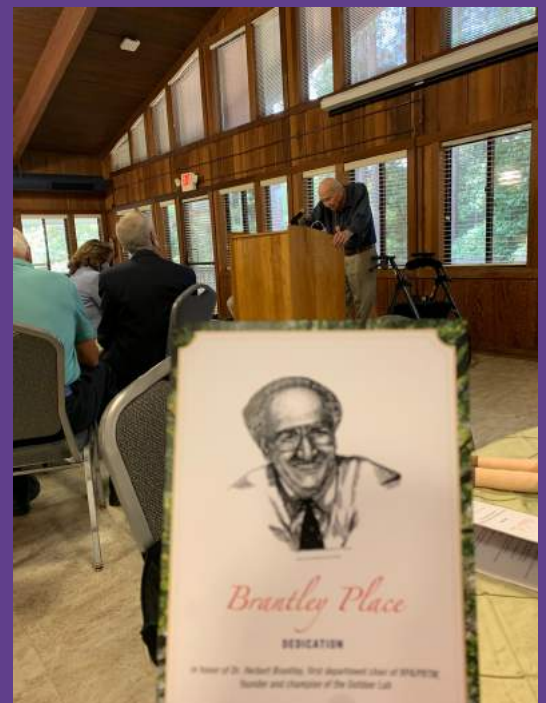


Why the man? Dr. Brantley was the founding Department Head of Recreation and Park Administration (1966) at Clemson University, the administrative unit for the CU Outdoor Lab, home of Camp Sertoma. Related to the dedication, he was the mover and shaker in the political and financial battles to create the Outdoor Lab (OL), ultimately giving Camp Sertoma and other camps a permanent home. All that followed for the next 50 years at the OL goes back to Dr. Brantley. It was time to provide him one last salute.



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Why the project? First, to provide another beautiful and functional program area for campers and camp staff. Brantley Place had to enhance camper experiences. It will! Second, as with any development, it had to be a multi-purpose area available to all OL patrons throughout the year. It will be! So, for a August weekend, we rolled out the proverbial red carpet to our honoree and his extended family. We cut the ribbon but also opened the Sertoma water slide to the grands and greats. We gave walking and golf cart tours showing 50 years of development that Dr. B and other family members best described as “unbelievable”. We opened the Sertoma funded pool for family use. We enjoyed interacting over excellent meals.



In Kresge Hall for the dedication program gathered a wonderful crowd...former students, friends, current and past OL staff, and others. The Provost spoke representing the University. A Dean spoke representing the College. As first and long time Director (Dr. B. hired me) of the OL, I had a time to reflect on our history. Son, Steven, provided excellent comments on behalf of the family and his dad. And then.....Dr. Brantley! For about 20 minutes, he was mesmerizing in his remembrance of past events, people by name, and circumstances that made the creation of the OL possible.

WHAT AN AWESOME TIME!





Following the program, we all moved to the new site, Brantley Place. After ribbon cutting and photographs, we gathered in the new development where the current OL Director, Leslie Conrad, offered some personal and emotional comments about the future value of the new program area. Finally, like campers gathered on a final night, we formed a friendship circle and collectively sang "Make New Friends". What a day, what a weekend! A personal comment is necessary. Throughout the weekend, of all the supportive groups mentioned to me by Dr. Brantley, he talked about the value of Sertoma of South Carolina to the success of the OL on several occasions. He remembered Sertoma names and Sertoma driven events.

Thank you, Sertoma, for your rich history at Camp Sertoma and at the Outdoor Lab! And, stroll to Brantley Place your next visit at the Outdoor Lab.

Charlie White
CUOL Director, 1975-2006



What's Next?



Not long after I joined Sertoma in 1970, I attended a District Leadership Conference in Columbia. Sertoma was a very active organization at that time and our leaders were energetic and forward-thinking. They presented the idea that, since South Carolina was one of the most active Sertoma states in the country, we should have a “state-wide” project. Many great ideas were discussed but, ultimately, a young Sertoman from the Electric City Sertoma Club in Anderson convinced us that a camp for disadvantaged and speech or hearing-impaired children was the ideal centerpiece for our state.

Sonny Powers, a Clemson graduate and member of my club, immediately joined forces with Bill Grishaw and Charlie White and the dream was born. They, along with countless Sertomans in our state, established a firm partnership with Clemson University and the dream now appeared possible. It was not an easy or trouble-free road but, as is so often the case, one individual appeared on the scene to help make the dream a reality. Dr. Bert Brantley, creator of the Clemson Outdoor Laboratory saw the potential in this partnership and this idea and we were off and running. Fifty years later, as I walked the grounds of our stunningly beautiful camp and arrived at the brand-new “Brantley Place” meeting area honoring the man who was so instrumental in its founding, those years seemed to melt away and I knew all of those Sertomans who were such a crucial part of this incredible legacy were here with us, watching the ribbon cutting and asking, “O.K., what’s next?”



Rogue reporter, Rick Vandiver



Thank you Bert!

CAMP
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GOLF
TOURNAMENT

Monday, October 11







Behind the Scenes...

