



To Karen and Dwayne Bowman

As a member of the board of Woodlawn School, and as a former head of school, and as a consultant in 2004, I am reflecting on a magnificent gift to the growing community of young parents around Davidson, North Carolina, and Lake Norman.

I started my journey with Woodlawn on a trip to the school 1 mile above the town of Davidson to meet with the young Dwayne Bowman and discuss his school and his desire to have a head search for the fall of 2004.

I will not forget what the scene was like and what the meeting entailed. I first met Karen and she talked with me about what was going on in Stinson Hall, and then Dwayne joined us. He told me that he wanted a school for his children like the one he had attended in Chattanooga, Tennessee, The McCallie School. In so many ways, I was impressed with the young man, his dream, and the tireless work his wife and he were striving to make it a reality.

The school was a wonderful gift to the community, to a generation of students, to a group of very dedicated teachers and to a future made of folks who would contribute to society.

Dwayne made the school what it is by giving of his time, treasure, and talents. Karen did the same in her quiet and selfless way. It is a deeply effective gift and one that will spread its magnificence to many folks in the generations to come.

When I came back as interim head in the summer of 2014, I found Dwayne as an able board chair, talented Chemistry teacher, and an aggressive and effective track and cross-country coach. There was no job that he would not undertake and no activity of the school that he did not shepherd.

And now they have made a gift of the school they opened and founded, financed privately for years, and poured out their hearts and love for several generations of young people. They have given land and buildings – and so much more! - to the school, its board, its students now, and or years to come, and to the community.

The Bowmans are students of life, the good life, and they have given it to several generations, and it will continue to give to countless generations to come. God bless them and their family for their graciousness and dedication to the finest in education, for their past efforts, their current generosity, and their future legacy gift to society.

Dwayne and Karen, I know I write these words of love, admiration, and gratitude to you on behalf of thousands... All those who have benefited from Woodlawn's first nineteen years, and for generations to come!

-- James Robert Shirley