

GRADUATION 2008

Presentation speech for The Honourable Wilhelm Carl Bourne for the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws of the University *honoris causa*

Chancellor, The Honourable Wilhelm Bourne, Attorney General of Anguilla, West Indies, is no stranger to the University of Buckingham.

Not only was he one of our early graduates in law, graduating in 1987 as a mature student, but he has retained strong links with the University recommending several students to follow in his footsteps, and being a very gracious host to University staff visiting Bermuda – and, we hope, now Anguilla!

Like the University of Buckingham Wilhelm Bourne has gone on to develop his reputation and professional career in a global context. But whereas the University has stayed firmly in the midst of the Buckinghamshire countryside, Wilhelm Bourne has gone on to live, work and be honoured in no less than 4 different islands in the West Indies!

Chancellor, the University of Buckingham is justly proud to have such an illustrious and successful alumnus. His many achievements, both before coming to Buckingham and latterly as Solicitor General of Bermuda and more recently as Attorney-General of Anguilla, mean that it is an honour for me to present him to you. (And to welcome his wife, family and friends to the University)

Wilhelm Bourne was born in Barbados where he received his primary and secondary education prior to entering the Barbados Civil Service. Here he served in the Department of Statistics.

While serving in this department, he was recruited into the Bermuda Police Force where he was swiftly promoted to Inspector.

I like to think that this was due to his instinctive respect for the Rule of Law - rather than due to distaste for statistics as he then undertook an external degree with the Queen's University, Canada whilst still serving in the Police Force.

Eventually, his ambitions lay neither with Statistics nor with the Police Force. His interest in pursuing a legal career became self-evident when he resigned from the Force to enter the University of Buckingham to undertake his legal studies full time with the aim of qualifying as a lawyer.

I am glad to report (with his family present) that his tutorial records show that he was a hard working, self-effacing student and one who was ambitious in the best sense of the word.

It is a relief to read that his tutorial records show an excellent attendance with only one or two absences – notably having to return home to Bermuda to assist in the prosecution of a criminal case! Such an original excuse that the then Dean, Professor David Casson, was bound to give permission!

Having been awarded his degree, Wilhelm (or Willie as he was known at Buckingham) returned to complete his professional training at the Hugh Wooding Law School in the University of the West Indies and was called to the Bar of Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Bermuda in 1990 by the Honourable Chief Justice of each territory.

Following his Call, Wilhelm Bourne had a distinguished career in private practice, and as a Principal Crown Council with a particular interest in regulatory legal issues. He holds qualifications from the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in London and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, London.

In 2001 he was appointed Solicitor General in Bermuda. In this capacity he gained much experience working with, as well as advising and representing, the Government of Bermuda in relation to regulatory legal issues and worked closely with the regulatory agencies in Bermuda.

He was also asked to undertake the task of Deputy to the Governor of Bermuda on numerous occasions. A task that he carried out with his characteristic courtesy and charm.

In December 2006, in recognition of his many talents and sense of duty, he was appointed as Attorney-General of Anguilla, West Indies. He is a member of the Executive Council of Anguilla and a member of the House of Assembly.

He continues to be involved matters relating to the Regulation of the Finance and Commercial world. Only last September he took time out from his busy schedule as Attorney General to take part in an International Symposium at Jesus College, Oxford, where he delivered a lecture exploring the impact of a regulation-driven offshore world on burgeoning markets: There is perhaps a delicate balance to be achieved between encouraging the growth of competition in new offshore jurisdictions and imposing old-style regulatory standards, which may impose inappropriate economic burdens on new entrants to this area of commerce.

Chancellor, the University of Buckingham is justly proud to have such an illustrious and successful alumnus. It is for all these reasons, Chancellor, that I call upon you to confer upon The Honourable Wilhelm Bourne, Attorney-General of Anguilla, West Indies, distinguished alumnus of this University, the degree of Doctor of Laws, *Honoris Causa*.

Mrs Charlotte Walsh, MA (Oxon), PGCE, LLB (CNA)
23 February 2008