Dr. Clinton Strong passed away on July 4, 2017 in Bloomington, IN at the age of eighty-eight. Clint was born on August 2, 1928 in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Reared in the Wisconsin towns of Waukesha and Prairie du Chien, he attended the University of Wisconsin from 1947 to 1949 and graduated from La Crosse State College (now the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse) in 1952 with a BS in physical education and history. While at La Crosse, he was active in several sports, including varsity baseball, in which he lettered. Following his graduation, he served in the U.S. Army as a radio operator for the First Field Observation Battalion in Korea. Upon his return from the military in 1954, he attended the University of Iowa, where he earned an MA in physical education in 1955.

His first teaching position took him to the community of Reinbeck, Iowa, where he was responsible for boys’ and girls’ physical education in grades two through twelve, and eighth-grade history – this in addition to his duties as acting junior high school principal. The next three years were spent in Davenport, Iowa, where sixth-grade math complemented his physical education responsibilities, and where his administrative experience was enhanced through service as assistant principal. He completed his PhD at the University of Iowa in 1961 with a major in physical education and a minor in psychology.

Professor Strong began his career in higher education at East Carolina College, where he served as associate professor from 1961 to 1964. During these years, he taught undergraduate and graduate professional preparation courses, supervised student teachers, and coordinated the departmental graduate program. The opportunity to return to his Midwestern roots was provided in 1964, when he was offered a position as associate professor at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois.

In 1969, he accepted an invitation to join the faculty at Indiana University. During his time at Indiana, he played a unique role in the research preparation of nearly all the school’s graduate students. Unlike most courses, Professor Strong’s “Research Methods” class was required of almost all students irrespective of departmental affiliation or major. As a result, Professor Strong had direct contact with a much larger percentage of all graduate students in the school than any other faculty member. Nearly 3000 students have been enrolled in the course, which he taught 112 times.

Yet these numbers alone cannot account for the profound influence Professor Strong exerted on so many graduates from the then School of Health Physical Education and Recreation and today’s School of Public Health-Bloomington. His commitment to excellence, his professional dedication, and his colorful, energetic teaching style – a style which invested every lecture with elements of theater – have all combined to produce an uncommon influence on the lives and careers of his students. Students and faculty alike have invariably been impressed by the number of hours he devoted to assisting individual students both in their work for his classes and in their subsequent careers. In addition to his exemplary work in the classroom, he directed twenty-six theses and dissertations and served as a member of numerous research committees.

From 1973 to 1977, Professor Strong served as acting chairperson of the Department of Physical Education for Men. In 1978, he became coordinator of continuing education and off-campus programs for the School of HPER. Professor Strong also played a variety of other service roles at the departmental, school, and university levels. Among these was membership on the University Promotions Committee,
the University Faculty Affairs Committee, the Bloomington Faculty Council, and the Board of Directors for the Men’s Faculty Club. In recognition of Professor Strong’s talent for organization and documentation, and of his indefatigable adherence to deadlines, he was called upon repeatedly for leadership in the development of planning documents crucial to the school. He served on numerous school committees, including a term as chairman of the Promotion and Tenure Committee.

For several years in the 1980’s, Professor Strong was heavily involved in the activities of the Education Committee of the United States Olympic Committee. He was particularly active in organizing special educational symposiums, Olympic Academies, which were held at various sites throughout the United States as well as in Olympia, Greece. He personally served as director and co-director of two of the most successful academies, one of which was held in Bloomington (1980) and the other in Indianapolis (1987). He was considered an expert on the Olympic movement and traveled extensively in the United States and abroad to lecture on the history of the Olympics.

Among the honors Professor Strong received for his many contributions were the Excellence Award from the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse in 1988 and the Maurice O. Graff Distinguished Alumni Award from that institution. Professor Strong was also elected president of Phi Epsilon Kappa, the national professional physical education fraternity, in 1987.

Throughout his distinguished career, Dr. Strong always maintained a genuine collegiality and enthusiasm for his work and for Indiana University. He is affectionately remembered as a role model to many.

James Belisle
Associate Professor Emeritus of Kinesiology

David Skirvin
Assistant Dean of Administration & Chief of Staff

Wynn Updyke (1931 – 2003)
Professor Emeritus and former Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs

David Koceja
Professor & Chair, Kinesiology

Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington