LIKE MANY WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY law students of the time, Bradley Winters, JD ’81, was influenced by environmental factors within Mudd Hall. He worried about “little things” like the stalactites that would form around the myriad cracks in the concrete ceiling from water leaking through the roof.

He also feared that these leaks were coming from huge lakes of rainwater pooling in the ceiling. And he wondered about the law school building’s structural integrity, particularly during an earthquake while he was a second-year law student. “As I was running from the back of the library one Saturday morning during an earthquake, I kept thinking ‘Boy, I’d sure like to get out of here before this ceiling gives way.’”

Winters wrapped some of his concerns into a comedy newscast he performed to rave reviews at the student talent show for two years with fellow law students Ken Vuylsteke, JD ’80, and Steve Hamilton, JD ’80. The three presented the “Martindale-Hubbell Report,” poking fun at their professors, deans, university policies, and, of course, Mudd Hall itself.

But “as comical as the building was,” Winters says, “my memories of the place are all fond ones.” At the end of the day, he observes, he had great classmates and great professors who changed his life and the way he approached life.

“I owe the law school everything,” says Winters, who enrolled at Washington University straight out of college. “My professors taught me how to think clearly and critically, how to reason with people and what it meant to be a counselor and an attorney.

“They also taught me how sickening it was to be unprepared, and how rewarding school and my profession would be if I invested the time to not only do the work, but to really think about what I was preparing to write and say,” he adds. “And, we really did manage to have a lot of fun.”

Winters, who parlayed his education into a 30-year legal career, is currently a partner at SNR Denton in St. Louis. “I do a little of everything: patent, trademark, commercial, and real estate litigation with some personal injury and product liability cases drizzled in,” he says. “The best part of my work is that I have a variety of clients with a variety of issues. It’s never boring.”

Frustrations do occur, but he loves legal work. “Some days a court will rule against you,” he says. “Some days an opposing lawyer will take what I think is an unreasonable position. So every day isn’t a bowl of cherries, but they all add up to one. In 30 years, I’ve never had a single second thought about my career choice. I’ve loved every minute of it.”