DOCUMENTS AND MINUTES OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
STANLEY H. SIMONSEN

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a Memorial Resolution for Dr. Stanley H. Simonsen, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

IN MEMORIAM
STANLEY H. SIMONSEN

Dr. Stanley H. Simonsen, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, died in Austin on July 29, 1996, at age 77 from bone cancer. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen Fuller Simonsen of Austin; children, Karen Waddell and husband John; Eric Simonsen and wife Nancy Knudson; Janet Zimmermann and husband James; Craig Simonsen and wife Carol; and six grandchildren.

Dr. Simonsen was born August 25, 1918, in Missoula, Montana. He grew up and received his early education in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Northern Iowa in 1940. After World War II, he was discharged from the U.S. Army, where he had served as a medical technician. He then entered graduate school at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where he received a master's degree in chemistry and then completed his doctorate in chemistry in 1949. He joined the faculty of the Department of Chemistry at The University of Texas in 1949 and retired from active service in 1988.

During his long career, he taught a wide variety of courses, mainly in analytical and general chemistry, and served on supervising committees or as research director for many master's, doctoral, and postdoctoral students. The only change that occurred in Dr. Simonsen's busy schedule upon his retirement was the disappearance of formal teaching. He continued his research work almost to the end. His research, conducted mainly in X-ray crystallography and structural chemistry, resulted in the publication of many journal articles and numerous presentations at meetings and conferences. He was a recipient of one of the earliest research grants from the Robert A. Welch Foundation of Houston, Texas, in 1956, and was continuously funded as a principal investigator until his death.

The computational demands of his chosen research area made Dr. Simonsen one of the earliest computer users at the University, and he played a seminal role in the establishment of computing as a research tool on this campus. In 1952, he and his colleague Professor F. A. Matsen obtained an IBM Card Programmed Computer at surplus from the Magnesium Corporation. They then raised, from their own
research grants and other sources, the funds required not only to equip a room in the chemistry building with air-conditioning, but also to pay for the operation of the air conditioners and the power for the computer. (The University administration was not yet ready to support such a novel gadget as an electronic computer.)

Dr. Simonsen and Matsen not only used that computer facility to great advantage in their own research programs, but provided a few hours a day of its use to others. Prompted in large part by the success of this initial use of computers in scientific research, the University administration a few years later established its first centrally-supported computational facility, featuring the IBM 650. Always a lover of scientific instrumentation, Dr. Simonsen also developed a computer-controlled system for the collection of X-ray diffraction intensity data in his laboratory long before the advent of commercial automated diffractometers.

Throughout his career, Dr. Simonsen was an active member of the American Crystallographic Association, having joined in 1950. He served on various committees and as organizing chairman for the national meeting of that association in Austin in 1987. He was also a long time member of the American Chemical Society and was active in the local section activities of that organization. He served as a member of the editorial board of the journal *Heterocyclic Chemistry*.

Dr. Simonsen is remembered by his many friends as a kind, warm-hearted person, totally generous with his time. He was especially helpful to younger faculty members, spending many hours helping them order equipment and materials, set up their laboratories, organize their courses, and learn to deal with the intricacies of life at a major university. He was influential, not only with his determined and vocal support but especially with the accessibility of his X-ray equipment, in establishing a state-of-the-art crystal structure service laboratory in the Department. His teaching, whether in the classroom or as supervisor of individual research, was notable by his demanding commitment to excellence, both on his part and that of his students, and by a high degree of rigor, tempered with his characteristic clarity and thoroughness and leavened with his sharp, though often dry, sense of humor. His greatest interests were family, church, teaching and research, and working with the youth and the adult leaders in the Boy Scouts of America. He was Scoutmaster of Troop 46 in Austin for eighteen years. Dr. Simonsen will be sorely missed by his many friends, colleagues, and students, with whom he established a warm personal relationship in addition to his professional ties.

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Norman Hackerman (Chair), Raymond E. Davis, and Hugo Steinmetz.

Distributed to the Dean of the College of Natural Sciences, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President on November 23, 1998. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. The resolution will be posted under “Memorials” at: www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/