

ACADEMY FOCUS

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NECROLOGY REPORT

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WILLIAM B. ADAMS

St. Helena, California
March 16, 1898

Bloomington, Indiana
May 27, 1990

William B. Adams retired after 54 years of service to the Bloomington National Bank. He was a close friend of many of the Indiana scientists of the early twentieth century and published papers in the field of archaeology. He was one of the oldest surviving members of the Indiana Academy of Science. He received the A.B. degree in botany from Indiana University in 1918.

Adams was active in several fields and was a member of the Indiana Historical Society, the Sassafras Audubon Society, and Nature Conservancy. He was also a member of Phi Kappa Phi fraternity.

OTTO KARL BEHRENS

Evansville, Indiana
August 22, 1911

Indianapolis, Indiana
December 21, 1989

Otto Karl Behrens retired in 1975 after a long and productive career in administration and research with Eli Lilly in Indianapolis. He referred to his career as "science and people related." He joined Eli Lilly in 1940 as a research biochemist and instituted the work on penicillin precursors which led to penicillin V. He was also a member of the group that isolated glucagon and determined its structure. During his career Dr. Behrens' leadership responsibilities have included the areas of biochemistry, agricultural research, biology as well as chemistry and pharmacology.

Before joining Eli Lilly, Behrens served as a research assistant with Nobel Laureate Vincent du Vigneaud at George Washington University. This work was followed by an appointment at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. He later was granted a Lalor Fellowship to Cambridge University and completed a fellowship at Cornell University Medical School.

Behrens received the B.A. degree from DePauw University in 1932, the master's degree in 1933, and the doctorate later in 1935. He was active with Eli Lilly for 35 years, including service as Director of the Biochemical Research, and as Associate Director of Research. He held 27 patents in the area of metabolism of amino acids, peptides, biosynthesis of penicillins, antibiotics, insulin and glucagon.

Behrens was also active in various scientific organizations. He was president of the Indiana Academy (1972), chairman of the Biochemical Section of the American Chemical Society, and a life member of the New York Academy of Sciences.

In addition to his scientific work, Behrens was an active worker with the American Baptist Church and a three time delegate to the National Council of Churches. He continued his active participation in church activities after his retirement in 1975. He served on the general board of the American Baptist Churches (1972-1974), and also on the board of the Indianapolis Church Federation. In 1957, Behrens received the DePauw University's Rector Achievement Award. He was a former member and chairman of the Franklin College board of directors and received the honorary Doctor of Science degree from Franklin in 1981.

A devoted scientist and worker for the physical and spiritual welfare of mankind; Behrens will be missed.

PAUL BENDER

Springs, Pennsylvania
June 26, 1899

Goshen, Indiana
1990

Paul Bender received the A.B. degree from Hesston College in 1921, and the master's and doctor's degrees from the University of Iowa in 1925 and 1931. He was appointed professor of physics at Goshen College, in 1932 where he taught until his retirement in 1965.

KENNETH NIELSEN CAMPBELL

Hillsdale, Michigan
May 31, 1905

Evansville, Indiana
April 28, 1990

Kenneth N. Campbell and his wife, Barbara Harriet Knapp, who died in 1985, were consultants who helped establish the pharmaceutical division of Mead Johnson, now Bristol-Myers-Squibb. He was the Director of the Mead Johnson Research Center from 1953 until 1970.

Campbell received the A.B. degree from Kalamazoo College in 1923 and the Ph.D. degree in organic chemistry from The University of Chicago in 1932. He was well-known as a teacher and consultant in the field of organic and pharmaceutical chemistry; he taught at The University of Notre Dame until 1954.

He was a member of AAAS, American Institute of Chemists, American Chemical Society, Sigma Xi, a fellow of the New York Academy of Science, and a charter member of the Royal Society of Chemistry of England.

ROBERT HOLIDAY COOPER

Near Cadiz,
Henry County, Indiana
August 9, 1901

Muncie, Indiana
September 2, 1990

Robert Holiday Cooper, 89, was head of the Science Department of Ball State University from 1950 to 1965 when the present organization of departments was established. He retired in 1968. Ball State's science buildings are named for him, the Cooper Science Complex. He received the bachelor's degree from Ball State, and the master's and doctorate from Iowa State University.

Cooper and his wife donated a 31.5 acre plot of woods on Bethel Pike near his home for use as an outdoor biology laboratory. Cooper was sincerely dedicated to the preservation of Indiana's few remaining natural woodlands and other natural areas.

Cooper, along with Earl Johnson, developed film strips on biology subjects which have been used by elementary schools throughout the state.

He was a member of the IAS committee which revised the constitution and bylaws of the society accepted in 1964.

FLORENCE ELLEN GEISLER

Indianapolis, Indiana
January 28, 1904

Indianapolis, Indiana
May 17, 1990

Florence Ellen Geisler received the A.B. degree from Butler University in 1929, and the M.A. in 1933. She taught mathematics and science in Indianapolis Public School #73 for 46 years. A media center at the school has been dedicated in her honor. She retired in 1970 but remained active in geological and biological societies.

Florence was elected to RESA club in 1968 and joined the Indiana Academy of Science in 1933. She attended spring meetings of IAS for many years. With Francis Heuber, she was a co-founder of the Indiana Geology and Gem society. She taught summer courses in botany at Butler University, and was a docent for the Indiana State Museum and the Children's Museum. Florence rearranged the rock collection of the state museum, and gave frequent talks about lapidary, geological and gemstone subjects.

She will be missed by her many students, and for her work with helping friendless animals.

ROBERT OWEN PETTY

Indianapolis, Indiana
June 11, 1933

Crawfordsville, Indiana
January 29, 1990



Robert Owen Petty was both a scientist and a poet. He received the A.B. degree from Butler University with a double major in biology and English. While doing the Ph.D. work in ecology and geology at Purdue, he received the President's Literary award for ten of his poems. As one colleague wrote, "He not only spoke and wrote the English language, he inhabited it."

Bob taught at Wabash from 1959 to 1982 when he retired because of poor health. He not only wrote technical articles about plant ecology, but also prepared popular articles and collaborated on several books. Several of his studies were important in preserving natural areas in Indiana. After his retirement he continued his popular writing as well as his hobbies. He worked tirelessly on projects involving the study and preservation of natural areas. He was instrumental in the preservation of Big Walnut and Beckville/Calvert Woods and in 1974 persuaded Wabash College to give the state the last tract of the Pine Hills (now part of the Shades State Park). He was chairman of the Indiana Academy's Natural Areas Preservation Committee from 1966 to 1974.

Quoting from an obituary written by his friends and colleagues, "Much of Bob's distinguished popular writing followed his resignation from teaching.... Bob frequently wrote, consulted and edited for National Geographic, especially for their spectacular big books on outdoor sciences and the series of Engagement Calendars. His popular writing is noteworthy for its quality rather than its quantity. He was a perfectionist, writing as slowly as he crafted the walnut stock of a long rifle. He was a rarity among literary naturalists, since his work was rooted in broad and deep scientific knowledge, a profoundly philosophical, brilliant mind and a sensitively poetic style."

Indiana has lost an important scientist as well as a poet after a productive but short life.

NATHAN WETHERILL SHOCK

Lafayette, Indiana
December 25, 1906

November 1989

Nathan Wetherill Shock graduated from Purdue University with the B.S. Degree in 1926 and the M.S. degree in psychology in 1927. He received the Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in physiology and psychology in 1930. He spent most of his working years with the U.S. Public Health Service as a physiologist-psychologist. He became chairman of the gerontology section in 1941.

WINONA HAZEL WELCH

Jasper County, Indiana
May 5, 1896

Greencastle, Indiana
January 16, 1990



Winona Welch may well be called, "the grand lady of Indiana Botany." Her life-long work on the mosses brought her recognition both in Indiana and throughout the scientific world. Comments by friends, colleagues, and former students attest that she was honored, admired, and loved.

Winona was born on a farm in Jasper County, Indiana in 1896. She died in Greencastle, Indiana in 1990 at age 93. Her education included the A.B. Degree from DePauw University in 1923, the A.M. Degree in Botany from the University of Illinois in 1925, and the Ph.D. Degree from Indiana University in 1928. She was Instructor in Botany at Indiana University in 1928-1930 after which she became Assistant Professor of Botany at DePauw University where she taught and carried on research (1930-1934) as Associate Professor (1934-1939), and Professor of Botany (1939-1961) when she became Professor Emeritus. She was head of the Department of Bacteriology and Botany from 1956-1961. Aside from her formal classes, she also participated in many meetings and summer courses throughout the United States and abroad.

Winona was the first woman president of the Indiana Academy of Science (1948). She was also an officer in other scientific and scholarly organizations. She was active in AAUP, AAUW, American Bryological Society (President 1954-1956), AIBS, American Society of Plant Taxonomists, Beta Sigma Omicron, Botanical Society of America, British Bryological Society, and others. She was honored by election to Honorary Life Membership in the Torrey Botanical Club.

After her so-called retirement in 1961, she continued active research on the mosses. From 1926 to 1977 she published more than 80 books and articles on mosses and other botanical subjects. Her book "Mosses of Indiana, an Illustrated Manual," Indiana Department of Conservation, 478 pp., 254 figs. (1957), is still a standard work on the mosses of Indiana and surrounding areas.

In May 1988, Winona was honored by The New York Botanical Gardens by a Festschrift, devoting a special issue of the journal *Brittonia* to her work. The addition of the Welch and Yunker herbaria to the Garden was recognized as a very important scientific contribution. At the ceremony celebrating the Festschrift comments from friends, colleagues, and students were solicited. A brief sampling of these includes the following:

As a person: "Truly, she is a good person, I don't think she is capable of doing a mean or selfish thing. I can't believe she has an enemy in the world."

As a teacher: "Gifted individuals such as Dr. Yunker and Welch possessed a genius for recognizing talented students, arousing their interest, and kindling them with the motivation to tackle graduate school."

As a research worker: "Admiration for her work was universal."

As a leader: "The high respect of her colleagues was symbolized by her selection as the first woman head of a science department" (at DePauw).

And without comment, a statement from another distinguished colleague: "She became the elder statesman of the 'moss ladies', always a little ahead of the rest of us."

WALTER JOHN WEBER

Melvin, Illinois
January 6, 1911

Indianapolis, Indiana
September 2, 1990

Walter J. Weber was an entomologist active in the agricultural program of the Indiana Farm Cooperative Association; he was a supervisor for 30 years retiring in 1975. He received the bachelor's degree in entomology from the University of Illinois and the master's from Purdue University.

He was noted for his anecdotes and stories which he incorporated into five books. He wrote, "If we risk a little humor we can lift barriers, lighten our loads, rise above limitations and keep going."

Among his many personal honors, Weber was named a Registered Professional Entomologist and a Fellow in the Indiana Academy of Science. Walter will be sorely missed at the meetings of the Entomological Section of the IAS. He has served his profession long and well.

SAMUEL WENGER WITMER

Farmersville, Pennsylvania

December 25, 1898

Goshen, Indiana

February 2, 1990

Samuel Wenger Witmer taught biology at Goshen College from 1915 to 1966. After his retirement he spent many hours seeking out and recording plants from Parsons Swamp Woods near Goshen. His list comprised 59 trees, 41 shrubs, and 230 flowering plants some of which had not been identified previously from the state.

Witmer received the A.B. Degree from Goshen College in 1914, the master's from the University of Wisconsin in 1915, and the Ph.D. from Indiana University in 1935.

One of his most exciting discoveries was that of the Kankakee Mallow, *Illiamna remota*, which he found blooming along a railroad track on the 4th of July 1944. This plant is considered one of the rarest in Indiana and the vicinity of Goshen is only the 5th place on earth it is found.

An endowment fund has been established in Dr. Witmer's memory by Goshen College, and a 17 acre wood near the Goshen campus has been named Witmer Woods. It contains 89 native trees of Indiana assembled by Dr. Witmer or his students. The Elkhart Park Board also has named an Oxbow Park trail in Witmers' honor.