New Exhibit Case Honors Five Professors

"This exhibition area is dedicated to members of the Faculties of Biology and Chemistry who enriched my life as I passed by...In gratitude and admiration."

So reads the plaque of a new Library exhibit case donated by an alumnus whose two undergraduate years at the U of I literally changed his life.

That former undergraduate is Dr. C. Barber Mueller, founder of the Department of Surgery and professor emeritus of surgery at McMaster University in Ontario, and noted researcher in adjuvant chemotherapy for the treatment of breast cancer.

Dr. Mueller returned to visit his alma mater on October 25 to dedicate the new case, an elegant oak-and-glass creation designed by U of I art and design professor Mark Arens.

The case, located in the east foyer of the Library, has quickly become a popular stopping spot for the thousands of students and faculty who enter the Library daily from the University's quadrangle area.

"The case serves as a statement to the importance of and commitment to undergraduate education at the University of Illinois," said the Library's director of undergraduate education, Barton Clark, at the dedication. "With this in mind, the case will be used each year to highlight those faculty who receive awards for excellence in undergraduate teaching."

Added Jane Loeb, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs, "At a time when we have been closely reexamining undergraduate instruction, it is especially welcome to receive this recognition of the success and the importance of the efforts of five past university professors. Dr. Mueller has provided permanent and beautiful testimony to the importance of undergraduate teaching in the lives of our students."

The five professors of zoology and chemistry whose names appear on the case's plaque are considered giants in the world of science.

To the young Mueller, however, who had transferred to the U of I in 1936 from small Blackburn College to pursue premedical study, they were "just people and friends when I had them in the classroom." Zoology professor B. Vincent Hall (1907-1975) was internationally known for his groundbreaking electron microscopy studies of the renal glomerulus. "He took me under his wing, gave me some rats, gave me a key to the building, and I could go there on weekends and nights trying to study some of the rat behavior as related to the estrous cycle, which, of course, opened up the world to me," reminisced Dr. Mueller.

The fifth honoree, chemistry professor Carl "Speed" Marvel, was "a commanding figure who dominated organic chemistry—not a surprising description for the man who laid the groundwork for modern polymer technology. Still, to Dr. Mueller, he was more than a great man. "He was patient and understanding of me, and somehow I guess he knew I was a bit different...I remember him so clearly in his classes."

For Dr. Mueller, who considers himself "educated by profession and a surgeon by trade," creation of an exhibit case dedicated to excellence in undergraduate instruction is a fitting tribute to the men who made such a difference in his life.

Said Dr. Mueller at the dedication ceremony, "I am pleased that these men will be here for you for a long time—maybe for the next fifty years as they have been with me for the past fifty years."

Corrections to Annual Report

Two names were inadvertently omitted from the list of donors in the Library Friends Annual Report. They are Tamara F. Bouseman, subscribing member, and Katherine J. Kral, sponsor.