

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 Arends.

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 departmental services, 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.



Dr. C. Barber Mueller chats with Mrs. Florence Hall, wife of one of the honored professors, B. Vincent Hall, during the exhibit case dedication.

Professor Hall and Dr. Mueller ended up pursuing the same research paths after World War II, reporting almost simultaneously on the electron microscopy of the renal glomerulus.

Waldo Shumway, noted zoologist, author of several important textbooks, and later provost of Stevens Institute of Technology, "gave me ten new pigs and some 24-hour chickens to compare them to and opened up a whole world that I had never known before," said Dr. Mueller. "I thought of him as a brilliant man, extremely helpful, and certainly a role model and a real inspiration."

Harley Jones Van Cleave, the acknowledged leader in the study of worm parasites, was remembered as "large, paternal, gentle." As department chairman during Dr. Mueller's two years on campus, he took an interest in the young transfer student and after graduation took Dr. Mueller on as a summer instructor.

"I had tennis, picnics, dates about six nights a week, and at the end of the summer I apologized for the fact that I had not worked on my master's degree. He said, 'I didn't expect it.'"

Professor of chemistry William Cumming Rose, the discoverer of the amino acid threonine, laid the foundation for all modern nutritional studies relating to proteins and amino acids. For Dr. Mueller, however, he was the person who opened the road to biochemistry. "His enthusiasm was contagious, and he made it exciting and real," remembered Dr. Mueller. "I have been an enthusiastic chemist ever since."

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.



Illustration from *Folk Tales of Old Korea*, one of the many works donated by the Republic of Korea to the Asian Library.