

## OBITUARIES

## PROF. DR. ERVIN E. UNDERWOOD



Ervin E. Underwood, author of *Quantitative Stereology* and third President of the International Society for Stereology, passed away in April of this year.

Erv was of the generation that completed high school at the height of the Depression in the 1930's. He worked in a steel mill for a few years, then joined the army at the beginning of World War II. He rose to the rank of major in his army career. When the war ended he used the G.I. Bill to help finance a college education. Erv played piano in a swing band to put himself through college. He graduated from Purdue University and went on to the graduate school at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He obtained his doctorate in 1954 working under Averbach and Cohen, who had been collaborators in applying quantitative microscopy in their research.

He went to Batelle Memorial Institute, an industrial research institute. At the time Fred Rhines (later an honorary lifetime member of the ISS) was a consultant for the organization. During that period Erv's interest in quantitative microscopy was brought to focus. He was instrumental in getting Saltykov's text translated into English. Saltykov's book supplied the inspiration for Erv to write his own text on the subject. *Quantitative Stereology* was published in 1970 while Erv was doing research at Lockheed Aerospace Corporation. This text was certainly Erv's most significant contribution to stereology; it is best described by the adjective authoritative. Erv was a voracious student of the literature and his text demonstrates that fact. His chapters abound with references to the early papers in stereology. *Quantitative Stereology* is an excellent source for the student interested in the development of the field up to that time.

While at Lockheed he obtained a patent on an alloy composition which was unique because it was based upon stereological parameters defining the microstructure of the alloy.

I first met Erv at our Symposium on Quantitative Microscopy held at the University of Florida in 1961. He contributed a key chapter to our text, *Quantitative Microscopy*, which resulted from this meeting.

Erv was a key player in the development of the International Society for Stereology during its first three decades of development. He would lecture on the subject anywhere he could drum up an audience. He organized and participated in several meetings adjunct to professional society meetings in materials science. He was elected President of the ISS at the Berne Meeting in 1971 and served from 1972-1975. He crowned this tenure by organizing the 4th Congress, held in Gaithersberg, Maryland in 1975. By that time he was a professor in the School of Materials Science at Georgia Institute of Technology at Atlanta. This 4th Congress was outstanding in the series.

In addition to his life work in materials science and stereology Erv was a man of broad esoteric interests. He played the vibraharp as well as the piano. He was an avid chess player, at one point earning the title of chess champion of the state of Georgia. Most unusual of his interests was his collection of nineteenth century postmarks from obscure post offices in the state of Georgia..

Erv is remembered as a very enthusiastic, outgoing, ebullient guy with a sharp wit and a ready smile. His enthusiasm was infectious and kept him young. Colleagues were always amazed when they learned his chronological age. Erv Underwood was a good friend, a respected colleague, a mover and shaker in our field. His presence and influence remain.

Bob DeHoff  
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