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In Memorium: William A. Jensen, 1927-2014

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In Memorium: William A. Jensen, 1927-2014

Abstract

Dr. William August “Bill” Jensen, Ph.D., 87, passed away quietly on September 9, 2014 at the Sanctuary Facility in Dublin, Ohio after a long illness.

Bill led a very distinguished and full professional life. He received his Ph.B. (1948), M.S. (1950) and Ph.D. (1953) all from the University of Chicago. During his Ph.D. he held Atomic Energy and Public Health predoctoral fellowships at the University of Chicago and Carlsberg Laboratory in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Disciplines

Botany

Comments

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



PERSONALIA IN MEMORIAM



WILLIAM A. JENSEN
1927-2014

Dr. William August "Bill" Jensen, Ph.D., 87, passed away quietly on September 9, 2014 at the Sanctuary Facility in Dublin, Ohio after a long illness.

Bill led a very distinguished and full professional life. He received his Ph.B. (1948), M.S. (1950) and Ph.D. (1953) all from the University of Chicago. During his Ph.D. he held Atomic Energy and Public Health predoctoral fellowships at the University of Chicago and Carlsberg Laboratory in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Just before he began his undergraduate program at the University of Chicago, Bill was drafted into the service at the end of the World War II. He never saw active duty but worked in an army hospital lab. He continued in the reserves during his schooling and returned to Europe to the Carlsberg Lab (with Prof. Heinz Holter) in Copenhagen where he completed his Ph.D. research. During his graduate

work he married his first wife Joan Sell and they explored Europe and this set the stage for his future love for travelling to many places in the world.

Upon returning from Europe, he carried out postdoctoral work at the California Institute of Technology (with Profs. Arthur Galston and James Bonner) (1953-55) and in the laboratory of Prof. Jean Brachet in Brussels, Belgium (1955-56). He then accepted an Assistant Professorship at the University of Virginia (1956-57) and then the same at the University of California, Berkeley (1957) where he quickly rose through the ranks to Professor of Botany. During his tenure at UC-Berkeley, he held positions of Chairman of the Department of Botany and also of Instruction in Biology, as well as Assistant and Associate Dean of the College of Letters and Science. In 1973-74, he was Program Director of Developmental Biology at the National Science Foundation. Bill was invited to move to Ohio State University, Columbus in 1984 where he became Dean of Biological Sciences (1984-1999) and Professor of Plant Biology until his retirement in 2009.

Bill was a man of many talents and interests. His early professional interests were in the areas of cell differentiation associated with plant embryos and embryo sac development which led him to combine techniques of histochemistry and electron microscopy, pioneering approaches at that time. From this work he became a sole author of the still popular book *Botanical Histochemistry* (1962). He mentored numerous graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who hold and have held major teaching and research positions at institutions of higher learning in the United States, Canada and Europe. His research has been published in over 100 articles in a variety of excellent journals, including 14 articles in the *American Journal of Botany*.

Throughout his career, he developed a passion for teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate levels and received several important awards for these efforts from the University of California and the Ohio State University and the Charles E. Bessey Award from the Botanical Society of America. At the Ohio State University in his later years he taught very popular large classes to non-science majors that enjoyed his portrayals of famous scientists and his multimedia presentations. His authoring

of entry-level texts in General Botany and General Biology supported this love for making botany and biology fun and understandable.

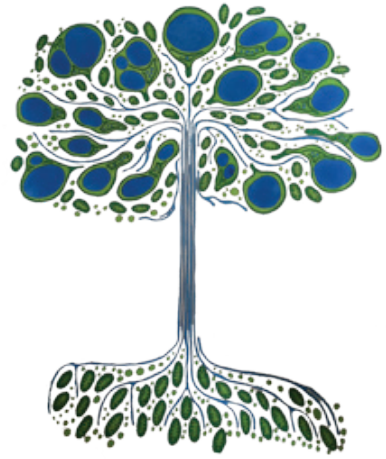
Bill gave generously to professional societies such as AAAS, the Botanical Society of America, and the American Institute of Biological Sciences. He was a Fellow of AAAS and the California Academy of Sciences, and received the Merit Award (Distinguished Fellow) from the Botanical Society of America where he served in a variety of capacities including its President in 1978.

From an early age when he joined the high school science club because of his interests in biology, botany and microscopes, as well as playing the clarinet, to his adult life where biology, botany and microscopes continued to be focal points, Bill was always enthusiastic, curious, questioning, and pushing-the-envelope kind of person who loved challenges and always expected the best from himself and others.

His insatiable curiosity and talent for creating beautiful, abstract, color pen drawings of images he had studied with his electron microscope became his passion in later years. He loved doing them, displayed them at art shows, sold them and sometimes gave them away as gifts. Prof. Jensen, 'Bill', you lived a full life, trained, mentored and taught countless young people to love botany and biology.

You did this with dignity, humor, humbly and with a deep-seated love for humankind. Such a legacy will live on through your dear wife Beverly, your family, friends and colleagues for many years to come. We will miss you.

---Dr. Jack Horner



Dr. and Mrs. Jensen exhibiting his artwork at Botany 2013 in New Orleans.