

Roger Grierson Young

December 18, 1920 — August 21, 1994

Roger Grierson Young was born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada, the son of Robert S. and Maryann Young. He received a B.S. degree in 1943 from the University of Alberta. After graduation, Roger was employed as an industrial chemist with the Aluminum Company of Canada in Arvid, Quebec. In 1946, he returned to the University of Alberta where he earned his M.S. degree in 1948. Then Roger entered the University of Oregon as a Teaching Fellow and later as a Research Fellow until the completion of his Ph.D. degree in 1951.

Roger first came to Cornell in 1951, and for two years he was a Rockefeller Postdoctoral Research Fellow in enzyme chemistry working with Nobel Laureate James B. Sumner. Roger continued his postdoctoral studies at Cornell with H.W. Williams studying the biochemistry of the eye. During this study, he received a Geer Research Grant in 1953. From 1953-55, he served as a biochemist with Johnson & Johnson's Ethicon Suture Laboratory in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

In 1955, Roger returned to Cornell as an Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Toxicology in the Department of Entomology and Limnology. He was naturalized a United States citizen in Ithaca and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1960. Roger was a member of the Cornell Faculty for 28 years and at his retirement in 1983 was granted the rank of Professor Emeritus.

His research dealt with a wide range of subjects, from the biochemistry of the eye to physiological processes in insects and other arthropods. His 32 scientific papers in refereed journals reflect his wide range of research interests. Particularly noteworthy was the leadership that Roger gave to the development of Environmental Toxicology Training at Cornell. He developed a proposal for the training program and NIH funded it in 1965. He served as the first director of the training program. The Environmental Toxicology Training program continues today and the program is now a Field in the Graduate School.

In addition to his extensive research interests, Roger taught graduate-level courses in Insect Biochemistry. He also participated in courses in Veterinary Medicine emphasizing the significance of toxic chemicals, both organic and inorganic, in the environment. In courses he presented, Roger took a deep interest in the progress of his students, offering patience and understanding with the difficult material. His laboratory exercises required particular attention for the inexperienced students because of the small size of the test animals. He was a most supportive instructor.

Roger advised an average of ten undergraduates each year. He also served as major professor or as a graduate special committee member for 26 students. Roger served on the Entomology Graduate Admissions Committee. He was also Entomology Field Representative and Comprehensive Exam Committee member. In addition, he served on the Graduate School's Fulbright Review Committee and was on the Faculty Council of Representatives. Roger was a member of the Society of Sigma Xi, the American Chemical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Entomological Society of America.

During Roger's career at Cornell, he and his family spent sabbatical leaves at the University of Washington, the University of the Philippines, and the University of California (Davis). After his retirement, Roger continued many of his scientific interests. He taught chemistry for a semester at SUNY Cortland and carried out several research projects at the Cornell Toxicology Laboratory. For three semesters he conducted biochemical research at the Huxley College of Environmental Studies, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington.

In addition to his professional interests, Roger was an active and loyal member of the First Baptist Church in Ithaca, and for many years, he participated in the Volunteer Fire Company of Varna. He enjoyed golfing with friends at the Robert Trent Jones Cornell Golf Course. His lifelong enthusiasm for camping, learned early in his youth, extended to countless camping adventures with his family. Roger's interest in life around him was reflected in a variety of hobbies. He built and sailed a boat, a product of his interests in woodworking and water-related activities. He was an avid reader and he pursued and maintained active hobbies in genealogy and photography.

Roger Young is survived by his wife of 40 years, Emily V. (Howes), Cornell M.A. '49. His three children are degree holders from Cornell: Roger, B.S. '77; Carolyn, B.S. '80, M.N.S. '84; and Elizabeth, B.A. '84.

Colleagues, students and friends recognized Roger for his scholarship, integrity, helpfulness and genuine kindness. Throughout his life he exhibited a quiet commitment to his family, friends and his professional career.

Arthur A. Muka, David Pimentel, Edgar M. Raffensperger