

Boyd Hardesty retires

Professor enjoyed reputation as a leading scientist in ribosome research

At the end of the fall semester 1998, Boyd Hardesty retired after more than three decades of very active research and teaching at UT-Austin.

Boyd was born on May 15, 1932 and grew up in the eastern part of the state of Washington. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of Washington in Pullman. For his Ph.D. degree he moved to Cal Tech, a very exciting and formative environment. He graduated in 1961 after working with Herschel Mitchel on *Neurospora* mutants. With an NSF postdoctoral fellowship, Boyd moved to Yale University as a postdoc but then decided that Schweet's lab in Kentucky might be a better place to study protein synthesis *in vitro*—an exciting new area at that time and an area that continued to be the focus of Boyd's research for much of his career.

Boyd Hardesty became Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Texas at Austin in 1964. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1968 and to Professor in 1973.

Boyd's early research at UT-Austin was on isolating and characterizing the elongation factors involved in eukaryotic protein synthesis. He and one of his first graduate students, Wally McKeehan (now Professor at A&M's Biotechnology Institute in Houston), won a battle against Fritz Lipman on the question of how many GTP molecules are hydrolyzed in one round of peptide elongation on the ribosome. This research on eukaryotic translation was carried out with components of rabbit reticulocytes. One can only wonder whether Boyd has ever seen the thousands of white New Zealand rabbits in his dreams!

In June 1972 Boyd was invited to give a lecture and present his research at an international meeting on translation and its regulation in Denmark. He gave a fascinating talk featuring quite a bit of speculation on how ribosomes work—many of his speculations were subsequently proven to be right. This coming June, Boyd returns to Denmark as an invited speaker at the International Conference on Ribosomes. Over the past three decades, Boyd has enjoyed a reputation as a leading scientist in the area of ribosome research combined with the application of fluorescence methods to study local environments in/on the ribosomes by changes in fluorescence intensities or by measuring distances between ribosomal components by energy transfer. His contributions in these areas are represented by his over 150 scientific papers. He served as mentor for about two dozen graduate students. The research was financially supported by grants from NSF, NIH, the Texas Advanced Technology Program, the Foundation for Research and the Welch Foundation.

Boyd was the recipient of a Fogarty Senior International Fellowship in 1983. He spent most of that year in Berlin at the Max-Planck-Institute for Molecular Biology, the Wittmann Abteilung—one of the leading places for ribosome research at that time. In the late eighties, Boyd decided to turn his own research to *E. coli* ribosomes and to study how they fold nascent peptides. This question is still under investigation.

Between the first translational meeting in Denmark and this year's conference, Boyd and I organized a ribosome meeting here in Texas which was attended by

about 200 scientists from all over the world. We edited the papers from this meeting, published as a book by Springer—our encounter with the science business world was an eye-opening experience.

Boyd married Willa Mae in 1953. Their three children are living in Austin and Houston; however Boyd and Willa Mae plan on moving back to the area in Washington where they grew up so Boyd will be closer to places where he can pursue his hobbies: fishing and hunting. He will have more time this year to spend in the wilderness. We wish him many happy years of retirement.



Prof. Boyd Hardesty



- contributed by Gisela Kramer

Remembering Philip Bailey

continued from page 17

note which I, on the spur of the moment, let go to the Dean's office several months ago, then I can understand and am willing to take my punishment." What the "unfortunate note" contained is lost to history.

For many of his years on our faculty, Phil served as Coordinator of the Organic Division and of the sophomore-level organic courses. His dedication to both responsibilities has set the standard for those who have followed him in these positions. I personally recall his unrelenting efforts to make the health professions course in organic chemistry as rigorous as the majors and engineers sections, and he indeed managed to do so before he relinquished his duties course coordinator.

Phil opted to retire in his mid-sixties, but planned to continue teaching on a one-half time basis. He served in this part-time status for only one year, realizing that he had better things to do than to spend over an hour each day traveling between Lago Vista, where he had a home on Lake Travis, and the campus. In the letter he wrote to Chairman Mike White in October, 1983, he cited several reasons for taking full retirement: "... Second, I feel that I have accomplished all that I am capable of in a significant fashion in research. [My investigations of ozone-organic chemistry have] culminated in my two volume treatise published by Academic Press . . . These volumes are now

continued on page 20