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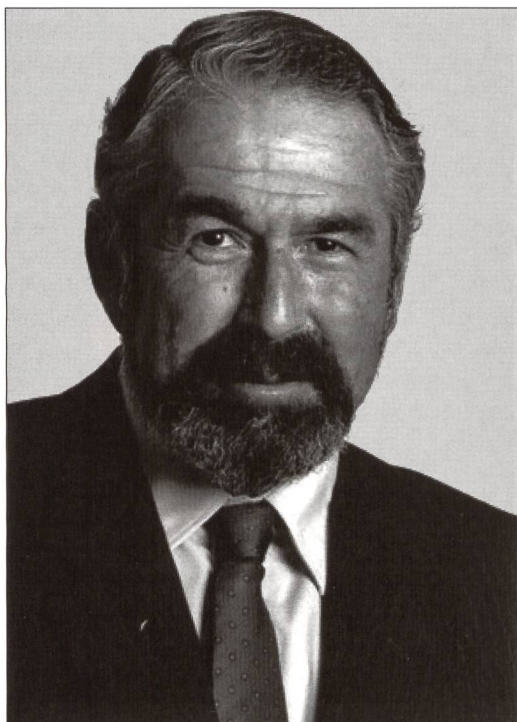
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NÉCROLOGIE

Howard Maer LENHOFF (1929-2011)



Howard Maer Lenhoff (1929-2011)

Dr. Howard Maer Lenhoff, Ph.D., 82, of 304 Dogwood Drive Oxford, Miss., died Tuesday, July 12, 2011, at his home. Dr. Lenhoff was a scientist recognized as a world authority in his field of biological research. He was also a humanitarian activist who achieved several goals many thought were beyond reach.

Dr. Lenhoff was born in North Adams, MA on Jan. 27, 1929, son of Charles and Goldie Rubin Lenhoff. After graduating from Drury High, he attended Coe College in Iowa and earned a Ph.D. in enzymology at the McCollum-Pratt Institute of the John Hopkins University. His first postdoctoral work was a fellow of the National Cancer Institute at the laboratory of W. Farnsworth Loomis in Greenwich, CT.

Serving next in the U.S. Air Force, he was appointed Acting Chief, Biochemistry Section of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology at Walter Reed Medical Center. Remaining in Washington, D.C. for a time, he was a Fellow of the Carnegie Institution at the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism in its Biophysics Section, also serving as visiting lecturer in the department of zoology of Howard University and as research consultant at George Washington University.

Dr. Lenhoff's next roles took him to Miami where he was Investigator in the Laboratories of Biochemistry at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Subsequently he founded and directed the Laboratory for Quantitative Biology at the University of Miami before being recruited by Dr. Grover Stephens to the young campus at the University of California Irvine as Associate Dean of Biological Sciences.

Many colleagues during those years will remember him for the number of special programs in which he participated. His research experiences took him to the Woods Hole Marine Biology Station, to Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, the Department of Pharmacology at Washington University in St. Louis, and the Friday Harbor Laboratory in Washington State.

He served as Director of the NSF research training program in Experimental Coelenterate Biology of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, as Instructor in the 2nd International Conference of Mediterranean Atlantic Marine Biology Organization, at the Hebrew University Marine Laboratory in Eilat, Israel, and then also in Eilat as the Director of the Graduate Course in Experimental Marine Biology. He was Visiting Scientist at the Station Zoologique of the University of Paris at Villefranche-sur-mer.

With his research interests increasingly diverse, he was to serve at various times as Fellow of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel; at the Israel Institute of Technology ("Technion"); at Ben Gurion University and Hebrew University; and as a Senior Research Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford University in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Lenhoff's primary experimental animal was the fresh-water hydra, and with his "organismic" approach, he studied its biochemistry, physiology, cell biology, development, toxicology, ecology, genetics, receptors, and the history of science related to this coelenterate. The history of science community remembers him for his studies on Abraham Trembley, the eighteenth century Swiss researcher often called "the father of experimental zoology." These studies led to Dr. Lenhoff being named an Honorary Member of the Société de Physique et d'Histoire naturelle de Genève (SPHN) member of the Swiss National Academy of Sciences (ASSN).

He also worked in the fields of immobilized enzymes and enzyme mediated immunoassay, in bio-analytical and protein chemistry. As his colleague Dr. That Ngo has stated, "He has made significant contributions in many fields of scien-

tific research ranging from biochemistry, biotechnology, marine biology, pharmacology, to cognitive research on Williams syndrome.”

At UC Irvine, in addition to his work as a researcher and professor, he held a variety of administrative posts, including Chair of the Academic Senate and Dean of the Graduate Division. His publications include a myriad of articles and a dozen books. Dr. Lenhoff’s work as a humanitarian was marked by the same qualities as his science and his scholarship. He was innovative and creative and diverse. One of the great joys of his life was his participation as a leader in the successful rescue of the Jews of Ethiopia. His activities on behalf of developmentally disabled musicians proved to be

instrumental in the establishment in Lenox, MA of a unique summer camp for musical young people who had Williams’ syndrome and later, the Berkshire Hills Music Academy now celebrating its 10th year in South Hadley, MA. Most recently his concern for the education of the young people of the Mississippi Delta developed into the “Guardian Angel Initiative” to enable children of four impoverished counties to attend school with dignity and pride. At the University of Mississippi during the past ten years, Dr. Lenhoff served as Adjunct Professor of Biology.

This obituary is published with the kind authorization of University of California Irvine (UC Irvine, School of Biological Sciences, US).