

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
EMMETT LEROY HUDSPETH**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Emmett Leroy Hudspeth, professor emeritus, physics, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

**IN MEMORIAM
EMMETT LEROY HUDSPETH**

Emmett Leroy Hudspeth was born to be a scientist and a teacher. Tall, 6'4", and distinguished, always dressed in a suit and tie, which for an experimental physicist was unusual even in his generation, he was the ideal image of the senior professor. From his first exposure to education, it was clear that he was an outstanding student of science. His appetite for knowledge was huge. As a teenager, he amused himself by virtually memorizing the "Book of Knowledge."

Hudspeth was born December 3, 1916, in Denton, Texas. He was educated in the public schools of Texas, and was valedictorian at the Arlington High School in 1933. Emmett attended Rice University and earned Phi Beta Kappa and a bachelor's degree in 1937. He stayed at Rice for graduate study and completed a PhD under the direction of H. A. Wilson in 1940, at the age of 23.

Emmett's first postdoctoral job was at the Bartol Research Foundation (now Institute), located on the Swarthmore College campus in Pennsylvania. With the outbreak of World War II, he joined the war effort at the MIT Radiation Laboratory in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He worked with I. I. Rabi and Tom Bonner in the group that helped develop radar. After the war, he returned to work at the Bartol Research Foundation, where he was a fellow and later the assistant director.

In 1950, Emmett joined the physics department at The University of Texas at Austin. He served as chairman of the department and as graduate advisor. He was an excellent and dedicated teacher of undergraduate and graduate students. He was among the first nationally to recognize the importance of teaching physics to liberal arts students, and he developed and taught what has become known nationally as a "Physics for Poets" course.

Dr. Hudspeth was also the founder of the University's Center for Nuclear Physics, and he served as director for many of its formative years. This effort led a government-funded program devoted to research using a high-energy particle accelerator, and made the University one of the world's premier institutions for pioneering research on the internal structure of the nucleus.

Emmett supervised twenty-five dissertations in nuclear physics and medical physics. His students admired him for many qualities. He was always available and approachable, and yet his mind was so quick and his knowledge of nuclear physics so profound that they all had to respect him. He had an endless series of experiments planned, seeking new ground and knowledge in nuclear physics. He was willing to share success with his students. In those days, it was customary for dissertation results, if they could be published, to be sent in with the professor as the senior author. Emmett authored and submitted such results with the student as the senior author. That graciousness was one of many reasons his students chose to honor him by establishing the Emmett L. Hudspeth Centennial Lectureship in Physics.

Besides Emmett's success as an academic, he also had an entrepreneurial side. At the age of fourteen, he bought a small printing press and founded the "American Printing Company." This was not a successful operation. In 1956, though, he expanded his research interests and founded the Texas Nuclear Corporation, which initially did contract research on shielding for the ill-fated nuclear powered aircraft. Under his direction, the corporation went into the business of producing small particle accelerators for commercial purposes, and, finally, very

successfully, medical and oil well diagnostic instruments. This business was later acquired by the Nuclear Chicago Corporation, which then merged with G. D. Searle & Co. Later, he was founder and president of the Medical Monitor Research Corporation.

A man of rich, well thought out, and varied opinions, Emmett was very fond of debate and discussion. At heart, he was what is now described as a fiscal conservative and social moderate. He was incredibly well informed. Not one to just discuss his beliefs, he lived by them. Ultimately, in 1978, to bring these views to a larger audience, he took a leave of absence and ran unsuccessfully for Congress from the 10th District on the Republican ticket against an unbeatable opponent, the Honorable J. Jake Pickle.

Emmett was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a fellow of the American Physical Society. Published extensively in the field of experimental nuclear physics, he was best known for his pioneering research on the energy levels and properties of light nuclei.

Emmett Hudspeth passed away on January 1, 2000. He was survived by a daughter and her husband, three sons and their wives, eight grandchildren, and two brothers.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Austin M. Gleeson (chair), Thomas A. Griffy, and Kenneth W. Gentle.

Distributed to the Dean of the College of Natural Sciences, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President on March 14, 2002. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. This resolution is posted under "Memorials" at: <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/>.