

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

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Criminalistics Section Special Session—A Tribute to Dr. Walter McCrone—Introduction

Last summer we received a legacy from Dr. Walter C. McCrone. It is a legacy that includes three healthy and dedicated organizations:

- McCrone Associates—a laboratory's laboratory that defines the leading edge in applied microscopy,
- McCrone Microscopes and Accessories—an excellent source for microscopical equipment and supplies, and
- McCrone Research Institute—an independent, not-for-profit, center for teaching and research in applied microscopy.

For each of these organizations, Dr. McCrone ensured a healthy future by choosing employees of the highest caliber and providing for them an environment in which they could excel.

Walter McCrone also left us a journal: *The Microscope*, an annual international meeting of applied microscopists: Inter/Micro, and 60+ years of focused, highly industrious professional work.

More importantly, however, his legacy includes a host of students, followers and former employees.

Students—more than 23,000 students, who dominate the application of light and electron microscopy to the fields of environmental analysis, forensic trace evidence analysis, art conservation, pharmaceutical sciences, contamination analysis and anywhere that particle identification is of concern.

Along with the students, the legacy includes several hundred employees and former employees, many of whom were inspired by Dr. McCrone and have taken some of his inspiration and energy into impressive subsequent careers. Looking at new companies alone we have John Reffner at Sens IR Technologies; Skip Palenik at Microtrace; Jim Millette and Tim Vander Wood at MVA, Inc., Jeff Hollifield at MicroAnalytical, Mike Bayard at Bayard Consulting; Marvin Salzenstein at Polytechnic, Gary Valaskovic at New Objective, Inc.; Jack Dodd at Dodd Consulting; Peter Cooke at MICA; and Mark Germani at Micromaterials Research, Inc. And we have John Delly, Thom Hopen, Robert Stevenson and countless others spread across the world.

While recognizing the profound and seemingly irreplaceable personal and professional loss of our colleague, we must remember how he himself came to microscopy. A chemist named Émile Chamot

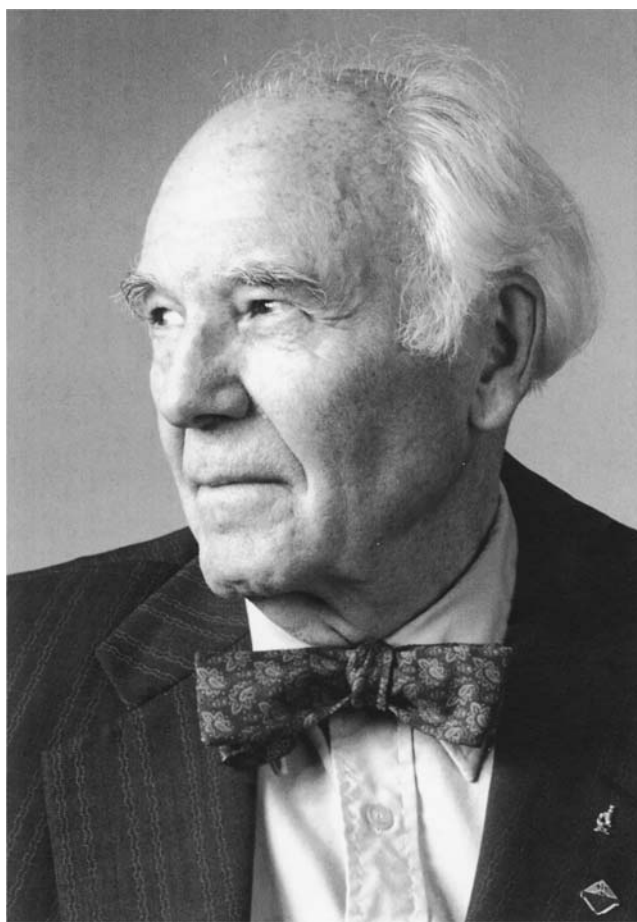


FIG. 1—Dr. Walter C. McCrone (1916–2002)

studied under Behrens and brought the methods of chemical microscopy to Cornell.

There Dr. Chamot inspired, along with many others, a young Walter McCrone who grew to give us all so much, in turn.

Among those thousands that have been taught by Walter McCrone, there are (at least in the aggregate) enough that are capable, willing and devoted to carrying on the mission. And among us, or

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those we teach, there may be one who fully takes the challenge to give to our profession in the way that Walter did. Dr. McCrone was quick to point out the benefits of a microscopical approach, critical of those that ignored it, and loath at the prospect of its falling into an unappreciated disuse. To dispel the specter of this latter end, he devoted his professional life to two things: the intelligent use of the microscope integrated into modern analytical chemistry; and the teaching of the methods of chemical microscopy at a time when formal academia truly ignored them.

What Dr. McCrone has done ensures, for our generation, that the capabilities of these methods will be appreciated, that there will be a place to learn them, and that, accordingly, there will be those who will use them. Once used, they create a competitive advantage both through their efficiency and because there are some types of problems that only microscopy can solve.

At the same time, the methods of chemical microscopy ensnare each user with their simple beauty, their elegance and their endless challenge to self-improvement.

Among these similarly disposed colleagues and with the institutions that Walter McCrone and his followers have put into place, we will certainly, as in Émile to Walter, bridge the gap to the next generation.

In this symposium, at the suggestion of Robert Gaensslen, and with thanks to Susan Ballou, Bruce Goldberger and the leadership of the Criminalistics Section of the American Academy

of Forensic Sciences, we indulged ourselves with a series of presentations describing some of Dr. Walter C. McCrone's legacy. Eight presentations were given at the Symposium, six of which are presented here and listed below. The others were Skip Palenik's presentation, "Dr. McCrone's Contribution in The Areas of Microscopy, Microchemistry and Crystallography," and Dr. Peter DeForest's presentation, "Dr. McCrone's Significance and Impact to Forensic Science from an Academic Perspective."

Dr. John Reffner	Remembering Walter C. McCrone
Dr. Joseph L. Peterson	Dr. Walter McCrone's Contributions to Microscopy Workshops and the Certification of Criminalists
Dr. Gary A. Laughlin	Dr. McCrone's Teaching Methods in Forensic Microscopy, Their Nature, History and Durability
Mr. Thomas A. Hopen	Dr. McCrone's Contribution to the Characterization and Identification of Explosives
Dr. Thomas Kubic	Dr. Walter C. McCrone – His Contributions to Environmental Microscopy
Dr. David A. Stoney	A Selection of Some of Dr. McCrone's High and Low Profile Cases in the Forensic Analysis of Art