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James J. Christensen 1931–1987

This issue of the Journal is dedicated to the memory of the late Professor James J. Christensen. Professor Christensen died suddenly at his home on September 5, 1987. He was 56 years old.

Jim's life was devoted to service; service to his profession of chemical engineering, to his University, to his students, to his wife and family and to his community.

During his professional career, he made significant contributions in several fields including precision calorimeter design and construction, determination of thermodynamic data for ligand interactions with protons and cations, compilation of thermodynamic data, and organization of international symposia. He was co-organizer of the first Symposium on Macrocyclic Chemistry. This Symposium is now held on an annual basis.

The precision calorimeters which he designed and constructed made possible the early measurement of equilibrium constants for cation-macrocycle interaction. These values demonstrated the remarkable selectivities these compounds have for a variety of cations. His interest in compiling thermodynamic data made these data available to workers in the macrocyclic chemistry field. Advances in this field were aided significantly by having these data available.

Jim was the recipient of numerous local and national awards based on his professional accomplishments. The latest of these was the prestigious American Association of Engineering Education 3-M Award in Chemical Engineering. He received this Award and presented a lecture on the subject of creativity just one month before his death.

He was a prolific writer and gave many invited lectures at national and international meetings. He has over 300 publications, including journal articles, review articles, book chapters, books, and patents. He involved students in all of his scholarly activities. These students became co-authors of his publications and many have achieved prominence in their own right. Through his own professional accomplishments and those of his students, he has left an important legacy to science and to macrocyclic chemistry, in particular.

Jim was a native of Salt Lake City, Utah. He received B.S. and M.S. degrees in chemical engineering from the University of Utah and the Ph.D. degree in chemical engineering from Carnegie-Mellon University in 1958. His Ph.D. research involved heat transfer to coils, which served as an excellent base for his later work in the design of precision calorimeters.

He married Virginia Bills and they are the parents of five children. One of these children, Scott, is following in his father's footsteps in that he is expecting to receive his Ph.D. in chemical engineering at the University of Delaware in late 1988. Jim and Virginia took their families on sabbatical leaves to Oxford, England and the Mexico Polytechnical Institute in Mexico City. He and Virginia traveled widely.

Jim had a genuine interest in Brigham Young University and in his students, undergraduate and graduate. He was the first chairman of the Chemical Engineering Department. BYU honored him several times with outstanding research and teaching awards. He was a popular teacher and research director. He took great delight in collecting 'toys' that demonstrated the principles of thermodynamics and using them to interest his students. His favorite courses were thermodynamics and creativity and he exhibited marked creativity in his teaching and research programs.

Jim will be missed by those who knew him well. However, his life was unique in many ways and his influence will continue to be felt in the lives of his family, students, and friends.

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