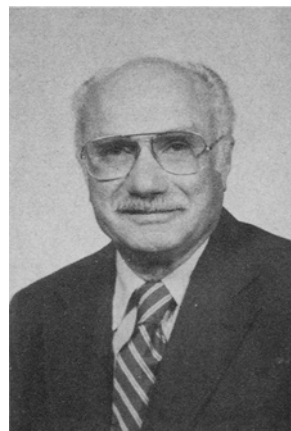

People

Profile: Reiser



AOCS used to be a lonely place for biochemists.

Ask Raymond Reiser. When he joined AOCS in 1946, the membership directory listed less than a dozen university faculty members and only a few of those were listed specifically as being part of a biochemistry department.

Reiser became a one-man crusade to introduce a sometimes recalcitrant group of oil chemists to biochemistry's emerging microanalytical methods. "I enjoyed that bunch [fellow AOCS members], and I saw a place where I could make a contribution," he says. "The micro methods obviously would be important in fats and oils." He successfully argued for a summer short course on analytical methods ("It took years and years to win that battle," he says), but unsuccessfully urged that it be held in air-conditioned facilities at Texas A&M University (Reiser's home base since 1940). The planners opted to hold the 1961 short course in the cooler climate of Rochester, New York. "But they had one of their warmest spells ever—temperatures were up around 100—and there was no air conditioning," recalls Reiser, who was program chairman. "We were in a real mess."

During his early AOCS years, Reiser recalls working with people such as Ralph Holman, Roslyn Alfin-Slater, William Lands, Salih Wakil, and Carter Litchfield, among many others, to enlarge both AOCS' biochemistry and biochemists' interest in AOCS. The major vehicle was lipid biochemistry symposia at AOCS meetings. The results have been mutually beneficial. Biochemistry is now a firm part of AOCS, which publishes *Lipids* for biochemists. The lipid biochemistry sessions at AOCS national meetings are now, in Reiser's view, superior to those at meetings of societies more directly designed for biochemists. And the analytical techniques developed by biochemists have been of major value to AOCS' traditional fats and oils component. Reiser became a member of the AOCS Governing Board in 1961; he served as AOCS president during 1967.

Where did his interest in biochemistry originate?

Reiser doesn't know for sure, only that "I've always been interested in living things; as a boy, I wanted to know what made them work," he says. His grandfather had owned knitting mills in Philadelphia; his father constructed knitting mills in Colombia at the turn of the century; a great-grandfather, family tradition says, built the Budapest-Berlin railroad and the first successful docks at the Danube River delta, emigrating to the United States after the Civil War. Reiser, however, grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, with an interest in living things. He received his B.A. in biology at Western Reserve University in Cleveland in 1929.

The shift in emphasis from biology to lipid chemistry developed during the next five years. A 1929 college graduate faced a poor job market, so Reiser looked around for whatever opportunities were available. He decided to attend graduate school at Ohio State University where he became a student under U.B. Brown, a well-known fats and oils investigator of that time. The late Waldo Ault was a labmate of Reiser's at Ohio State. Reiser's first major

research task, to separate unsaturated acid by crystallization of halide derivatives of their phenol esters, didn't support the hypothesis being tested, but it did "teach me a lot about fats and oils," he says. The link to biochemistry came when Reiser became part of a research project investigating why nerves, under stress of vitamin A deficiency, developed characteristics similar to those of nerve tissues that had been cut. The project required Reiser to become deeply involved with lipid analytical methodology.

Reiser received his doctorate from Ohio State in 1936, but jobs were still scarce. Almost by happenstance, he obtained a postdoctorate research position at Duke University's School of Medicine, Department of Medicine, where fat absorption in children (celiac disease) and adult sprue was a major research area.

It was in North Carolina that Reiser met his future wife. As there was no reformed Jewish congregation in Durham, where Duke was located, Reiser had to travel about 20 miles to Raleigh to attend religious services. There he met the 17-year-old Shirley Jacobs at a picnic, but had forgotten that encounter until he met her again the next year. Then one Friday night, when he arrived in Raleigh for 7:30 p.m. services, he found the synagogue empty. He called the Jacobs' household to determine why and was told services were to start at 8 p.m. that evening. That conversation led to a developing friendship between the Raleigh teenager and the 31-year-old researcher. Two years later, on August 29, 1939, after overcoming the expected objections of Shirley's parents, Raymond and Shirley were married.

The move to Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, followed in November 1940. Jobs were hard to find in 1940 so he accepted an offer as an analyst in the State Chemist Laboratory at \$1,200 per year. The job initially lasted two years, as by 1942 Reiser was in military service as a hospital biochemist, serving in the U.S. and France.

After World War II ended, Reiser resumed his career at Texas A&M as a researcher in animal feeds. For a while, he taught biochemistry to veterinary medical students when their curriculum was being expanded to include that subject.

It was during this period that Reiser became involved with AOCS, along with other biochemists, as the importance of fats in foods and nutrition began to be more

widely recognized. The number of papers on the biochemistry of fats and oils was increasing in the *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society*. Reiser was among those who encouraged AOCS to begin a new publication, resulting in the eventual debut of *Lipids* in 1965. That was the same year Reiser received Texas A&M's Distinguished Professorship Award. He also has received the Canadian Award of Merit, the Ohio State University Centennial Award, the Norman Borlaug Award, and the Southwest Regional Award of the American Chemical Society.

When he received the Alton E. Bailey Award in 1976 from the AOCS North Central Section, he was cited for "studies establishing the importance of lipids in cattle feed, exposition of biological interconversions of polyunsaturated fatty acids, discovery of bacterial hydrogenation of polyunsaturated fatty acids in the rumen, studies in the area of lipid metabolism and atherosclerosis, and development of analytical techniques for lipids and fatty acid isomers. Final acceptance of the use of monoglycerides in food preparations came as a result of his studies." He had shown in 1952 that monoglycerides and free fatty acids are the end-products of fat digestion.

Reiser has never ducked a controversy. Beginning with a letter to the Editor of the *JAOCS* in October 1956, and continuing to the present, he has raised the ire of many members of the nutrition and medical fraternities by objecting to the castigation of either animal or polyunsaturated fats in the diet.

Most recently, Reiser joined with other AOCS members to protest a decision, since reversed, not to publish anticipatory abstracts for national meeting talks in *JAOCS*. "The abstracts are the proceedings of the scientific program," he argued. "The presentations are the justification for the members to attend and participate. To have no readily available record of the proceedings is indefensible."

Thus, at age 75, Reiser is maintaining a keen interest in his profession. This past summer, he was settling into a new office on the Texas A&M campus, having recently given up his laboratory in an outlying building for a site in the main biochemistry-biophysics building. Reiser obviously was pleased at the chance for more frequent informal contact with fellow staff members, but unsure about not having a lab.

While Reiser has been pursuing his career, Shirley has been active in several activities. For approximately 20 years, she headed the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at Texas A&M. She also has become a home designer and builder, responsible for approximately three dozen homes in College Station. The most recent was a planned unit development. The development used land on the Reisers' home site they no longer needed, plus some additional acreage. The Reisers' present home includes an indoor swimming pool, designed by Shirley, that gives Ray a chance to swim three-quarters of a mile each day.

The Reisers have two sons. Richard has his own advertising firm in Irvine, California. The younger son, Donald, is a businessman in College Station.

Raymond Reiser has fought, and won, a lot of battles. He helped introduce the AOCS and the world of biochemistry to each other. He has pursued a distinguished career as a teacher and researcher while raising a family and making important contributions to his professional society. He's the first to say that Shirley has been indispensable to his success.

And, quite obviously, he's not ready to retire.

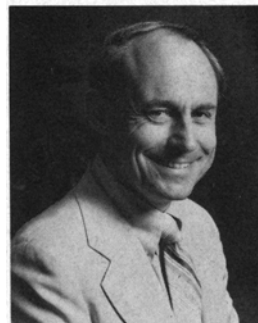
Wiedermann joins ASA Asia staff

Lars Wiedermann, a long-time member of AOCS and frequent invited speaker at short courses and conferences, has joined the American Soybean Association as a soy oil specialist for Asia, based in ASA's Singapore office.

Wiedermann will be responsible for educational programs on the proper handling and processing of soy oil into finished products, providing technical help to soy oil users and potential users in an area reaching from Japan to India. The new position is part of ASA's worldwide market development effort. □



Wiedermann



Beyer

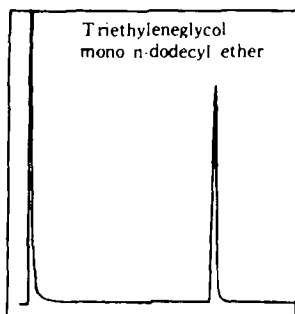


Carter

Angelo V. Graci, chief of the engineering and development laboratory of the USDA's Southern Regional Research Center, New Orleans, LA, has received the 1981 Federal Business Association's distinguished service award, executive and administrative category. . . . The Chemicals Division of Pfizer Inc. has appointed AOCS member **Robert D. Campbell** manager of market development in its Irvine, CA, branch, where he will identify development opportunities for new and existing products and help to implement regional sales. . . . Former AOCS President **Stephen S. Chang** reports that the Department of Food Science at Rutgers University has received a highly favorable review by an external review panel that described the department as one of the five top food science departments in the United States. . . . **Richard Kalgren**, president of the Sunflower Association of America, has joined Victoria Grain Company of Minneapolis as a sunflower and flax trader. . . . **Malcolm Thain** has succeeded **Philip C. Spensley** as director of the Tropical Products Institute in England; Spensley is credited with coining the term "aflatoxin." . . . **Ragnar Beyer** has been appointed president of Alfa-Laval Inc., a U.S. unit of the worldwide Alfa-Laval Group; his predecessor, **Kees Sonius**, is now with Alfa-Laval Group Management. . . .

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Philip Hunter has become president and chief executive officer for Hunter Associates Laboratory with **Richard Hunter** remaining chairman of the board. . . . **Barry L. Loeb** has been named director of engineering services for Emery Industries Inc. . . . **W.L. Carter** is now operations manager, western region, for Swift Adhesives and Coatings for Eschem, which represents the specialty oils, wax coatings and industrial adhesives interests of Esmark Inc. . . . **G. Nicholas Lauer** has been appointed manager of the mathematics department for Durkee Foods' Foods Research and Development. □



Deaths

Samuel O. Sorenson

AOCS has been informed of the July 19, 1981, death of Samuel Olef Sorenson, in Laguna Hills, CA. He was 85. Mr. Sorenson served as president of the Society during 1946; he was a former technical director for Archer Daniels Midland Co., retiring from that firm in the mid-1950s.

Mr. Sorenson was born Nov. 30, 1895, in Waterville, Maine, attending public school in Maine. He was graduated

from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, as an industrial engineering chemistry major in 1916. He joined ADM in 1922 and became technical director in 1935. He joined AOCS in 1936.

Mr. Sorenson was active on numerous AOCS committees, organizing many drying oil sessions for annual meetings. He became an emeritus member of AOCS in 1955.

During his term as president, the Society's publication officially became the *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society* and the second edition of AOCS' *Official Methods* was published. The 1945 election in which he was chosen vice-president was the first election by mail that AOCS had held.

Survivors include his wife, Lucile; two sons, Dwight of Kansas City, MO, and Neil of Scottsdale, AZ; five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

James E. Malone

AOCS has learned of the death of James E. Malone, of Lansdowne, PA, on July 15, 1981. He had been a member of AOCS since 1954.

Leonard J. Cook

AOCS has learned of the death of Leonard J. Cook, a staff member with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) in Australia. Dr. Cook received degrees from Melbourne University, Sydney University and Texas A&M University. He joined AOCS during 1966 while a doctoral student at Texas A&M.