

Obituary

Dr. Paul Donald Garn

July 7, 1920–April 6, 1997

Paul D. Garn, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at the University of Akron, Paul D. Garn passed away after a short illness, on April 6, 1997. Paul was born July 7, 1920, in Fremont, Ohio, to Charles and Margaret (Horn) Garn. His public school education was received in Fremont, Woodville, and Gibsonburg. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1939, was released in 1941, recalled in 1942, and released to reserve status as first lieutenant in 1946.

He married Polly C. Niece of Wellesley, Mass., in 1945. They had three children. Mrs. Garn succumbed to cancer in 1977.

He entered the Ohio State University in 1946 and received the Bachelor of Science degree in 1948, the Master of Science degree in 1949, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1952. He then joined the staff of Bell Telephone Laboratories at Murray Hill, N. J.

Although his university training had been largely in electrochemistry, his principal assignment was to develop thermal methods for evaluation of materials.

Dr. Garn joined the International Confederation for Thermal Analysis (ICTA) at its inception and served on its Committee on Standardization 1966–88; as chair 1976–85. When an organizing committee initiated the North American Thermal Analysis Society, they invited him to become its first president. He also chaired the American Society for Testing and Materials Subcommittee – and Committee – on Thermal Analysis.

In 1963, he joined the faculty of the University of Akron as Associate Professor, then Professor and, since 1989, Professor Emeritus, and served as Director, Center for Fire & Hazardous Materials Research, 1984–87.

In 1979, he married Betty Jane Reid Givler Stokes; she succumbed to cancer in 1990.

Professor Garn had given invited lectures before the Chemical Society of Bombay and India, Japan's Society for Calorimetry and Thermal Analysis, the Scandinavian Thermal Analysis Society, the Chemical Society of the German Democratic Republic, the Italian Thermal Analysis Society, as well as numerous international and other technical society meetings.

In 1977, he was selected by the Executive Committee of ICTA as the first recipient of the DuPont-ICTA Award in Thermal Analysis. He received a George Marshall Memorial Fellowship (administered by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation) spent in Cologne, and a Senior Research Associateship (National Research Council) spent at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

He published nearly ninety articles in thirty-five journals, proceedings and other publications in thermal methods, environmental science, and analytical chemistry. He had patents on electrically insulating coatings and etching of printed circuits, and wrote one monograph and edited or co-edited four proceedings.

He is survived by sons, Michael Garn, M.D. (Astrid) and David Garn (Laurel); daughter, Kathy McCown (Charles); grandchildren, Heather, Paul, and Benjamin Garn; sister, Irene Garn of Huntsville, Texas, and Alyce U. Harding of Palm Coast, Fla.

The preceding announcement is from the Akron Beacon Journal and was graciously provided by the Chairman of the Department of Chemistry at The University of Akron. It is a tribute to one of our most prominent thermoanalytical colleagues whose life and activity enriched all of us. His presence in the formative stages of NATAS and ICTAC contributed enormously to the organization and vitality of these fledgling societies.

Paul attended the initial ICTAC meeting in Aberdeen Scotland during the Summer of 1965. He did this in spite of his allergic aversion to 'sheep-meat' and must have had a difficult task of avoiding it there. He immediately became active in the standardization efforts of ICTAC and along with Harry McAdie, Hans Wiedemann, and Oscar Menis spearheaded the first and second international test programs for thermoanalytical standard materials and protocol. He later assumed the Chairmanship when Dr. McAdie relinquished it in 1974 and continued in that capacity until 1985 when it was transferred to Dr. Gallagher. The committee members recall with great fondness the meetings of the committee in England with the associated historic Elizabethan-style dinners, large quantities of non-vintage wines, and arm wrestling on the hood of a Rolls-Royce.

He extended his involvement with ICTA to become the co-chairman of the technical program and co-editor of the proceedings for the second ICTA in Worcester, MA during August of 1968. It was at this meeting that NATAS was conceived and Paul joined the McAdie team along with Bob Pfeil from Battelle Labs to form the Society. Harry served as the Immediate Past President, Paul the President, and Bob as the Secretary and Organizing Chairman of the first NATAS meeting held at Battelle in Columbus, OH during November of 1969. Paul remained active in both societies until his retirement. The ASTM Committee E-37 on thermal analysis and properties was a direct consequence of the substantial efforts by Oscar Menis and Paul in the early 1970s. He had chaired the subcommittee that gave birth to the full committee, E-37.

When I (PKG) joined Bell Telephone Laboratories in 1959, Paul was already pioneering in the then highly under utilized field of thermal analysis. The book that he wrote in those days along with his missionary zeal helped to dramatically champion the methods. He served as my introduction to the field and reviewing the book at his request really allowed me to absorb the theory, methodology, and caveats of these techniques.

Those who encountered Paul remember him as a brusque, outspoken, no-nonsense guy who, as Harry McAdie puts it, did not suffer fools gladly. His criticism was honest and straight forward in the best scientific manner. He certainly never turned his back on a good scientific discussion of heterogeneous kinetics, solid state reactivity, or thermoanalytical methods. We missed him after his retirement and now we mourn the passing of both a friend and influential colleague of our scientific and professional community.

Patrick K. Gallagher
Harry G. McAdie

We express our deepest sympathy for the death of Professor P. D. Garn who was one of the first members of the Editorial Board of our Journal.

The Editors