

Inside AOCS

AOCS Honorary Members

In its first 75 years, the American Oil Chemists' Society has singled out less than two dozen individuals for honorary membership.

Honorary membership is very selective. It is considered only for those whose achievements in science entitle them to special recognition or who have given unusually important service to the society or their profession. The procedure is as follows: After a petition is signed by at least 50 active members, the proposal for honorary membership must be approved first by the Governing Board and subsequently by two-thirds of the members voting on the question.

Here is a brief sketch of the individuals AOCS members have honored in this way, in the order of their selection. Three of these 19 men—H. L. Roschen, V. C. Mehlenbacher and Walter O. Lundberg—are alive.

I. G. Priest (1913)

Irwin G. Priest, chief of the Optics Division's Colorimetry Section, National Bureau of Standards, directed research leading to the standardization of Lovibond glasses and was an authority on color measurements. AOCS presidents E. R. Barrow, H. P. Trevithick and W. D. Hutchins cooperated with Priest in this work, helping to obtain appropriations from Congress to standardize color grading of vegetable oils. In 1928, with the assistance of several associates, Priest studied the color sense of 60 members of AOCS at the society's New Orleans meeting by using Stilling Charts and a Marten photometer.

In recognition of his work and his connection with the government, Priest, in 1913, was the first person named an honorary member of the society.

He successfully developed exact color nomenclature and measurement methods, and based color specifications on accurately determinable physical quantities. He designed the rotatory dispersion colorimetric photometer to determine color, temperature and intensity for incandescent illuminates and for various phases of daylight.

He died in 1932.

H. S. Bailey (1915)

When elected to honorary membership in 1915, Herbert S. Bailey worked for the Bureau of Chemistry, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Later, after working for a year at du Pont, he became chief chemist at the Southern Cotton Oil Company in Savannah. Subsequently, he joined a citrus concern in California. He retired in 1946.

Bailey succeeded G. Worthen Agee as editor of the "Chemists' Section" of the *Cotton Oil Press*, and became the editor of the society's first independent publication, *Journal of the Oil and Fat Industries*. He also headed the cooperative analysis program after the death of Frank N. Smalley.

As editor of the society's publication, Bailey wrote many interesting pieces. Among them is the following, entitled "A Chemist's Prayer":

"Help me to be thankful that I have a job where, in addition to a living, I can get pleasure in doing the things that I enjoy.

"Teach me to know that the total of an analysis is 100%, and that meaningless decimals are an abomination.

"Grant that in my laboratory a day's work may be measured by results, not hours; that when the last burner is turned out and the final titration made, all the data obtained may be down in black and white. May my reagents be pure, my weights accurate, and my standard solutions not only carefully made but properly kept.

"Above all, lead me to judge rightly the work of my fellow-chemists, and to heartily co-operate with them in all things that tend to increase the prestige of our profession." (from the April 1921 *Cotton Oil Press*)

George S. Jamieson (1920)

In an October 1950 article, Reid T. Milner said George S. Jamieson was "the dean of scientific American oil chemists." He was an early contributor to the journal, served as assistant editor of the "Chemists' Section" in 1921, and was a member of the editorial board from its founding until 1948. Jamieson was a chemist in charge of the Oil, Fat and Wax Laboratory, Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, USDA, when he was made an honorary member in 1920. He retired from USDA in 1947. According to Milner, Jamieson's classic monograph *Oils, Fats and Waxes* was the leading publication in English in this field for many years. He also made many contributions to the journal between 1921 and 1944.

He died in 1959.

C. L. Alsberg (1921)

C. L. Alsberg, elected to honorary membership in 1921, was chief of the Bureau of Chemistry, USDA. He later directed the Food Research Institute at Stanford and Giannini Foundation at the University of California.

He died in 1940.

W. W. Stockberger (1921)

Warner W. Stockberger was in charge of the Office of Drug, Poisonous and Oil Plant Investigation of USDA, Washington, D.C., when he became an honorary member in 1921. After a scientific career in plant chemistry, he became pre-eminent in the field of personnel administration. Stockberger was the first recognized authority on this subject in the federal service and was made director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture personnel in 1925.

He died in 1944.

C. A. Browne (1925)

C. A. Browne, also employed in the USDA's Bureau of Chemistry, "was one of the most famous chemists ever to work for the government," according to Milner in 1950. Browne's expertise was in sugar chemistry and he was one of the first Americans to study rice oil. He was made an honorary member of AOCS in 1925.

According to Milner, Browne made important contributions to the history of agricultural chemistry. He served as chief of the Bureau of Chemistry and was a collaborator in the Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry, USDA.

He died in 1947.

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J.C.P. Helm (1945)

The first active AOCS member to be made an honorary member, J.C.P. Helm was honored by a testimonial dinner at the Memphis Country Club on May 10, 1945. A chemist, he owned Helm Laboratories in New Orleans, Louisiana. Helm served as AOCS secretary-treasurer from 1925 to 1945, and was elected an honorary member when he stepped down from that position. He also served as one of the society's two New Orleans representatives.

Helm joined AOCS in 1924. He died in 1960.

Felix Paquin (1947)

Felix Paquin, a charter member and one of the original founders of AOCS, served as society president in 1909 and 1910, the only person to serve two terms. He was born in Quebec in 1865. In 1892, he was city chemist and bacteriologist for Memphis, Tennessee. In 1900, he started a private practice, concentrating chiefly on cottonseed products. Paquin served as the official chemist of the Memphis Merchants Exchange and his analyses of crude cottonseed-oil samples helped settle disputes by the Exchange Arbitration Committee. In 1909, he moved to Galveston, Texas, where he purchased an established commercial laboratory and continued his work in general analytical chemistry. In later years, he devoted more time to marine inspection than to the cottonseed oil industry.

Paquin originated the idea of a past president's group, by hosting a dinner for the past presidents at the 1944

spring meeting in New Orleans. In a surprise move during the 1947 annual meeting at New Orleans, petitions were circulated nominating Paquin and J.J. Vollertsen as honorary members.

Paquin died in 1951, two weeks after suffering severe burns in an accident in his laboratory. He had been working alone in his laboratory that Labor Day when he was badly burned by ethyl ether boiling over on a hot plate and igniting. He extinguished the fire, called an ambulance and waited for its arrival. He died of complications from the accident.

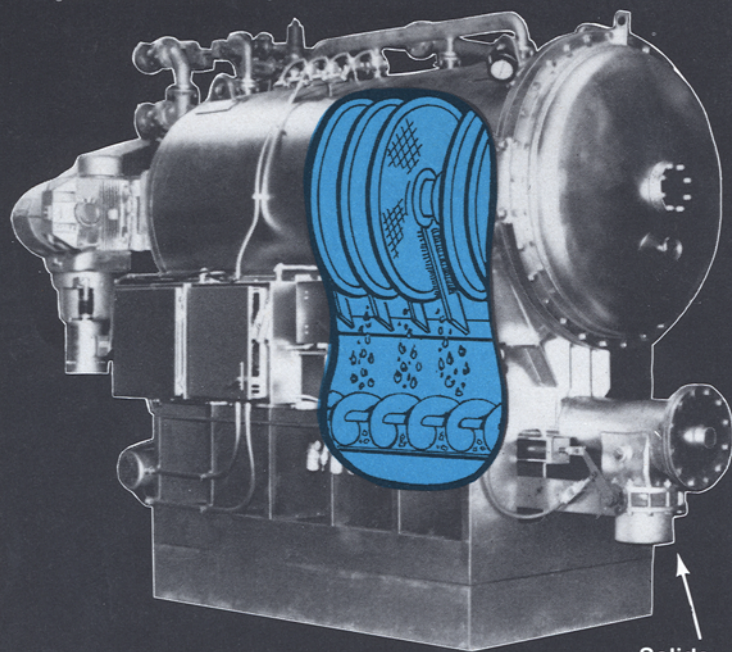
J. J. Vollertsen (1947)

J. J. Vollertsen, named an honorary member in 1947, served as AOCS president in 1925. Vollertsen was vice president in 1924 and a member of the Governing Board from 1924-1929. He was Smalley chairman from 1936-1947, AOCS treasurer from 1947 to 1953 and served on many committees, including the journal and uniform methods. He joined AOCS in 1916.

Vollertsen lived in Chicago all his working life. He first worked for Swift and Company, then went to Kennicott Water Softener Company. In 1907, he went to work for Morris and Company. Five years later, Morris and Company became interested in hydrogenation of oils. Vollertsen became assistant chief chemist for Armour in 1923, chief chemist in 1926. The first research bakery was built under his direction. In 1939, he took over responsibility for the

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company's refinery pilot plant. In 1946, he retired as chief of chemical research and development, Armour and Co., U.S. Yards, Chicago.

He died in 1966.

H. L. Roschen (1952)

Harry L. Roschen was a research chemist at Swift and Co., Chicago, Illinois, when he was made an honorary member of AOCS in 1952.

Roschen began working for Swift and Co. in 1926, and joined AOCS in 1933. He served as Moisture Committee chairman from 1935-1939 and became involved in work on the journal in 1934, during W. H. Irwin's chairmanship. After Irwin became ill and was unable to carry out his editorial duties, Roschen filled in. When Irwin died in 1937, Roschen was named editor and journal chairman, roles in which he served until 1948. Roschen also was a vice president of the society for 1937-1938 and AOCS secretary from 1945 to 1951.

He remained with Swift & Co. for 44 years, retiring in May 1970. Roschen, who lives in Forest Park, Illinois, was born April 4, 1905.

T. C. Law (1959)

Thomas C. Law, one of the founding fathers and charter members of AOCS, was named an honorary member in 1959. He served as AOCS vice president in 1915, president in 1916, on the Referee Board and such committees as fat analysis, color, seed analysis, peanut analysis, journal, refining, uniform methods and Smalley. He was an industrial chemist, organizing one of the first industrial laboratories in the South. That was Law and Company, formed in 1903, in Atlanta.

In 1947, he formed Law-Barrow-Agee Laboratories Inc., which became Law Engineering Testing Company in 1958. He was born in 1880 and died in 1962. He specialized in chemical development of the vegetable oil industry, with emphasis on chemical control of manufacturing, basic research and perfection of analytical methods of evaluating products. He was very active in the Masonic Order and the Shriners of North America. In 1915, he was instrumental in establishing the first Masonic orthopedic hospital in the U.S., the Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children in Decatur, Georgia. He also served as chairman of the Chemists Committee of the National Cottonseed Products Association for more than 30 years.

A. S. Richardson (1959)

A. S. Richardson was named an honorary member in 1959. Serving as society president in 1931, Richardson helped guide AOCS through the Depression. He was a member of the Referee Board, 1931-1954, the Smalley Committee, 1946-1952, the Editorial Advisory Board, 1932-1948, and the AOCS Governing Board, 1930-1936. During his tenure as president, AOCS' journal title was changed from *Oil and Fat Industries to Oil and Soap*, reflecting the growing role of the soap section in the society. Richardson joined AOCS in 1921.

Most of his career was devoted to research on soaps, synthetic detergents and edible fats and oils. He is credited with

organizing, expanding and supervising Procter & Gamble's chemical research department. He joined Procter & Gamble in 1921 and directed chemical research there until 1946, when he was named associate director of the Chemical Division. He taught chemistry at Princeton for three years before and after World War I and served as a field artillery officer during the war. He retired in 1954 and died in 1978.

When elected to honorary membership, Richardson wrote a letter of thanks, saying, "I am not too modest to class myself among the many who have given much of themselves to the society, but it constantly gave me more than it received in turn."

J. J. Ganucheau (1963)

"The fact that the AOCS is one of the foremost scientific organizations in the world was not brought about by chance but by men," according to J. J. Ganucheau in a *JAACS* commentary dated March 1959.

Ganucheau joined AOCS in 1918, served as third vice president of AOCS during 1936-1937 and second vice president in 1942-1943. He was a member of the Governing Board between 1954-1957 and served as New Orleans representative between 1947-1963. He also served on such committees as advertising, uniform methods, refining, soaps in refining oils and soapstock.

He was district chemist for Wesson Oil and Snowdrift Company in Louisiana and retired from the Wesson Division of Hunt Foods in 1962, after 44 years of service. He was also a prize-winning photographer.

Ganucheau was made an honorary member in 1963. At the time of his death in 1966 he was a consulting chemical engineer.

T. H. Hopper (1963)

An agricultural chemist, Turner H. ("Hop") Hopper joined AOCS in 1936 while working at the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. Previously, he had worked at the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station. From 1939 to 1942, he was with the USDA Regional Laboratory in Urbana, Illinois. In 1942, he was assigned to the USDA research facility in New Orleans, now the Southern Regional Research Center, where he served as chief of the Oilseed Crops Laboratory from 1958 to 1962, when he retired.

Hopper served on the AOCS Governing Board from 1948 through 1961, including terms as secretary (1951-1954), vice president (1955-1956), and president (1956-1957). He received a special merit award for his ten years as editor of analytical methods for the society. He was a member of many committees, including membership, nominating and election, convention manual, by-laws revision, emeritus membership and check sample, and chaired most. He also was a New Orleans representative.

Hopper was named an honorary member in 1963. He died in 1978 at the age of 83.

V. C. Mehlenbacher (1964)

Virgil C. Mehlenbacher, AOCS president in 1949, was named to honorary membership in 1964. He started his career in 1926 as an analytical chemist with Swift and Company, Chicago. From 1929 to 1936, Mehlenbacher was

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supervisor of the company laboratory at Los Angeles. From 1937 to 1941 he was head of the company's Eastern Division laboratories with headquarters in Newark, after which he returned to Chicago to direct analytical methods research. By 1948 he was the company's chief chemist. In 1961 he was named general manager of the company's newly established quality assurance department.

Mehlenbacher was born in 1901, joined the AOCS in 1933 and retired in 1966.

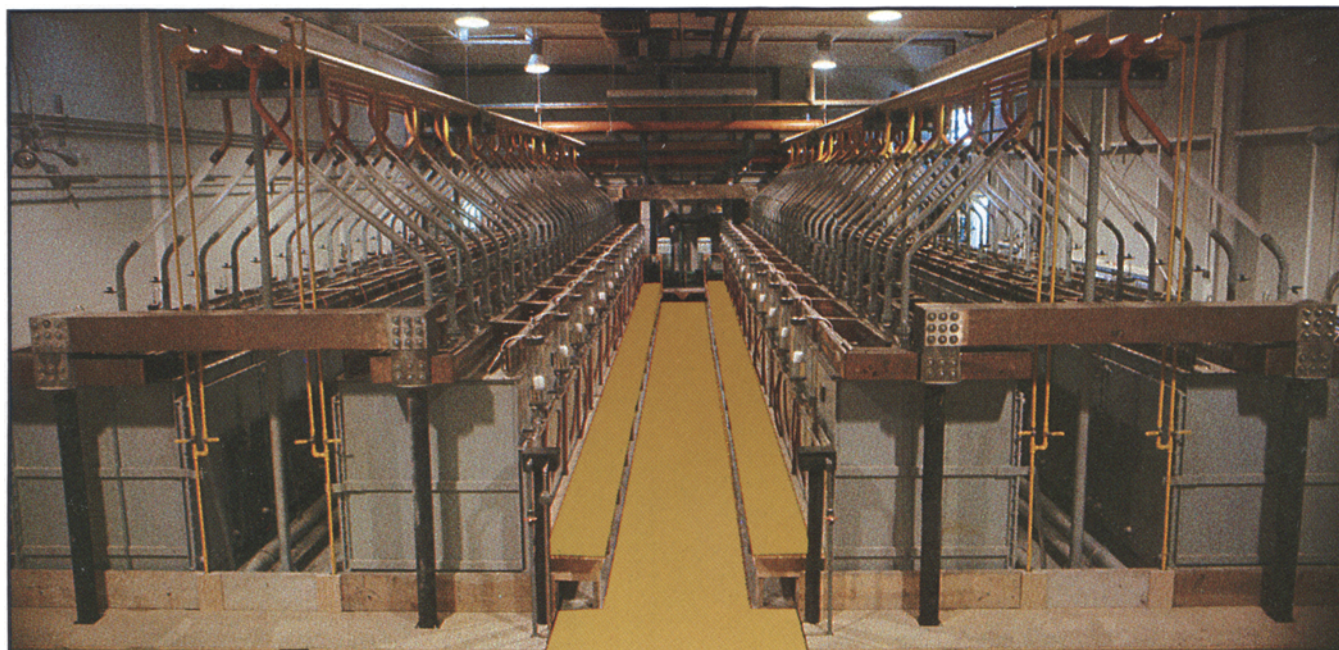
Serving on many AOCS committees over the years, he has been known particularly for his work as chairman of the Fat Analysis Committee, a position which he took over in 1939 and held through 1961. He revised and rewrote the book of Official Methods during the 1940s, and served as technical editor between 1945 and 1950. Mehlenbacher was a member of several scientific and technical societies and a charter member of the Institute of Food Technologists. He wrote the book *The Analysis of Fats and Oils*, published in 1960. Mehlenbacher was the first recipient of the North Central Section's Alton E. Bailey Achievement Medal in 1959.

Following retirement, Mehlenbacher spent about eight years on various consulting assignments. These included trips to Poland and Israel. In 1978, the Mehlenbachers sold their home with prized rose gardens and settled down to apartment living and "official retirement" in LaGrange Park, Illinois.

Hans P. Kaufmann (1964)

Professor Hans P. Kaufmann was founder of the German Society for Fat Research and served as its president for more than 30 years, 1935-1968. He also initiated the International Society for Fat Research in 1954 and was president of the First World Fat Congress held in Hamburg in 1964.

Kaufmann developed methods for analyzing and characterizing fats and oils and worked in lipid synthesis. He was professor emeritus of the University of Münster, Germany, where he had served as head of the Department of Pharmacy and Chemical Technology until 1958. He also had been director of the Federal Center for Fat Research in Germany.



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Kaufmann, born in 1889, joined AOCS in 1954 and was named an honorary member in 1964. He died in 1971.

John P. Harris (1967)

J. P. Harris, chemical engineer, joined AOCS in 1916. He designed, installed and started operating refining, deodorizing and shortening plants, salad-oil plants and hydrogenation plants. He worked at Armour and Company and the Phoenix Cotton Coil Company, and served in the chemical warfare service during World War I. He joined the Industrial Chemical Company, pioneer manufacturers of "bleaching carbons," and managed its Chicago office from 1926 until he retired in 1951. At that time, he organized his own company, John P. Harris Inc.

In 1932, he served as AOCS vice president and moved up to president the following year. He received honorary membership in 1967. In a speech announcing Harris' honorary membership status, then AOCS president C. W. Hoerr said, "Jack managed to keep the Society financially solvent through those years (Depression) although the sources of sufficient income were not readily apparent to the members. My grapevine informs me that Jack Harris dipped into his own pocket many times to cover society expenses."

Harris lived from 1886 to 1967.

R. H. Potts (1970)

Ralph H. Potts, also a chemical engineer, was best known for his work in fractional distillation of fatty acids, which led to the production of pure fatty acids on a commercial scale. He was responsible for the design and construction of a number of fatty acid and fatty chemical plants in the U.S. and Europe.

Potts joined Armour International Chemical Company in 1922 and worked in glycerine and soap manufacturing operations. He designed and built the first commercial unit for producing nitriles and amines and two pilot plants—one for edible products produced from continuous hydrogenation and deodorization of tallows and shortening oils, the other for developing processes to manufacture chemical derivatives from fats and oils. He invented more than 25 patents covering process methods and equipment for producing fatty acids and fatty chemicals. He retired from Armour in 1961 but continued to do consultant work. At the time of his death, at age 80, in 1981, he was a consulting engineer for Armak Company (now Akzo Chemie America).

In 1960, Potts became the second person to receive the Alton E. Bailey Achievement Award. He joined AOCS in 1938 and was made an honorary member in 1970. Armak established the Ralph H. Potts Memorial Award to commemorate his contributions to the industry.

Walter O. Lundberg (1975)

Walter O. Lundberg, AOCS president in 1963, joined the society in 1944 and was made an honorary member in 1975, the same year he received AOCS' Award in Lipid Chemistry.

Most of his professional life was dedicated to developing the Hormel Institute. His research interests in the chemistry, biochemistry, nutrition, metabolism and processing of fats, oils and other lipids gave Hormel Institute its direction and helped make it a strong division of the University of Minnesota.

Lundberg was chemistry instructor at Johns Hopkins University in 1934-1935 and a research chemist for U.S. Steel Corporation in 1935. He joined the University of Minnesota faculty in 1941 and became a full professor of physiological chemistry in 1947, professor of biochemistry in 1949. He was resident director of the Hormel Institute from 1944 to 1949, and executive director from 1949 until 1975 when he officially retired at age 65.

He served as editor of *Lipids* from 1967 to 1974. Other activities in the society have included serving as member-at-large, secretary, vice president and member of the Foundation Board of Directors, the *Lipids* Editorial Advisory Board and education committee. He also has chaired a number of committees, from membership to awards. He was honorary chairman of the joint ISF-AOCS World Conference in 1971 and ISF president.

In 1967, he received the Alton B. Bailey Award as well as awards in Germany, England, France, Spain, and Argentina for his contributions to the field of oil and fat chemistry.

After retiring, he served as a consultant for the American Soybean Association during 1977-1978, helping ASA to set up a project comparing partially hydrogenated soy oil and corn oil on lowering the serum cholesterol in humans. In 1978, he received an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation U.S. Senior Scientist's Award and spent a year abroad, chiefly in Münster, West Germany. He spends winters in Florida or Arizona, although his "home base" is Minneapolis, Minnesota. Summers, he often can be found at a cottage on Sugar Lake, Minnesota, where he is writing a history of Hormel Institute.

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