

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
WILLIAM J. MANDY**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for William J. Mandy, professor emeritus, microbiology, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

**IN MEMORIAM
WILLIAM J. MANDY**

William J. Mandy died at his home in Austin on June 8, 1999, at the age of 66. At the time of his death, Bill was professor emeritus at the University in the Department of Microbiology. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Rosalie, his son, David, his daughter and son-in-law, Pam and Dean Blaine, his daughter Lara, and her fiancé, Charles Hoene, and grandchildren, Nicholas and Carly Blaine. His sister and brother-in-law, Peggy and Jim Walker, also survive him.

Bill was born in Lackawanna, New York, on March 12, 1933, to Gabriel and Margaret Mandy. His parents had immigrated to the United States in their youth; his mother as a teenager from Czechoslovakia; his father as a young adult who, although born in the U.S., had grown up in Hungary where his parents had returned after missing their homeland. Gabriel returned to find a better future for himself in upstate New York, where he and his future wife met each other in English night classes. As a result of this rich ethnic family history, Bill and his sister Peggy grew up within two cultures, that of their parents' new country and their old ones, and became bilingual in English and Hungarian. Perhaps because of this background, Bill became an individual who was always keen to experience new adventures and was excited by new ideas and technologies. At the same time, he was well rooted in his sense of family tradition and responsibility.

After graduating from high school in 1951, Bill attended the University of Buffalo for two years, leaving to serve as a medic and paratrooper in the U.S. Army from 1953 to 1955. He completed his BS degree in 1958 at Elmhurst College in Illinois, where he seriously began to orient his future professional goals toward a career in biology and biochemistry. Elmhurst was also where he met his future wife, Rosalie.

Following their marriage, Bill and Rosalie moved to the University of Houston. In 1960, two years after moving to Texas, Bill obtained an MS degree. While at Houston, Bill worked on cholesterol deposition in *Penicillium* molds. After completing the MS degree, he made the decision to switch to his ultimate field of study, immunology.

For his PhD degree, which Bill obtained in 1963 from the University of Illinois, Urbana, he trained in the specialized field of immunology known as immunochemistry. During that three-year period, he not only helped care for his family, did research, and wrote a dissertation, he also co-authored an astonishing seven papers with his mentor, Al Nisonoff, on a variety of topics related to the recombination and heterogeneity of univalent rabbit antibody fragments. These papers were uniformly of high quality and were quickly published in some of the world's most prestigious journals: *Science*, *Nature*, *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and *The Journal of Biological Chemistry*, with Bill as the senior author of three of those contributions.

His next move was to the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco, where he further honed his research skills in aspects of antibody immunochemistry and immunology, as a United States Public Health Service Fellow, working with Hugh Fundenberg. As during his PhD research years, his two

postdoctoral years were extremely productive and resulted in Bill coauthoring another six important papers, again published in some of his field's best journals.

Bill began his professorial career at The University of Texas at Austin in 1965, when he joined the Department of Microbiology as an assistant professor. Once at the University, Bill continued to make rapid research contributions to the emerging literature dealing with the immunochemistry of rabbit antibodies. By that time, however, it was not only with his own hands at the bench, but also as a mentor of research students. The outstanding productivity and the high quality of his group's accomplishments in those early and difficult years for any young professor are shown by his rapid advancement from assistant to associate to full professor in eight years. During that time and after, Bill mentored numerous postdoctoral associates and master's students, in addition to the ten or more students who earned PhD degrees under his supervision.

During his academic career at The University of Texas, Bill routinely taught courses in graduate immunochemistry and undergraduate immunology, which were highly praised. In fact, it is common to find that students who had taken his undergraduate course remember him as an excellent and fair but rigorous teacher. Bill's keen insights and clarity of thinking inspired and set a high standard for his graduate students. He sincerely cared about his students as individuals and was always available to discuss and offer advice on issues regarding science, career or personal matters. Of his graduate students, most have gone on themselves to distinguished teaching or research careers, with several currently holding the rank of full professor, and one even having gained the distinction of being elected to the National Academy of Sciences. Among his undergraduates, many are known to have profited not only in the classroom, but also in the laboratory where Bill was at his best, because he never let professorial life completely drive him from his first love, hands-on research. It was not unusual to find Bill at the bench, patiently demonstrating a technique or expressing intense interest in the outcome of an experiment and, more often than not, taking part in that experiment himself.

Bill's research dealt mostly with the genetics and regulation of rabbit immunoglobulin production and processing. His laboratory made numerous contributions to the field of immunochemistry, with particular emphasis being placed on the regulation of genetic polymorphism in immunoglobulins. In recent years, the focus was on the definition of biochemical properties and inheritance patterns of rabbit immunoglobulin allotypes and major histocompatibility complex class II antigens. Other studies included immunochemical analysis of immunoglobulin hinge region epitopes and identification of thymus-specific cell surface molecules. The high quality of this research, and the high esteem with which it was held among his peers, are easily documented by review of the many scientific honors he received over the years. These included a prestigious U.S. Public Health Service Career Development Award that ran from 1966 to 1976; his continuous receipt of competitive research grants from the National Institutes of Health throughout most of his career, in addition to grants from other agencies, such as the National Science Foundation and the Welch Foundation; his appointments to numerous editorial boards and grant study sections; and his numerous invitations to organize symposia or to present his science throughout the world at a variety of national and international meetings.

Between 1972 and 1983, Bill served on the editorial boards of *Molecular Immunology*, the *Journal of Immunology*, the *African Journal of Immunology*, and *Contemporary Topics in Immunology*. He edited, in 1973, with R. A. Reisfeld, Volume 2 of *Contemporary Topics in Molecular Immunology*, and with F. Inman, Volumes 4 and 8 in 1975 and 1981, respectively. From 1971 to 1974, he was a member of the Standardization and Nomenclature Committee on Immunoglobulin Allotypes—International Union of Immunological Societies. Bill was a member of the American Society of Immunologists, the Canadian Society for Immunology, the American Society for Microbiology, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was also a visiting guest professor at the University of Brussels, Belgium in 1976, chairman of the UT Austin Department of Microbiology in 1980-81, and a visiting scientist in the Department of Microbiology at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas in 1985.

Bill retired from the University with emeritus status in 1995. However, he did not retire from actively contributing to the world of immunology. Rather, he pursued and fulfilled yet another goal by successfully establishing the immunology-based companies known today as Bio-Medical Services of Austin, Bio-Medical International of Austin, and Pan American Veterinary Labs, the latter with friend and colleague,

Bob Glass. These successful businesses provide allergen detection systems and solutions to veterinarians treating cats, dogs, horses, and cattle in the U.S., Latin America, Sweden, France, and South Africa.

Bill loved to spend time with friends and family, and to travel, fish, and hunt. He was a connoisseur of Hungarian food, wine, and family traditions. He was a great storyteller, particularly of tales calling on his Hungarian background or his various fishing, hunting or other expeditions with friends or family. These loves gave him endless material for talking about things other than science. For example, one of his favorite stories involved a chat many years ago with three of his colleagues, one of whom also had a Hungarian background. The four of them were heading back to their labs after lunch one day, talking about their backgrounds. One asked Bill whether he could speak Hungarian, which of course Bill could do. Then he asked the other Hungarian-surnamed colleague the same question, whose reply was that he knew very few words. "Like what?" the first asked, to which the fellow responded, "Well, words like *gudahgeki*." "Well, what does *gudahgeki* mean?" he asked. Without missing a beat, and never having exchanged this story before with his colleague, Bill reached into his pocket, pulled out a set of keys, and said, "Really, don't you know what a *gudahgeki* is? It's what opens a *gudahge* (garage) door!"

Other funny stories routinely exchanged included those pertaining to the many failures encountered while fishing during the annual fishing trip of the "tongue-in-cheek" Society for Applied Piscatology, better known to members as the SAPS. In one story Bill loved to tell, his boat had caught about 20 or 30 whites in just one quick pass off Rocky Point at Lake Buchanan. They were so proud of this catch that they couldn't wait to get back to the camp and show it to their fellow fishermen. Away they sped, only to discover upon reaching shore that they had lost most of the catch when these experienced fishermen forgot to tie the fishing baskets securely to the boat before putting them in the lake for safe keeping.

One of Bill's most admirable traits was his ability to be able to say just the right things in times of crisis or tragedy, both publicly and privately. He could be gracious to and about those who might have wronged him, passionate and truly comforting when family or friends faced personal crises, and tolerant of listening to a person's concern which, in retrospect, might have been insignificant, but seemed important at the time. He had a vibrant personality that could fill any room he was in, yet in quiet personal talks, his attention was fully upon the speaker and the issues at hand. His family, his friends, and his professional colleagues will miss Bill Mandy.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Paul J. Szaniszló (chair), Charles F. Earhart, and Henry R. Bose.

Distributed to the Dean of the College of Natural Sciences, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President on April 20, 2000. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. This resolution is posted under "Memorials" at: <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/>