

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
KEITH PRESTON YOUNG**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Keith Preston Young, professor emeritus, geological sciences, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The General Faculty

**IN MEMORIAM
KEITH PRESTON YOUNG**

Keith Preston Young was born into an old-time ranching family in Buffalo, Wyoming, in 1918. He frequently talked fondly about his experiences growing up in the area. As the first in his family to attend college, Keith's geological education began at the University of Wyoming, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1940 and his master's in 1942. In the summer of 1942 Keith served as an assistant to the Wyoming State Geologist. He joined the U.S. Army in September 1942, served in Europe, and retired as a captain in August 1946. He had interesting stories of his experiences slogging through Germany near the end of WWII. Following his military service, Keith returned to his geological studies, receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin at Madison two years later in 1948. During the summers of 1947 and 1952, Keith also served as an instructor at the Princeton University field camp. While at Madison, Keith met Ann Smedal, and they were married on June 4, 1949. Keith and Ann had three sons, Keith M., Steven E., and Robert A.

In 1948 Keith joined the geology faculty of The University of Texas and began his long career teaching and leading research on Cretaceous stratigraphy and ammonite paleobiology. His zest for discovering ammonites and expanding knowledge of Cretaceous events continued following his retirement from teaching in 1988. He directed fifty theses and dissertations, most of which focused on the study of Cretaceous geology during the years of 1950-1983. His teaching success was recognized in 1981 when the department awarded him the Houston Oil and Minerals Excellence in Teaching Award.

Keith's professional contributions have been significant and varied. In 1970 at the beginning of the development of the new discipline of environmental geology, Keith designed and presented a short course for the American Geological Institute. He expanded this material as a basis for a new undergraduate elective course in the department and wrote one of the first textbooks in this discipline, *Geology: the Paradox of Earth and Man* (1975). From 1975 to 1982 he served on the Mid-Cretaceous Working Group of the International Geological Correlations program of the International Geological Congress (IGC) and on the Tethyan Correlations Working Group. His publication record began in 1949 and ranges from ammonite paleontology to Holocene subsidence. A major accomplishment has been the erection of the ammonite biostratigraphy of the Gulf Cretaceous System and the correlation of the European stages. Keith recognized the alternating endemic and cosmopolitan character of ammonite biotas in the Gulf Comanchean and the significance of these to understanding sea level changes in North America. Keith continued his ammonite research long after retirement.

Keith was a voracious reader of geology journals and science articles in newspapers and magazines, including those far from his own fields of interest. The various clippings that he posted on the bulletin board outside his office were the best source of new discoveries in science prior to the internet.

A satellite interest of Keith was research on rudists, and he ably guided his students within this research domain. Keith also produced and catalogued a large number of acetate peels of rudist specimens that are now in the Texas Memorial Museum. His excellent cataloguing of the research collections held within the Department of Geological Sciences has enabled the museum to move that information speedily into the digital world.

Keith provided important public relations and service functions for the Department of Geology over the years. For example, when numerous lay visitors brought in local rocks or fossils that they wanted identified, Keith delighted in not only identifying the objects but would provide a brief lecture on the geological and historical significance of the item.

A useful non-scientific endeavor of Keith was the writing of a history of the discipline of teaching and research at UT Austin up to the time of the dedication of the "new" geology building in 1967. He remained the authority on the history of the department long after his retirement.

Keith Young died at his home on August 20, 2004.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Earle F. McBride (chair), Robert L. Folk, and William R. Muehlberger.

Distributed to the dean of the College of Natural Sciences, the executive vice president and provost, and the president on December 17, 2004. 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/>.