

Wolfgang H. J. Yourgrau FREE

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New England Research Application Center has added **C. Gilbert Young** to its technical staff.

Robert L. Chase, recently of Piedmont Virginia Community College, Char-

lottesville, Va., is now associate professor of physics at Sweet Briar College.

Dale F. Dickinson has recently joined the radioastronomy group at Caltech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

obituaries

Wolfgang H. J. Yourgrau

Wolfgang H. J. Yourgrau died in Denver on 18 July 1979, soon after returning home from an extended lecture and research tour of Europe. The world of physics and the philosophy of science has lost a multi-talented scholar; the world in general, a unique and colorful humanist.

Yourgrau was born near Berlin in 1908. He attended the Werner-Siemens Realgymnasium in Berlin and then the local von Humboldt University, where he studied theoretical physics, mathematics and biology. First, as a tutor in natural philosophy and later as an assistant to Erwin Schrödinger, Yourgrau worked towards his doctorate, which he earned in 1932, the year that also marked the end of the Weimar Republic.

With the rise to power of the Nazis the following year, Yourgrau, an organizer of the SAP (an offshoot of the German Social Democratic Party), became a target for harassment. After being severely beaten by Storm Troopers, he fled Germany and lectured against Fascism while passing through Latvia, Poland and other countries. Finally, Yourgrau was permitted to enter Palestine, a British mandate at that time, as a political refugee.

In Palestine, he traveled widely as a lecturer for the educational and cultural division of the *Histadrut* (Jewish Federation of Labor), discussing local problems, but the menace of Nazism remained foremost in his mind. In the spring of 1942, British authorities granted Yourgrau a license to publish *Orient*, an independent German-language weekly. With himself as editor-in-chief and Arnold Zweig, the exiled novelist-dramatist as co-publisher, *Orient* declared war "on every fascist movement, every attempt to restrict the right of free expression of opinion..." But it was a subsidiary point on the program of *Orient*, one touching on Palestine's complex internal politics, that brought turmoil to the journal. Boycotts and threats against businesses associated with *Orient*, culminating in the destruction of the offices of its fourth printer finally compelled the closing of the financially crippled journal—one year after it first appeared.

Yourgrau immediately sought a more active role in the fight against the Axis Powers. Working at first for the Palestine Information Office, he prepared Ger-



YOURGRAU

man-language news bulletins that were broadcast on Jerusalem Radio. The US Office of Strategic Services, having established its Middle Eastern Headquarters in Cairo, then also recruited Yourgrau to help in planning intelligence operations behind enemy lines.

After the war, Yourgrau resumed his academic career and his interrupted research as Head of the Department of Logic and Scientific Method at the School of Higher Studies in Jerusalem and subsequently as Acting Dean of its Faculty of Arts and Sciences there. In 1948, Yourgrau emigrated to South Africa, his wife's native country. During the following decade he taught, wrote and did research at the Universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand and Natal. He moved to the US in 1959 to take a position as a research professor at the Minnesota Center for the Philosophy of Science and then to become chairman of the department of history of science at Smith College in Northampton, Mass. In 1963 Yourgrau accepted a permanent post as professor of history and philosophy of science at the University of Denver.

Over the years, Yourgrau's manifold publications have ranged from political editorials in *Orient* to papers on general relativity. This made him known to an exceptionally large spectrum of scholars, a fact attested to by the scheduled appearance in 1981 of a memorial volume of essays written in his honor by over forty of his academic colleagues. Among his

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obituaries

best known books are *Variational Principles in Dynamics and Quantum Theory* and *A Treatise on Irreversible and Statistical Thermodynamics*. In 1969 he and Henry Margenau started the international journal *Foundations of Physics*, of which he remained an editor until his death.

Gregarious and extroverted, his forthrightness and lack of false modesty endeared him to some, made enemies of others. His co-workers and many friends in different parts of the world enjoyed his unique kind of humor, were buoyed by his passion for life, and stimulated by his enthusiasm for intellectual pursuits. Sentimental and deeply emotional, he was intensely loyal to individuals whose friendship he valued, expecting the same degree of allegiance in return. But perhaps the most enduring impression will be his automatic reflex to side with, and concretely support, human beings—whether fellow students in Germany, penniless intellectual exiles in Palestine, or anyone else who crossed his path—who were treated unjustly or in need of help.

ALWYN VAN DER MERWE
University of Denver

John M. Peech

John M. Peech died on 10 June 1979 at the age of 37. Despite the brevity of his career, he had been involved in an extraordinarily wide range of activities as a physicist, musician and poet. After studying for two years at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, he returned to his home town of Ithaca to study Applied Science at Cornell University. As an undergraduate he assisted Robert Pohl with experimental studies of the ultrapurification of alkali halide crystals. He then earned his PhD at Harvard University (1974) studying cyclotron resonance in metals at far-infrared frequencies, a subject he brought to a new

PEECH



level of sophistication. Pursuing his interests in applied science, he worked for several years at Stone and Webster Engineering Corp analyzing pipe restraints and other components of nuclear power plants, and initiating an experimental program to test some of the assumptions of the designs. Subsequently he returned to Cornell, where, at the time of his death, he was working with Pohl on geophysical problems relevant to nuclear waste storage. Throughout his career as a physicist, Peech retained his love of music; in 1973 he won the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra Competition and gave a brilliant concert performance of Bartok's Second Piano Concerto with the Orchestra. He also was an accomplished poet and had several of his poems published in the *New Yorker*. Because of his loyalty and unique intensity and versatility, John will be long remembered by his friends in many walks of life.

WILLIAM J. SKOCPOL
MICHAEL TINKHAM
Harvard University
ROBERT POHL
Cornell University

Laurence A. Marusak

Laurence A. Marusak, who had recently been appointed an assistant professor of physics at Wayne State University, died unexpectedly in Michigan on 19 December 1979 at the age of 26. Born in Pennsylvania, he received his BS degree in physics and chemistry from Millersville State College in 1975. Marusak earned his PhD in solid-state science from the Pennsylvania State University in 1979, where he held an National Science Foundation Engineering Traineeship in the interdisciplinary solid-state science program. Prior to joining Wayne State, Marusak was also a project associate in the Materials Research Laboratory at Penn State.

Marusak's research activities and interests were in the interdisciplinary area of materials science, with a doctoral thesis that included synthesis, magnetic studies and Mössbauer spectroscopy of iron sulfides, x-ray emission, Auger spectroscopy and some high-pressure work. In addition, he had acquired technical skill in the area of rf sputtering and was actively engaged in studying the physics of amorphous magnetic oxides of iron. In his brief teaching career, he pursued his duties with great enthusiasm and was highly regarded by his students.

Marusak impressed his colleagues with his energy, ability and promise as a researcher, but even more so by the warmth of his personality and genuine interest in others, as evidenced by his many fruitful collaborations. His premature death has deprived the physics community of a talented and promising contributor, and those who have been his direct associates

have been deprived of a friend who will be remembered with affection.

R. L. THOMAS
A. M. DE GRAAF
Wayne State University
L. N. MULAY
The Pennsylvania State University

William S. Benedict

William S. Benedict, an internationally distinguished spectroscopist and professor emeritus of the Institute for Physical Science and Technology of the University of Maryland, died in Washington D.C., on 10 January. He was 70 years old.

Benedict earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Cornell University in 1928 and 1929, respectively. His scientific career was well underway in 1933 when he received his PhD from MIT. Benedict's doctoral dissertation on the structure of nitrogen dioxide was the basis of a landmark paper. He published several other papers on the absorption spectra of small molecules from 1933 to 1935 while serving at Princeton University as a fellow of the National Research Council.

After six years as an industrial research chemist, he joined the Geo-physical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution in Washington (1942-46) and then the National Bureau of Standards (1946-51). His work during the interval from 1946 to 1952 featured the first of his notable measurements on the spectra of water vapor and the oxides of carbon. He has been widely acclaimed for fundamental contributions delineating the mechanism of the water-vapor laser, and for his discovery of hydrogen chloride in the atmosphere of the planet Venus.

While principally a theoretician in his later years, he was never completely divorced from experimental matters. In fact, he was the originator of what is now called the "Benedictine Slits" technique, an ingenious method for investigating a

BENEDICT

