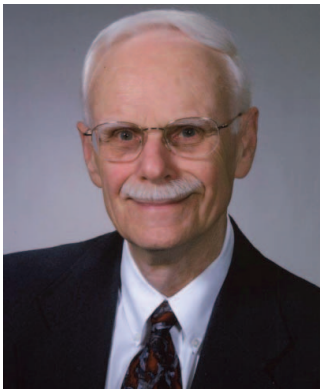

in memoriam



Dr. Ralph L. Webb, 1934–2011

Dr. Ralph Lee Webb, Professor Emeritus of Mechanical Engineering at Penn State University and Book Review Editor of *Heat Transfer Engineering* died April 3, 2011, in State College, Pennsylvania. Ralph—as he was known to everyone who had met him—was one of that special breed of engineers who had actually worked as an engineer in industry before returning to the academic world. His academic career began with a B.S. (with Honors) from Kansas State University, followed by service with the U.S. Air Force. He received a Master's from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, followed by a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. His research was directed towards understanding heat transfer mechanisms to improve equipment performance. In 1963, Ralph joined The Trane Company in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, as Manager of Research. Trane, a major manufacturer of air-conditioning systems, also manufactured plate-fin (or matrix) heat exchangers for the process and energy industries, and

they had great interest in developing new surface configurations to enhance performance. He stayed at Trane for 14 years.

In 1977, Ralph moved to the Mechanical Engineering Department at Penn State, bringing along his industrial experience and especially his interest in all forms and mechanisms of heat transfer enhancement in industrial applications. He developed and taught courses for the students and he also organized courses for the ASME Professional Development program; in these activities, he collaborated with Dr. Arthur Bergles of Rensselaer and Heat in History Emeritus Editor of *Heat Transfer Engineering*. Ralph's research programs produced 49 Master's and 17 Doctoral students. Ralph's research programs resulted in many papers and conference presentations. And he found time to write a definitive text in the field, *Principles of Enhanced Heat Transfer* and found the *Journal of Enhanced Heat Transfer* in 1993.

In recognition of these accomplishments, Ralph received the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Heat Transfer Memorial Award, the Institute of Refrigeration Hall-Thermotank Gold Medal, and the Donald Q. Kern Award from the American Institute of Chemical Engineers for his work in applied heat transfer.

Ralph is survived by his wife, Sylvia Apple, of State College, two daughters, two stepchildren, and two grandchildren. In his spare (!) time and in retirement, Ralph enjoyed repairing antique clocks.

Those of us who were privileged to know Ralph and Sylvia (a scholar in her own right and a frequent attendant at heat transfer activities) will long recall his friendliness, straight-forward and thoughtful approach to any issue, and his high standard of personal and professional conduct.

Ken Bell