

## In Memoriam Andrew Gans "Jack" Sharkey, Jr.



A. G. (Jack) Sharkey Jr., a pioneer in analytical mass spectrometry and its application to the analysis of organic molecules, died Nov. 17, 2003, in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania at the age of 84.

Sharkey's career spanned more than five decades. A physicist by training, he attended the College of Wooster, Case Institute of Technology and the University of Pittsburgh. Upon graduation in 1943, he joined Westinghouse where he was a member of a team developing the Westinghouse mass spectrometer. He joined the U.S. Bureau of Mines in 1946 and stayed with the laboratory in Bruceton Pennsylvania during its transition to the Department of Energy in 1977. From 1978 to 1985, he was Deputy Director of the Pittsburgh Energy Technology Center (PETC), at that time the largest fossil energy research center operated by the federal government. Sharkey's major research interest at PETC was the application of spectrometric techniques to the analysis of coal and coal-derived fuels. He had more than 200 publications to his credit, most of them in the field of mass spectrometry of organic compounds.

As an adjunct faculty member at the Department of Geology and Planetary Science (GPS) at the University

of Pittsburgh, Sharkey taught two of the earliest graduate-level mass spectrometry courses in the country beginning in 1964 and continuing through his retirement. The two-course sequence, "Introductory Mass Spectrometry" and "Interpretation of Mass Spectra," included students from many departments at the University of Pittsburgh as well as from other universities and industrial research laboratories in the area.

Following Sharkey's retirement from the federal government in 1985, he was named Research Professor for the Departments of Chemistry and GPS and a senior research collaborator with Professor David Hercules in the University's Surface Science Laboratory.

Jack was also a sterling citizen of the scientific community. He worked tirelessly as meeting organizer, session chair, committee member, and society officer for several scientific societies. A long-time member and past Chairman of the Pittsburgh Conference on Analytical Chemistry and Applied Spectroscopy, and of the Spectroscopy Society in Pittsburgh, he was also a charter member of ASTM Committee E-14 on Mass Spectrometry and Allied Topics and of its successor organization, the American Society for Mass Spectrometry (ASMS). In 1963, Jack served a term as Vice-President for Arrangements for ASTM E-14 and in 1971 he was a

Charter Member of the Board of the newly-formed ASMS as Member-at-Large.

Among his many awards, Sharkey received the Department of Interior Distinguished Service Award in 1970 and the Department of Energy Distinguished Career Service Award in 1985, the highest awards given by those departments, respectively. He was the recipient of the Pittsburgh Award of the American Chemical Society, Pittsburgh Section, in 1992, and the ACS Student Affiliates Outstanding Service Award the same year. He was honored in 1994 as a pioneer in mass spectrometry at the James L. Waters Symposium in Chicago and in 1997 with a symposium in his name that brought some of the world's best-known scientists in mass spectrometry and geochemistry to Pittsburgh.

While Jack Sharkey's record of publications in the

scientific literature attests to his success and productivity as a research scientist, those who knew him as a respected colleague, wise mentor, enthusiastic teacher, or good friend will remember him as a self-effacing, gentle, kind man; ready to help with his considerable expertise and knowledge without a moment's hesitation. He was always supportive of young investigators and promoted their careers by invitations to conferences and symposia that he organized. He will be remembered for his great enthusiasm for mass spectrometry and its practitioners.

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