Vivian Thomas Stannett to Receive The Olney Medal

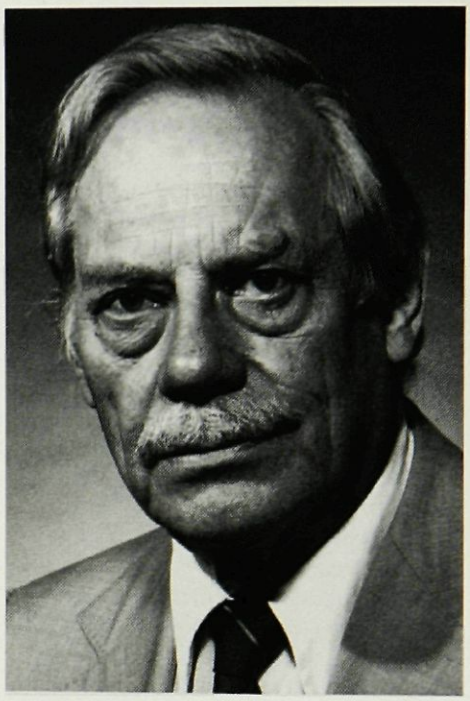
Vivian Thomas Stannett, Camille Dreyfus Professor Emeritus of chemical engineering at North Carolina State University, is this year's recipient of the Olney Medal for achievement in textile chemistry.

Stannett was born and raised on a farm in Bucks County in Southern England. In 1936 he entered the London Polytechnic and graduated with a BS in chemistry in 1939. His first position was as a shift manager of the cellulose acetate film plant of the British Celanese Corp. Due to World War II, the film was in great demand for gas masks and other military uses. In 1941 he was moved to the Army Laboratories at Woolwich Arsenal to work on detonator inspection and research. Eventually, the Arsenal was severely bombed and Stannett was moved to a large ordinance plant and laboratories near Liverpool. After the bombing ceased, he was moved back to Woolwich only to have his laboratory destroyed by a VI rocket. Fortunately there were no casualties, but the loss of the facility prompted his return to a cellulose acetate plant.

When the war ended, Stannett considered studying for a PhD in chemistry. He had read many of the works and activities of Professor Herman Mark (1965 Olney Medalist) at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn and applied to work with him. Although it was overcrowded with students on the G.I. Bill, Stannett was somewhat of a novelty in 1947 and often thought to be a G.I. groom! Dr. Mark offered him a place without a fellowship, but wrote that if Stannett did well in the first semester, he would obtain one in January, which he did.

Stannett started in graduate school at Brooklyn in 1947 and obtained a PhD in physical chemistry in 1950. He then returned to England to the cellulose acetate factory until 1951 when he and his wife moved permanently to the United States and became citizens in 1957.

After working in research for Koppers Co. in Pittsburgh, he was appointed assistant professor of forest chemistry at the College of Forestry at Syracuse University in 1952 and then became a full professor in 1957. His only sabbatic leave was in 1958-59 at



the University of Paris, working with Drs. Magat and Chapiro, leaders in the field of radiation grafting and chemistry of high polymers. This field of work continued in Syracuse until 1961 when he moved to the Research Triangle Institute as associate director of the newly formed Camille Dreyfus laboratory for polymer research. Henry A. Rutherford (1974 Olney Medalist) instigated this move. Stannett kept his academic credentials intact by becoming Adjunct Professor of chemistry at Duke University and later also at North Carolina State University. In early 1967, he joined the Chemical Engineering department at North Carolina State University, and was later named Camille Dreyfus Professor. He officially retired in 1988, but continued working until his final student graduated in 1992. The Research Triangle Institute has retained him part-time as Camille Dreyfus scientist.

Stannett's field of specialization includes the modification of fibers and applications of high polymers to textiles and pulp and paper; the effects of high energy radiation including electron beams on high polymers and to effect polymerization; and the transport of gases, water and small molecules in general in high polymers, barrier properties and membrane technology. He has published about 400 papers and reviews on various aspects of polymer science and technology.

Stannett is married to the former Susanne Sulzbacher who holds a BS honors degree in textile chemistry from the Queens University in Belfast. They worked together on a military research problem and married in 1946. They have one daughter, Rosemary, married to Christopher Royce, a self-employed musician, and three grandsons.

Professional Activities

Stannett has been quite involved with various professional groups. He was general secretary macromolecular secretariat, chairman of polymer division and chairman of the North Carolina section of the American Chemical Society (ACS). He has been involved with TAPPI, the Society of the Chemical Industry, Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Lambda Upsilon. He has also held the positions of chairman of "chemistry and physics paper" and "polymers" for Gordon Research Conferences, president of the North Carolina State Chapter of Sigma Xi and council member of Oak Ridge Associated Universities and has served on the board of governors and executive committee of RTI, advisory board of *Journal of Membrane Science* and editorial board of *Journal of Polymer Science, Macromolecular Science, Radiation Physics and Chemistry, Plastic Film and Sheeting, Polymer Contents,* and *Polymers for Advanced Technologies.*

Honors

Stannett has received many honors including Elected Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chemistry, New York Academy of Sciences, TAPPI and the Royal Society of Chemistry. Other honors are the Silver Medal from TAPPI, Borden Medal from the ACS, ACS Anselme Payen Medal, ACS North Carolina Distinguished Speaker Award, International Award and Gold Medal of the Society of Plastics Engineers, Distinguished Alumnus Award of the Polytechnic Institute of New York, Alcoa Foundation Distinguished Research Award from the NCSU School of Engineering, North Carolina Science Award and Gold Medal, UNC Board of Governor O. Max Gardner

Award, Honorary Chairman and Academic Achievement Award, ACS Award for Polymer Chemistry, Liaison Scientist of Polymer Science ONR - Europe, North Carolina Distinguished Chemist Award from the American Institute of Chemists, Honorary Member of the Society of Fiber Science and Technology (Japan), Elected Member of the National Academy of Engineering and Holladay Medal from NCSU.

The Olney Medal

Established in 1944 in honor of Dr. Louis Atwell Olney, the founder and first president of AATCC, The Olney Medal recognizes outstanding achievement in textile or polymer chemistry or other fields of chemistry of major importance to textile science. The award consists of a gold medal, a scroll and an honorarium.

Presentation of the medal each year is a highlight of AATCC conferences. This year the Association will present The Olney Medal at the conference Awards Luncheon on Monday, October 9 at the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta. Stannett will deliver the traditional Olney Medal Address in the theater at the Inforum beginning at 2:15 p.m. His topic will be Grafting to Natural and Synthetic Textile Fibers.

Previous Recipients

Stannett is the fifty-second recipient of The Olney Medal. The first medal was presented to Dr. Olney in 1944. Since then, the Association has awarded the Medal to:

1945: Milton Harris of Milton Harris Associates
1946: William H. Cady of U.S. Finishing Co.
1947: Edward R. Schwarz of Massachusetts Institute of Technology
1948: Harold M. Chase of Dan River Mills
1949: Charles A. Seibert of DuPont Co.
1950: George L. Royer of American Cyanamid Co.
1951: Raymond W. Jacoby of Ciba Co.
1952: Werner von Bergen of Forstmann Woolen Co.
1953: Roland E. Derby Sr. of Derby Co.
1954: William D. Appel of the National Bureau of Standards
1955: Miles A. Dahlen of DuPont Co.
1956: Walter J. Hamburger of Fabric Research Laboratories
1957: P. J. Wood of Royce Chemical Co.
1958: Henry E. Millson of American Cyanamid Co.
1959: Emery I. Valko of Lowell Technological Institute
1960: Arnold M. Sookne of Harris Research Laboratories
1961: Fred Fortess of Celanese Corp. of America
1962: Charles F. Goldthwait of North Carolina State University
1963: Guiliana C. Tesoro of J. P. Stevens & Co.
1964: Richard O. Steele of Rohm and Haas Co.
1965: Herman F. Mark of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn
1966: Wilson E. Reeves of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
1967: Edwin I. Stearns of American Cyanamid Co.
1968: Harold P. Lundgren of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
1969: D. Donald Gagliardi of Gagliard Research Corp.
1970: Paul L. Meunier of DuPont Co.
1971: Ernest R. Kaswell of Fabric Research Laboratories
1972: Victor S. Salvin of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro
1973: Herman B. Goldstein of Sun Chemical Corp.
1974: Henry A. Rutherford of North Carolina State University
1975: R. Lee Wayland Jr. of Dan River Inc.
1976: George L. Drake Jr. of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
1977: James M. Straley of Tennessee Eastman Co.
1978: Dmitry M. Gagarine of Milliken Research Corp.
1979: Joseph W. Gibson Jr. of DuPont Co.
1980: Roland E. Derby Jr. of Derby Co.
1981: Mathias J. Schuler of DuPont Co.
1982: Stephen B. Sello of J. P. Stevens & Co.
1983: Theodore F. Cooke of Textile Research Institute
1984: Ralph McGregor of North Carolina State University
1985: Stanley P. Rowland of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
1986: Melvin D. Hurwitz of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro
1987: Ludwig Rebenfeld of Textile Research Institute
1988: Martin K. Lindemann, Consultant
1989: J. Lee Rush of AlliedSignal Inc.
1990: Hans-Dietrich H. Weigmann of Textile Research Institute
1991: Robert J. Harper Jr. of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
1992: Bethlehem K. Andrews of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
1993: Herbert T. Pratt of DuPont Co.
1994: J. Nolan Etters of the University of Georgia