IN MEMORIAM

George Friou
Professor of Medicine
Irvine
1919 — 1999

Professor George Friou had a remarkable career in rheumatology and immunology, making seminal research contributions during every stage of his long career. After graduation from Yale Medical School, he remained at Grace New Haven Medical Center for a residency in internal medicine. He then had a tour in the U.S. Navy with an assignment to the laboratory of Naval Medical Research Unit #4. He subsequently returned to Yale as a research fellow and ultimately as a member of the faculty. After a brief tour as assistant professor at the University of Okalahoma, he joined the faculty of the University of Southern California School of Medicine as associate professor and chief of the Division of Rheumatology. In 1980 Dr. Friou became professor of medicine and chief of the Division of Rheumatology at UCI and held this position until his retirement on July 1, 1990.

Professor Friou's seminal research involved the introduction of the immunoflurescent technique to detect antinuclear antibodies (ANA). This became a principal factor in a revolution in our understanding of the disease, systemic lupus erythematosis (SLE), with an impact which persists today. The initial ANA work was followed by other ANA related major contributions. Thus, Professor Friou not only showed that a substance in the serum of patients with SLE reacted with the nuclei of cells but that the substance was gamma globulin and the target in the nucleus was DNA complexed with histones.

Other contributions of truly major significance preceded the antinuclear antibody studies. These include the discovery of the human antibody to streptococcal hyaluronidase, which until this day is used to demonstrate prior infection with the streptococcus and the first utilization of prevalent common antigens in a skin test to demonstrate disease anergy in sarcoidosis. These earlier contributions along with Dr. Friou's antinuclear antibody studies spanned the first half of his research career, a period of approximately 20 years. During the second 20 years, up until his retirement in 1990, Dr. Friou's continued to make significant contributions to our knowledge of rheumatic diseases and clinical immunology. In addition, he trained many post- doctoral fellows who in turn have gone on to make major scientific contributions.

During his career, Professor Friou and his family looked forward to spending quality time each summer on a small island off the cost of Maine, reached only by boat. Upon retirement, Professor Friou and Mrs. Friou were able to make their visits to the island last most of the year.

Professor Friou's surviving family, his many colleagues, and his numerous trainees will remember him for his intellectual curiosity, diligence, and leadership.

Jeremiah Tilles, M.D.