



IN MEMORIAM

Glen E. Everett
Professor of Physics Emeritus
UC Riverside
1934 – 2004

With the death of Glen Everett the UC Riverside campus and physics department has lost a valued colleague and friend. He was one of the founding members of the department, and devoted his career to the department and the campus.

Glen was an experimental condensed matter physicist. His dissertation and early scientific research studied microwave properties of metals with A. C. “Andy” Lawson, the first chair of the physics department, when they were both at the Institute for the Study of Metals of the University of Chicago. This work investigated the properties of metallic materials such as superconductivity. Giants in the field, such as Morrell Cohen and Helmut Fritsche, were very admiring of these early experiments. With Andy Glen also studied the behavior of solids under pressure, a difficult and sometimes exciting (pressure “bombs” can blow up!) experimental field.

Roy Goodrich, Glen’s first graduate student, writes

“I learned a huge amount from Glen during these few years, and after starting an academic career, I realized what else I had learned from Glen — how to teach the principles of basic experimental research to graduate students. Due to what Glen taught me about teaching research to graduate students — daily interaction, credit for doing things correctly, understanding of problems, both with physics and personal — when I became a faculty member at Louisiana State University, I very quickly had the largest number of experimental students in the department pursuing PhDs under my direction. This occurred because I knew how to apply Glen’s teaching principles, and the word spread quickly. There are now eighteen physics PhDs who are Glen’s grand- students and over 100 publications that should have Glen Everett listed as mentor and the person who made them possible.”

Glen’s later research in the 70s and 80s involved precision measurements of magnetic properties in the “critical” region near magnetic phase transitions. During his 1971 sabbatical year in Grenoble, France, he learned much from and gave much to some of the great European research efforts in this field. He had a string of remarkable postdoctoral students from Zurich and Grenoble. Glen was a consultant at the Naval Weapons Center, Corona and China Lake, for most of his career, from 1963 to 1994, working on microwave properties of materials. Some of this was classified work, but no secrets are revealed in guessing that he was involved in stealth aircraft technology (radar uses microwaves).

Many of us remember the seventies as a depressing time at UCR when student enrollment declined to such an extent that the president of UC speculated publicly that the campus might have to be closed. As we know, that didn’t happen, but with static enrollment the physics faculty was unchanged for many years. Glen’s colleague Peter Kaus once remarked that working in the physics department was like being on a cruise ship with the same fellow passengers for twenty years. Under these circumstances some departments fell victim to dissent and factionalism. But, throughout, physics remained a remarkably harmonious and cooperative group, and Glen was a key element in maintaining this spirit. He was always generous, happy for colleagues’ successes, ready to lend an ear and, if asked, provide sound advice.

Glen was meticulous in bureaucratic matters. One day passing Glen's office with a colleague we saw him writing away (Glen always kept his office door open) — he was composing a “final report” for a government agency telling them how he had used a federal research grant. We ribbed him a little: “Glen, the money is spent, don't waste time, just scribble a few lines, anything will do.” Of course he ignored us — Glen always fulfilled his obligations.

Glen created and maintained countless undergraduate lab courses in the UCR physics department. From this we learned Glen's unique secret to having happy and successful students: His courses demanded more work than anything else in physics, but the students took to the work well. One could almost see the scene. A student explaining to Glen that too much was expected of him, there wasn't enough time to do the work. There is Glen nodding in sympathy. Finally Glen would come up with the perfect solution: he would arrange — even if it meant that he would do the work himself — to make the laboratory available for more hours so that the students could get their work done. He was offering serious instruction in a serious program. How could it be otherwise? After graduation his students would regularly comment that they learned what mattered most from his courses. Glen was demanding, but gave the students more than enough material and of his own time in his office and in the lab. From this we learned a valuable lesson: students can be happy with your class even if you are very demanding, so long as they know what you expect and you give them the preparation they need to succeed.

He developed the campus's first microcomputer course in 1979; he coordinated hardware courses with new computer science initiative in the math department in 1984. These courses convinced university committees studying the feasibility of a new College of Engineering at UCR that electrical engineering was already alive and well on the campus.

As chair of the physics department in the eighties Glen consulted widely and sought consensus. This was the crucial period when UCR finally began to expand. The directions chosen and the faculty appointments made during his chairmanship were keys to ensuring a dynamic physics program over the next decade.

The Bourns College of Engineering was in large measure due to Glen's efforts. He went to see Dean Sherman and Executive Associate Dean Heath to start the process that led to the Bourns College of Engineering. Glen provided the initial spark, and worked with Executive Vice Chancellor (and later Chancellor) Hullar and Chancellor Schraer to bring Engineering along before even the first faculty members or staff were hired. Glen traveled, learning about other programs along with their successes and failures. He studied what elements of engineering buildings were effective, and what designs should be avoided. He worked with campus Architects and Engineers, and Budget and Planning to get the first engineering building several years into the long process before the first engineers were hired. Glen also designed initial curricula to get the academic degrees in engineering through the academic senate, and recruited the first freshman class of engineering majors. Glen was formally the interim dean of engineering for a year (1988-89) before the first regular dean was brought on board, but in reality he had served the campus for many years through initial planning and approval stages. He was truly the founding dean of the College of Engineering. Former Executive Vice Chancellor David Warren notes “...the immense role that Glen played in helping to get the College of Engineering started. He was a critical player in the early planning and development of Engineering, and while most people think of Susan Hackwood as the founding dean, in fact Glen deserves a great deal of credit for his formative work.”

Glen loved the wilderness. In the summer of the Centennial year 1975 one of us (A. K.) and her teenage nephew joined Glen and family for a memorable ten day backpacking trip in the High Sierras. It was superbly organized by Glen. He brought a capacious tent, which in an emergency could accommodate the entire party. Indeed the emergency arrived, in the form of a tremendous storm toward the end of the trip. After hunkering down for 24 hours they learned from a passing ranger that the storm might continue for days. Glen decided they should make a dash for it — shepherding them over the pass at ten thousand feet amidst lightening bolts and deafening thunder. Of course he got them safely down. Glen was a leader.

Our colleague Gordon VanDalen writes: “Glen loved students. The more he loved a student the harder he would be. He knew that good students (most students) would respond well to his demands because he was also there, working harder than they were because he was having fun too. Then there was the joy of life that Glen so often exhibited. People who didn't know him as well, perhaps never saw what a great smile he could produce. He was always able to talk about photography, hiking and backpacking, travel, and his family. One of our fondest memories is simply that: he just beamed when talking about his favorite things.”

We didn't expect to lose Glen so soon. But we know that he lived a happy and fulfilling life, always fully engaged in his work, his hobbies and above all his family, and that's a comfort.

Anne Kernan
Albert R. Stralka
Douglas E. MacLaughlin, Chair