

Clyde I. Boyer

July 21, 1913 — April 12, 2003

Clyde I. Boyer, Professor Emeritus of Veterinary Medicine passed away on April 12, 2003 in Tucson, Arizona. He was married for 61 years to his wife and companion, Ethelder "Sell," who died in 2005. His two daughters, Gail Moore and Sandra Boyer, a son, Clyde Boyer III, and a grandchild, Tiffany Moore, survive them.

Clyde was born in 1913 and grew up in Philadelphia. He attended the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1940 with the V.M.D. degree from the Veterinary School. He performed active duty in the military from 1941-46 and subsequently served for many years in the Medical Corps. Reserves, rising to the rank of Full Colonel. In 1946, he was appointed Assistant Professor in Clinical Pathology at the University of Pennsylvania, a post he held until 1950 when he moved to Georgia as an Associate Professor at the Experiment Station in Tifton. However, it was at Cornell that Clyde made his major career contributions. He joined the faculty in the College of Veterinary Medicine as an Associate Professor in 1952 to specialize in studies of turkey diseases. While in that position, he developed a program of immunization against erysipelas, a serious bacterial infection of turkeys, and also introduced the method of drinking-water-administration of procaine penicillin for the prevention of epizootics of the disease. Additionally, he studied salmonellosis and encephalomalacia in turkeys and worked on nonspecific enteritis of chickens and turkeys. His contributions were of great value to the turkey producers in New York State and elsewhere. He was promoted to Professor in 1960. In 1958, Clyde undertook a one-year sabbatic leave at Texas A&M University where he conducted research on psittacosis/ornithosis and where he was subsequently awarded an M.S. degree.

Dr. Boyer was a member of the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine and became the College's first Professor of Laboratory Animal Medicine in 1966. To assist him in his new endeavors, he took a second sabbatic leave to study at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine with particular emphasis on laboratory animal medicine. In September 1972, Dean George Poppensiek appointed him to the new position of Director of Laboratory Animal Medicine. In this position, he assumed responsibility for the teaching programs, research, and for the administration of laboratory animal care in the College. He also supervised the development of a University-wide program of laboratory animal care that had just been mandated by the United States Public Health Service. The program he initiated has developed into one of the nation's most exemplary programs of laboratory animal care.

Clyde Boyer was meticulous and curious, qualities that were admired by his colleagues and were of considerable value in his approach to his job. He is remembered for his humility, kindness, gentle disposition, and for his understanding and concern for others. And, he had high personal standards. For example, as Director of the Diagnostic Laboratory, he was required to obtain a license to practice veterinary medicine in New York State. True to form, he refused the opportunity to obtain a license through the reciprocity agreement between Pennsylvania (where he was licensed) and New York State, and so he undertook the difficult task of sitting the exams in New York many years after graduation. Few of his colleagues would have suffered that trial!

Although his professional life was full, Clyde found time to indulge other interests, among them hiking, fishing and spelunking. He also thought skiing would be fun and once decided to show his children the “ins and outs” of the sport on a hill near their home. On a downhill “demonstration” he broke his leg (full length cast for six months), which prompted his wife to burn his skis in the fireplace! His sense of humor, which he maintained in spite of it all, along with his scientific and personal contributions are missed by his many friends, colleagues and family members.

Katherine Houpt, Bud Tennant, Bruce Calnek