

Arden Frederick Sherf

August 7, 1916 — September 19, 1989

Arden Frederick Sherf, professor emeritus of plant pathology, died at Tompkins Community Hospital on September 19, 1989, at the age of seventy-three after a brief illness. He was born in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, son of the late Fred E. and Alice Lavina Stubbs Sherf. He received the B.S. degree in plant pathology from the University of Minnesota in 1939. Work toward an advanced degree in plant pathology, started at the University of Nebraska in 1939, continued until 1942 when it was interrupted for military service. While in the U.S. Navy, Arden served as a pharmacist mate, a submarine communications officer, and a research plant pathologist at Fort Detrick, Maryland. Following World War II, Arden resumed his studies at the University of Nebraska, receiving the Ph.D. degree in plant pathology in 1948. He also remained active in the U.S. Naval Reserve for 20 years after the war, retiring with the rank of Commander.

Before coming to Cornell in 1954, Arden served as extension plant pathologist at the University of Nebraska from 1946-49, moving to Iowa State University in 1949 where he was assistant plant pathologist and later associate plant pathologist and extension specialist. Arden became professor of plant pathology in 1959, and also served as department extension leader at Cornell until his retirement in 1981.

Arden became widely known for his contributions to extension plant pathology and to extension's motto of "helping others to help themselves," a philosophy he followed for his entire career. His dedication to the dissemination of disease control information affected all facets of the vegetable industry—growers, processors, county agents, and other agricultural specialists and agribusiness personnel. A major contribution in this area was co-authoring the textbook *Vegetable Diseases and Their Control* with Professor Charles Chupp in 1960. This useful text was revised extensively in 1986 in collaboration with his former student, Dr. Alan MacNab. This edition, like the first, is a significant contribution to the art and practice of plant pathology.

Dr. Sherf's reputation as a leader in extension brought demand for his services on both national and international levels. He served as a member of review panels for several plant pathology departments. He was an unpaid consultant to seedsmen, vegetable-processing firms, and fungicide companies. His research on control of vegetable diseases by seed treatments, soil fumigants, and foliar fungicides brought requests for his counsel on registration of chemicals for minor crop uses, and rebuttable presumption against registration (RPAR) consideration for several fungicides.

In addition to his work at Cornell, Arden served as a vegetable consultant to the British Ministry of Agriculture in 1968 and to the Department of Agriculture of New South Wales, Australia, in 1975.

Dr. Sherf was an active member of the American Phytopathological Society since 1942 and served as chairman of numerous APS committees. He was elected a Fellow of the Society in 1980. In 1983, his professional colleagues bestowed the northeastern division APS award of merit upon him.

Aside from his professional accomplishments, Arden devoted his considerable energies to supporting youth activities and community affairs. He had a life-long interest in music, particularly jazz. As a youth, he played the saxophone and had his own dance band in high school and as an undergraduate student in college. He also served as manager of the University of Minnesota football team.

In the eight years of his retirement, Arden was active in volunteerism, including the Kitchen Cupboard and the Tompkins Community Hospital Auxiliary where he worked closely with families whose loved ones were facing serious operations. Arden and his wife, Jean, also traveled extensively and served as tour group leaders in Europe on numerous occasions. They especially enjoyed the many new friends they made.

Arden is survived by his wife, Jean; two daughters, Carol Flower and Andrea Smith; two sons, David and Stephen; a brother, Glenn; eleven grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Carl W. Boothroyd, Edward D. Jones, Thomas A. Zitter