



Edward Carlos Melby, Jr.

August 10, 1929 – April 22, 2018

Edward Carlos Melby, Jr. D.V.M. dean emeritus of the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, died Sunday, April 22, 2018, following his battle with Alzheimer's disease. He was 89 years old.

Ed Melby was the sixth dean of the college, appointed on October 1, 1974, by the Board of Trustees when George C. Poppensiek completed his term in 1974. Ed served as dean until 1984. His years at the helm of Cornell represented a decade of considerable growth and the expansion in the size and scope of college facilities and programs.

Dean Lorin Warnick indicated that we have all benefited from his work in expanding our research programs and in obtaining funding for new facilities that were built after his term as dean. Dr. Melby's service and dedication has had significant, lasting impact on both the college and the veterinary profession. With Ed Melby as dean, the number of College employees grew from 468 to 820 full-time and 139 part-time student employees. The College's budget also increased from \$8.6 million to exceed \$32 million. Over that same period, competitive grants and contracts awarded for current and future years rose tremendously from \$3.8 million to \$21.2 million.

For many years, Dean Melby worked to set the stage for planning and funding a new teaching hospital and to upgrade facilities built in the 1950s. New facilities were critical to preserving the college's standing and to meet the challenges and opportunities of expanding clinical programs. Dean Melby also oversaw the new building to house an enlarged State Diagnostic Laboratory to offer expanded services to practitioners and others, including a program of Equine Drug Testing and Research to serve the equine racing industry in the State. Furthermore, to serve the equine importation industry, Dean Melby presided over the

opening of the only Contagious Equine Metritis (C.E.M.) quarantine facility in New York State at the time, one of the few in the nation.

Administrative units at the college also saw expansion and re-organization under Dean Melby's leadership. In particular, the Baker Institute for Animal Health underwent a major re-organization and growth. The Department of Avian Diseases changed its name and scope to include aquatic animal medicine and a poultry facility was built to further research on atherosclerosis, vaccines, Marek's disease and other poultry disease. New departments, Preventive Medicine and Pharmacology, were also formed, while a single Department of Clinical Sciences was created that was sub-sectioned by clinical specialty as well. The number of faculty, including interns and residents in the teaching hospital, increased along with both the size and complexity of clinical research.

Born in Vermont in 1929, Ed Melby served in the United States Marine Corps, then studied at the University of Pennsylvania and University of Vermont prior to receiving his DVM degree from Cornell in 1954. After being in private veterinary practice for 12 years in Vermont, Ed took a teaching post in comparative medicine at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, where he was professor and director of the Division of Laboratory Animal (Comparative) Medicine. In addition to his regular teaching and administrative responsibilities, Dr. Melby served on several national councils and boards related to laboratory animal medicine. Ed also had a strong interest in the Baltimore Zoological Society serving as its director and president. In addition, Dr. Melby edited four major textbooks on laboratory animal science, including the three-volume *Handbook of Laboratory Animal Science* with Norman H. Altman, as well as publishing more than 50 scientific papers.

Dean Melby left the College in 1984 and took a position as vice president for research and development at SmithKline Beecham Laboratories in Philadelphia, from which he eventually retired to return to his family farm in Vermont. In the mid-1990s, Dr. Melby supported and worked with the Veterinary College Diagnostic Laboratory personnel to expand the Oral Rabies Vaccination Program in New York State into Vermont and New Hampshire to control the spread of raccoon rabies.

Written by Alexander de Lahunta and Donald Lein