

CHARLES WESLEY FERGUSON, 1922-1986

Professor Wes Ferguson's association with the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research began when he was a graduate student in 1948 and ended March 24, 1986. He would have received the University of Arizona 35-year service award on April 11th. His dissertation research was on annual rings in Big Sagebrush. In the 1950's he assisted Edmund Schulman with archaeological and botanical collections all over the Southwest. Of particular significance was the bristlecone pine research in California and Nevada. After Schulman's death Ferguson almost single-handedly began developing an increasingly old bristlecone pine chronology. The ancient bristlecone pine chronology was the major focus of research for the rest of his life, although he found time to study shrubs, and other trees such as pinyon and mesquite as well. Besides collecting and dating thousands of specimens, another highlight of his effort was in providing materials upon which the radiocarbon chronology could be calibrated. Beginning with his first article in the *Tree-Ring Bulletin* in 1949, Ferguson published nationally and internationally in sources available to the professional and the lay communities alike. Notable among these were "Bristlecone Pine: Science and Esthetics," in *Science* 1968; "Dendrochronology of Bristlecone Pine, *Pinus aristata*: Establishment of a 7484-year chronology in the White Mountains of Eastern Central California, U.S.A.," in the proceedings of the 12th Nobel Symposium, 1970; and, with others, "Dendrochronological Calibration of the Radiocarbon Time Scale," in *American Antiquity* in 1974. From marginally budgeted, solo field trips conducted out of his Model A Ford in the 1950s, to his service as an officer of the Tree-Ring Society from 1953 to 1974, he remained an instrumental member of the tree-ring research community throughout the following years which saw such significant increases in both personnel and funding. His world wide research took him to New Zealand, Australia and Taiwan. The memorial service in Tucson filled the University of Arizona Flandrau Planetarium with friends and scholars representing a wide diversity of disciplines. His contributions throughout were substantial, and he will be missed.

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