

HELMUT WAKEHAM V.A.S. FELLOW DIES AT AGE 85

Virginia Academy of Science Fellow and long time supporter, Helmut Richard Rea Wakeham, died October 18, at his residence in Cedarfield, Richmond. Dr. Wakeham was born in Hamburg, Germany and moved with his parents to the U.S. as a teenager.

Active in the Boy Scouts throughout his life, he earned his Eagle Scout Badge in 1933. According to his son, Dr. Stuart G. Wakeham, "Wake" exhibited those leadership qualities that imbue Scouting's highest rank throughout his life, shaping his interests in the Boy Scouts, education of youth, and his cultural interests. He served as director and president of the Boy Scouts Robert E. Lee Council from 1973 to 1975. In the 1970's, he helped develop the Camp Brady Saunders.

Wakeham attained Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the University of Nebraska and, a Doctorate of Philosophy in physical chemistry from the University of California, Berkeley. He held research positions with Standard Oil Co. of California, the US Department of Agriculture in New Orleans, the Institute of Textile Technology, Charlottesville, the Textile Research Institute in Princeton, N.J., and was Director of the Ahmedabad Industry Textile Research Association in India from 1956-1958. During his tenure at Standard Oil Co., Dr. Wakeham worked to develop a practical synthetic rubber to aid the World War II effort.

In 1958 Dr. Wakeham came to Richmond to head the Research and Development Department of Philip Morris Co. Later he became Vice-President of Science and Technology for that corporation. Being keenly interested in the education and encouragement of scientific achievement of young people, he was instrumental in securing financial support for the Virginia Junior Academy of Science. For many years, Philip Morris Co. supported the VJAS student paper awards in all of the VJAS sections at the time of the annual meetings.

In 1980, The Academy recognised Dr. Wakeham's contributions to science and to the Academy, making him a Fellow of The Academy.

Dr. Wakeham's many contributions to Virginia's cultural community include President of the Richmond Symphony from 1979 to 1981 and Chairman, 1981- 1983. He lead efforts to rennovate the "old" Lowes Theater in downtown Richmond to become The Carpenter Center for Performing Arts. He served alternately as president and chairman of that organization from 1980 to 1987. He received the Angel Award of the International Society of Performing Arts, and was Director of the American Symphony Orchestra League.

Dr. Wakeham was instrumental in securing the "old" Broad Street Rail Station as the home of The Science Museum of Virginia. He served as the SMV Foundation President and Director from 1974 to 1977.

Dr. Wakeham was a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemists, receiving the Distinguished Chemist Award in Virginia and was Cultural Laurate in Science and Technology of the State of Virginia.

Besides his son, Dr. Start Wakeham, "Wake" is survived by a brother, Richard Wakeham (Grand Prairie, TX), and two daughters, Susan Kosiur of Orcas Island, Wash., Rosemary Wakeham of Rolla, MO, and three grandchildren.