

OBITUARY

Francis “Fran” Rosevear 1912 ~ 2010

Francis “Fran” Rosevear, one of Cornell University’s early microscopists and a pioneer of identifying surfactant phases through polarized light microscopy, died on July 5, 2010, in Cincinnati. He was 97 years old.

A lifelong microscopist, Dr. Rosevear attended Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, where he studied under Professor Émile Chamot and earned his Ph.D. in chemical microscopy in 1937. After graduating, Dr. Rosevear went to work for the research department at Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati, where he did groundbreaking analyses in soap chemistry until his retirement in 1976. His photomicrographs identifying surfactant phases in soap are still used by the company today.

Throughout his professional career, Dr. Rosevear remained affiliated with Cornell University and was a founder of the Cornell Microscopy and Imaging Facility, which continues to offer chemical microscopy and other specialized polarized light microscopy courses. Known for his quiet generosity, Dr. Rosevear donated 19 microscopes to the microscopy facility to replace the laboratory’s aging equipment. His contribution helped Cornell maintain its microscopy program.

Francis Burt Rosevear was born on August 4, 1912, in East Orange, New Jersey, and spent his childhood in Bloomfield, New Jersey. In 1936, he married Ruth Fisher, his wife of 73 years; the couple raised three children.



Dr. Rosevear was an accomplished musician, who mastered the saxophone, oboe, English horn and sarrusophone. He was a charter member of the Cincinnati Community Orchestra and was active in the Civic Orchestra and Queen City Concert Band in Cincinnati. A skilled arranger, he directed many musicals in his church, workplace and community.

Dr. Rosevear was passionate about railway history and technology, travelling frequently by train and seeking out abandoned railroad routes and artifacts. His intense curiosity also led him to astronomy, which had him spending many evenings at the library of the

Cincinnati Observatory studying star maps and nomenclature.

The outdoors were also a great attraction for Dr. Rosevear. He adored the Adirondack Mountains in New York, where he enjoyed hiking and climbing for more than 50 years. He organized many outdoor activities for the Boy Scouts, serving as a troop leader for three decades. His book, *Colvin in the Adirondacks: A Chronology and Index*, chronicles the adventures of renowned surveyor Verplanck Colvin.

Dr. Rosevear is survived by his wife Ruth; sons Allan of Irvine, California, and Lloyd of Dover, New Hampshire; brother Robert of De Land, Florida; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. A daughter Eleanor and brother Edward are deceased.