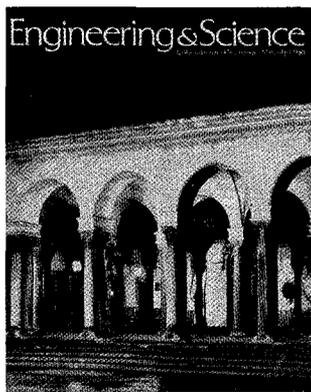


## In This Issue



### Happy Birthday

On the cover — an unusual and beautiful night view of the Athenaeum, the Institute's faculty club, which is celebrating its 50th year of service to the Caltech community. There is good cause for celebration because in the Athenaeum the members have had since 1930 a gracious and convenient place in which to lunch or dine, to hold a meeting or a banquet, to meet friends and colleagues, to house distinguished visitors, and "to hear discussions of topics of interest . . . by those best prepared to tell of the fascinating developments in science, art, literature, history, and government." At first, the membership was drawn from scholars and scientists at the Institute, the Mount Wilson Observatory, and the Huntington Library and Art Gallery, and from the newly organized Caltech Associates. Later other groups became eligible.

On March 21, the 50th anniversary of the Athenaeum's first dinner for its members was celebrated with another dinner that honored those of that first group who

are still members today and their special guests. Lee A. DuBridge, president emeritus of Caltech, was the chief speaker, and on page 15 *E&S* presents "The Athenaeum — Fifty Years Young," an adaptation of his recollections of the early days of the club.

Henry Lester



### Electrochemical Contact

The speaker for the Watson Lecture on December 5 was introduced by his colleague in neurobiology, Felix Strumwasser, who said in part: "Henry Lester is a biologist who specializes in synapses, the functional contact between one nerve cell and another cell. He came only gradually to biology, however, having received his undergraduate education at Harvard College, where he graduated with highest honors in chemistry and physics. He did his graduate studies in biophysics at The Rockefeller University in the laboratory of H. K. Hartline, F. Ratliff, and F. A. Dodge. Lester's postdoctoral research was done in Paris with Professor Jean-Pierre Changeux, a molecular biologist who converted to neurobiology.

"Lester came to Caltech in 1973 as assistant professor and advanced to associate

professor in 1976. He is currently the recipient of a five-year National Institutes of Health award for research career development, and this is a highly competitive and prestigious grant. But his versatility and self-confidence can really be appreciated by the following two facts: First, this year he is one of two biology faculty members who are teaching sections of freshman physics; the other is no less than Nobel laureate Max Delbrück. Second, Lester's model research animal is the Amazonian electric eel. No doubt that will lead to an electrifying and educational lecture."

"Drugs and the Brain" on page 8 is adapted from that talk.

### How It Is

For several years the Institute Archives under the direction of Judith Goodstein has been engaged in an Oral History project. To date more than 20 of Caltech's senior citizens have been interviewed about their recollections of childhood, anecdotes about others, and memories of the Caltech that once was.

A completed Oral History represents more than memories, however. It also involves several hours of interviews and the time and skills of a researcher, transcriber, editor, indexer, and binder — and finally the approval of the subject as to the future use of the material. At that point *E&S* has twice entered the situation — in the case of the oral histories of Henry Borsook and L. Winchester Jones. We have each time had the difficult job of choosing and printing small portions of much longer reminiscences. On page 21 we present the third in our series, which was equally difficult to excerpt, "Max Delbrück — How It Was." This is the first of two installments.



Lee DuBridge

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PICTURE CREDITS: Cover, 18 — Chris Tschoegl/4 — Floyd Clark/4 — Leigh Wiener/15 — James McClanahan/27 — John Bedke, Mount Wilson Observatories

Engineering & Science (USPS 492-070) is published five times a year, September-October, November-December, January-February, March-April, and May-June, at the California Institute of Technology, 1201 East California Boulevard, Pasadena, California 91125. Annual subscription \$5.00 domestic, \$7.50 foreign, \$15.00 foreign air mail, single copies \$1.00. Controlled Circulation postage paid at Pasadena, California. All rights reserved. Reproduction of material contained herein forbidden without authorization. © 1980 Alumni Association California Institute of Technology. Published by the California Institute of Technology and the Alumni Association.