Retiring This Year

Pol Duwez
Professor of Applied Physics and Materials Science

Pol Duwez becomes professor emeritus this month after more than 30 years on the Caltech faculty. One of the world's leading scientists in the field of metals and materials, he has created a remarkable series of new alloys with unusual properties that are now widely used in industry. Born in Mons, Belgium, in 1907, Pol received his degree in metallurgical engineering at the School of Mines there in 1932, and his DSc in physics and mathematics from the University of Brussels in 1933. He was a research fellow in physics at Caltech from 1933 to 1935, then returned to Belgium as a Fellow of the National Foundation for Scientific Research at the School of Mines from 1935 to 1937. From 1937 to 1940 he was director of the National Laboratory for Silicate Research there. In 1941 he became a research engineer working on defense projects at Caltech, moving up to JPL in 1944, where he headed the Materials Section until 1954. He was an associate professor of materials science at Caltech from 1947 to 1952, when he became a full professor. As devoted to music as he is to metallurgy, Pol was destined for a career as a cellist until he was 10 years old and has continued to play the cello all his life.
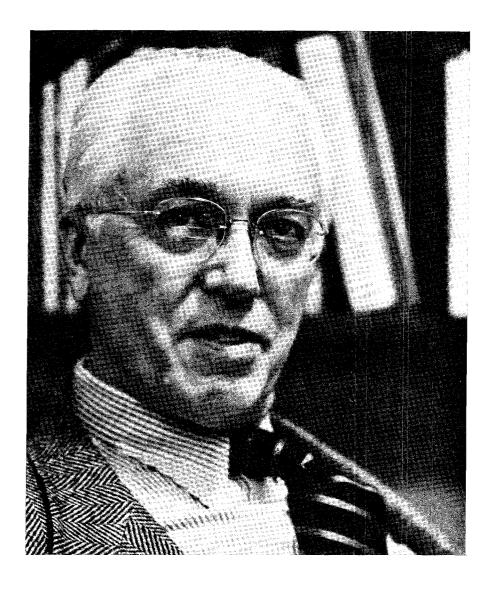
Retiring This Year

Milton S. Plesset
Professor of Engineering Science

Milton S. Plesset becomes professor emeritus on July 1. Born in Pittsburgh, in 1908, he received his BS (1929) and MS (1930) from the University of Pittsburgh, then went to Yale for his PhD (1932) in physics. In 1932-33 he was a National Research Fellow at Caltech, then studied for a year at the Institute for Theoretical Physics in Copenhagen, and in 1934-35 was a C.R.B. Traveling Fellow. From 1935 to 1940 Plesset was an instructor in physics at the University of Rochester. He returned to Caltech as a research fellow in physics in 1941, but left in 1942 to head the Analytical Group of the Douglas Research Laboratories at the Douglas Aircraft Company. In 1945 he served as technical representative to the Air Force in the European theater. He became associate professor of applied mechanics at Caltech in 1948 and was made a full professor in 1951. In 1963 he became professor of engineering science. He served as consultant to the Science Division of the RAND Corporation from 1948 to 1972, and he has been a consultant to the Energy and Kinetics Department at UCLA where he was appointed adjunct professor this year. An authority on the problems and progress of nuclear power, he served as a member of the US Advisory Committee for Reactor Safeguards since 1975.

Robert D. Wayne
Associate Professor of German

    Robert D. Wayne retires this month after 26 years on the Caltech faculty. He came to
Caltech in 1952 as an instructor in German, became an assistant professor in 1962, and
associate professor in 1969. Born in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1913, Bob got his BA degree
from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa., in 1935, then spent a year in graduate study at the
University of Tübingen in Germany. From 1936 to 1938 he was a casualty insurance adjuster
with the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company in Boston. And in 1939-40 he worked in New York
City and Washington for the Good Will Fund, as a translator on a research project investigating
German subversive activities in the United States. In 1938 he became an instructor in German
at Columbia University, where he received his MA in 1940. He joined the Army in 1941, was
assigned to Military Intelligence in the North African, Mediterranean, and European theaters,
and was released, as a Captain, in 1946. Before coming to Caltech, Bob served as a teaching
assistant and lecturer in German at UCLA, where he was a doctoral candidate. Neatly
enough, Bob's wife, Mary Helen, is also retiring this June as City Librarian of South Pasadena,
and the first thing the Waynes are going to do about their joint retirements is take a trip to
England out of season.