

ALUMNI NEWS

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The San Francisco Chapter meets weekly for lunch at the Fraternity Club, 345 Bush Street, on Mondays.

TOM SIMPSON '25 NEW SOCONY-VACUUM RESEARCH DIRECTOR

THOMAS P. SIMPSON, 1925 chemical engineering graduate, was named director of research for the Research and Development Department of the Paulsboro, N. J., works of the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company in June. This Department is the central research unit for Socony-Vacuum. The staff comprises 850 scientists and technicians, and is one of the largest industrial research units in the country. Research is carried on in many fields, varying from nuclear physics and organic chemistry to the production of heavy duty lubricants and motor fuels.

A few of the notable recent developments originating in the Paulsboro laboratories include the Thermofor Catalytic Cracking Process, which played a vital part in the manufacture of high octane gasoline for the armed services during the war; the Bead Cracking Catalyst, improved alkylation methods for producing super fuel ingredients; and processes for converting natural gas into chemical raw materials and liquid fuels.

Simpson has been with Socony-Vacuum since 1935. Recently he has served as assistant director in charge of development, and earlier as chief development engineer. Starting with the General Petroleum Corporation of California, now a Socony-Vacuum subsidiary,

he worked in the Process Laboratory, becoming assistant manager in 1933. Two years later he was transferred east to Paulsboro.

DAVID WONG '32 WINS REDLANDS ALUMNI AWARD

DAVID Y. WONG '32, M.S. in C.E. '33, was awarded an annual Alumni Achievement Award in April by the University of Redlands where he received the B.A. degree in 1931. While taking work at the Institute, Mr. Wong worked with the Los Angeles County as a highway inspector. After completing his college work, he became building inspector for the city of Canton, China. With the outbreak of war he became active in construction of bridges on the Burma Road. After the Road's capture by the Japanese, his work turned to the second communication road, the Ledo Road. Mr. Wong worked for many months on railroad survey and construction. His final contribution was in airfield construction with his report serving as a model for all Chinese engineers.

METEOROLOGY GRAD HEADS 15TH AIR FORCE

BRIG. GEN. Leon W. Johnson '36, recently given command of the 15th Air Force, is one of the few Army Generals to have received the Congressional Medal of Honor. A 1926 graduate of the United States Military Academy, Gen. Johnson transferred to the Air Forces after three years in the Infantry. During the pre-war period he received an M.S. degree in meteorology at the Institute.

For his extraordinary heroism in the low-level bombing attack on the Ploesti oil fields in Rumania from bases in Africa in 1943, Gen. Johnson added the Medal of Honor to his list of decorations which included the Silver Star for gallantry and the Air Medal for exceptional wartime flying service.

Soon after Pearl Harbor, Gen. Johnson helped to organize the Eighth Air Force, and upon its arrival in England, he served as commanding officer of a bombardment group, later as operations officer for the entire Eighth Air Force, and finally as commanding general of a heavy bombardment wing.

CHARLES KIRCHER '31 HEADS ROSE POLY DEPARTMENT

DR. CHARLES Edward Kircher Jr. '31 has been appointed professor of chemical engineering at Rose Polytechnic Institute. Chemistry and Chemical Engineering are being separated at Rose, and Dr. Kircher will head a new Department of Chemical Engineering.

Recognized as an authority on the production of plutonium, an essential element in atomic energy research, Dr. Kircher directed a group of research workers at the University of Chicago on the problem of plutonium production during the war.

The 1948 ALUMNI DIRECTORY is being organized, and the Association hopes to have it printed by the first of the year.

Will all delinquent alumni mail their questionnaires in to the Alumni Office immediately.

ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE WINS ALUMNI MAGAZINE AWARD

In the Magazine Awards Competition of the American Alumni Council, of which the CalTech Association is a member, *Engineering and Science*, in competition with technical and professional schools throughout the country, won the award here reproduced "—for general excellence of series of articles, running throughout the publication year, interpreting various phases of modern technical education and reporting significant research activities of the school together with appropriate illustrations".

For Outstanding Editorial Achievement
In publication of an alumni magazine

AWARD OF MERIT

In the 1947 Magazine Awards Competition sponsored by the American Alumni Council for alumni publications in the United States and Canada



William S. Gilson
Director for Magazines

Joseph E. Bell
President, American Alumni Council

Following receipt of the B.S. degree, Kircher took graduate work, being awarded the M.S. in chemical engineering in 1933. From 1933 to 1936 he was employed by the Du Pont Company in El Monte, Calif., and Niagara Falls, N. Y. From 1936 to 1938 he was stationed at Iowa State College, Ames, on research for the company in cooperation with the college. A pilot plant for the extraction of soybean oil was designed, erected and operated. In 1939-40 he was granted leave of absence by Du Pont to complete work for his Ph.D. in chemical engineering at Iowa. From 1940 to 1943 Dr. Kircher was with Du Pont at Niagara Falls.

1936 CLASS SECRETARY RETURNS FROM YEAR'S TRAVEL

HOLLY B. DICKINSON '36, wrote at the beginning of the summer after a year's travel:

Got a leave of absence from Lockheed last June and in September my wife and I left for 18,000 air-miles of traveling in Central and South America. Saw Mexico, Guatemala, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Equador, and airports in between. Also Ted Coleman, class of '26, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. He's importing airplanes—Fairchilds, mostly, for Brazilians to supervise their fazendas from. He expected to return here about now, or by the end of this year. During the war he was V.P. of Northrop, you remember.

To condense four months of travel into a sentence, don't miss Guatemala, especially if you're a Kodachrome fan. If you must go to South America, go way south to the Argentine, Chilean Lake Country in

the Andes. It's worth it. But first consult Dickinson's travel service and avoid some of the things I bumped my head into, from Rio taxi drivers to Guayaquil rioters.

On June 1, I am starting off in another direction. I begin as an apprentice in the office of Richard J. Neutra, Los Angeles architect.

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