

Dr. Howard Julian White, Jr., 1920-2010



Dr. Howard J. White, former Executive Secretary of IAPS (now IAPWS) and Secretary for many years for the U.S. National Committee to IAPS, died on January 7, 2010 in Chestertown, Maryland.

Holding a doctorate in physical chemistry from Princeton University, and after 10 years of work in industry, Dr. White joined the National Bureau of Standards (NBS, presently the National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST) in 1965 as Assistant Chief of the Physical Chemistry Division. Soon after that, he joined the newly established Office of Standard Reference Data (OSRD) at NBS as a program manager in the areas of thermodynamics, thermophysics, and colloid and surface chemistry.

White's work on thermodynamic databases brought him into contact with related projects in other countries, which in turn led to his participation in several international organizations, such as the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), and the Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA). White was the US interface with thermodynamic data activities in the Soviet Union under the program for scientific collaboration established by the Nixon administration in the early 1970s. During several visits to the Soviet Union, he worked out valuable collaborations on developing thermodynamic databases.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, OSRD sponsored and White managed a new formulation of the properties of water and steam by L. Haar and J.S. Gallagher at NBS, together with G.S. Kell, National Research Council, Canada: *The NBS/NRC Steam Tables*. It was based on more extensive data over larger pressure and temperature ranges than the formulations then existing.

White played a leading role in the International Association for the Properties of Steam (IAPS, presently the International Association for the Properties of Water and Steam, IAPWS). He served as Secretary of the US National Committee to IAPS from about 1973 through 1989. He served for ten years, 1979-1989, as Executive Secretary of IAPS. During his tenure, in 1984, IAPS adopted a new formulation for scientific use of the properties of water and steam, based on the NBS/NRC formulation.

White presented reviews of IAPS activities at the 9th, 10th and 11th International Conference on the Properties of Steam [1-3]. Howard White was also the senior editor of the Proceedings of the 12th International Conference on the Properties of Water and Steam [4]. This conference was held in Orlando, Florida.

IAPS recognized White's manifold contributions to the organization by electing him as an Honorary Fellow in 1988.

After his retirement from NIST in 1988, White remained active on the international scene for many years. In 2000, for instance, he was co-editor of a two-volume IUPAC publication [5]. He and his wife of 60 years, Betty, enjoyed a long and happy retirement in the Heron Point community on a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Jan V. Sengers, Anneke Levelt Sengers, and Allan H. Harvey
Members, IAPWS TPWS Working Group
Members, US National Committee to IAPWS

References:

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- [3] H.J. White, Jr., *Review of IAPS activities in the past decade*, in: *Proceedings of the 11th Conference on the Properties of Water and Steam*, M. Pichal and O. Šifner, eds. (Hemisphere, Washington, DC, 1989), pp.11-16.
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- [5] *Equations of State for Fluids and Fluid Mixtures* J.V. Sengers, R.F. Kayser, C.J. Peters and H.J. White, Jr., eds. (IUPAC Physical Chemistry Division, Elsevier, 2000).