

In Memory



David E. Pope, 84, who retired as Senior Research Geologist from the Louisiana Geological Survey (LGS) in December 1999 passed away on Sunday, May 29, 2005, after a short illness. Affectionately called “Dave” by most of his friends and colleagues he continued to work as a volunteer with LGS until the end. Dave began his career as a biostratigrapher and paleontologist with Union Producing Company in 1948 and worked with them for nineteen years in Houston, New Orleans, and Lafayette and retired in 1967 as District Paleontologist.

He worked as a consultant from 1967 to 1975 at which time he joined the Louisiana Geological Survey in Baton Rouge.

Any individual who has ever served in any official capacity for the Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies (GCAGS), the Baton Rouge Geological Society (BRGS) or for that matter, any of the member societies of the GCAGS will doubtless be aware of the valuable contributions made by Dave to every organization he has been involved with in various capacities. Dave was born in Forrest City, Arkansas, and graduated from Forrest City High School in 1938. He then attended Louisiana State University on a football scholarship, but his university career was interrupted when he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1942 to serve in the U.S. Army during World War II. He returned to LSU in 1946 and received his B.S. degree in 1947 and an M.S. degree in 1948 with specialization in micropaleontology. He was a student of H.V. Howe, R.J. Russell, H.N. Fisk, and C.J. Roy.

During his career in the U.S. Army, Dave advanced to the rank of Captain and was awarded the Silver Star twice, Purple Heart, the Mediterranean Theater Medal with three battle stars, and the Combat Infantrymen’s Badge. Dave graduated from the Infantry School (1943), the U.S. Army Counterintelligence School (1955), the 4th (now 5th) U.S. Army Military Intelligence School (1962), and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (1967). He separated from active duty in 1946 but continued his military career in the Army Reserves and retired as Lieutenant Colonel in 1968. He is a life member of the Reserve Officers Association and the Military Order of World Wars (MOWW) and has also served as the Vice Commander/Commander-elect of the Baton Rouge Chapter of MOWW.

The only person to serve as President of both GCAGS (1985-86) and the Gulf Coast Section of the Society of Sedimentary Geology (GCSSEPM) from 1959-60 Dave was a very active member of these organizations as well as the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), the local section of American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG), and other local societies. He co-founded the present BRGS in 1979 along with Harry Roland. He has served BRGS as President, Vice President, chairman of numerous committees, and was awarded Honorary Membership in 1991. He was the main motivating force behind BRGS. The highly successful 1995 and 2003 GCAGS Conventions in Baton Rouge were spearheaded by Dave Pope who was the General Chairman.

Dave attended the first GCAGS Convention while working in New Orleans in 1951, and has made most of them since then. He has served GCAGS in various capacities as Acting Secretary (1956-57), Vice President (1984-85), President (1985-86) and assisted in editing various GCAGS Transactions, served on various Committees, chaired technical sessions, judged papers, and has published papers in the Transactions, including the history of the GCAGS in 1991. Dave was the GCAGS Historian since 1983 and was awarded Honorary Membership in 1997. He is charter member of the Gulf Coast Section of SEPM (1953), and received Honorary Membership in 1987.

Both AAPG and AIPG have benefited from Dave’s willingness and interest in involving himself in the various geological societies. He has been a member of the AAPG since 1949 and AIPG since 1985. He is an AAPG Certified Petroleum Geologist, and a contributor to the COSUNA Gulf Coast Correlation Chart (1988). Dave has served AAPG as a member on the Committee for the Preservation of Cores and Samples (1957-60), and has been on the membership Committee since 1988. He was Vice-President and President-elect of the Louisiana Section of AIPG (1997-98) and was the Vice-General Chairman for the 1998 AIPG Convention held in Baton Rouge. Dave has been a member of the New Orleans Geological Society since 1949, serving as Secretary (1956-57), Vice President and Program Chairman (1961-62) and has served on various committees.

Dave has been married to Alice Duke Akins of Baton Rouge since 1990. His two sons, David Brian “Rusty” and Mark Alan, live in Lafayette and they were born when he was married to Dorothy Salario, now deceased. Dave is also survived by his two sisters, Mary Jane Pope Wilson and Evelyn Pope Burrows Dunn, both of Forrest City and several nieces and nephews.

Dave’s biography is essentially a history of selfless and dedicated service to the Louisiana Geological Survey, GCAGS, BRGS, and many other professional organizations.

He will be missed by all who knew him.

Chacko J. John