



IN MEMORIAM

Roderick B. Park
Professor of Plant and Microbial Biology and Vice Chancellor, Emeritus
UC Berkeley
1932 — 2013

Roderick B. Park, scientist, administrator, sailor and farmer, died at his home in Point Richmond on September 6, 2013. Rod is survived by his wife Cathy, his daughters Barbara Shapiro and Marina Park, his son Malcolm, his stepson Michael Tassan and eight grandchildren.

Rod was a plant physiologist and an internationally recognized authority on chloroplast membranes. In the early 1960s he used freeze fracture and electron microscopy to examine details of the chlorophyll- containing membranes in chloroplasts and discovered the quantasome, the membrane particle that corresponds to the Photosystem II complex involved in the reactions of photosynthesis. It is a testament to his early discoveries that these fundamental membrane particles continue to be a focus of research at Berkeley and elsewhere.

Rod received an A.B. degree in biology from Harvard in 1953 and a Ph.D. in biochemistry from Caltech in 1958. He moved to Berkeley in 1958 to join Melvin Calvin's laboratory, where he developed his interest in photosynthetic membranes and a research program in his own laboratory, which resulted in the publication of more than 80 peer- reviewed scholarly articles. His research accomplishments led to his election as Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1990. Following a two- year postdoctoral with Calvin, Rod was appointed assistant professor in the Botany Department in 1960, and he very rapidly rose up the academic ranks. He was granted tenure, promoted to Associate Professor in 1963 and advanced to professor in 1966.

Rod was born in Cannes, France to American parents, who moved back to the USA when Rod was two years old. He grew up in upstate New York and attended Tabor Academy for his high school education. Tabor Academy, located on the coast in Marion, Massachusetts, left two indelible marks on Rod: first class academic training; and the skills of a sailor, Rod having become First Mate of the school's two- masted schooner the Tabor Boy.

Rod's administrative and organizational talents were recognized early on in his career as a Berkeley faculty member. In 1965 he was appointed to the Academic Senate Select Committee on Education at Berkeley, also known as the Muscatine Committee, led by Charles Muscatine. This committee was established in response to the student unrest at Berkeley in 1964 that became known as the Free Speech Movement. The Muscatine Committee was charged with developing a pluralistic approach to education that would revitalize the aims and practice of education at Berkeley. The Committee's recommendations, published in 1966, brought about changes that had a long- lasting effect on the lives of students and faculty at Berkeley.

Rod's involvement in the administrative affairs of the Berkeley campus was to have a profound effect on the biological sciences. He can be credited with almost single- handedly transforming the biological sciences at

Berkeley from their traditional early 20th century format to new models that allowed them to flourish and succeed. These efforts began when Rod and several colleagues in the biological sciences formed the Biology 1 Committee in 1963 to unify the teaching of lower-division biology. The biosciences at Berkeley had been Balkanized into traditional departments such as Bacteriology, Botany and Zoology, each teaching its own beginning course, Botany 1, Zoology 1, etc. The outcomes of the Biology 1 effort were the formation of a core course, the year-long Biology 1; the establishment of a new department, the Department of Instruction in Biology, to administer the course; and the renovation of lecture halls and laboratories to accommodate this course. Rod became Chair of the new Department of Instruction in Biology in 1968.

Rod was appointed as Provost and Dean of the College of Letters and Science in 1972, a post he occupied until 1980. One of his first actions as L&S Dean was to accelerate the revolution in biology at Berkeley with the goal of unifying administrative units using the Biology 1 experiment as a model. The reorganization of biology gathered momentum in the mid 1970s, and by 1980 a faculty committee convened by Rod strongly supported the concept of radical change, which included the dissolution of existing departments. The notion that traditional department such as Botany and Zoology would disappear without protest was quickly dispelled and enormous resistance developed to the reorganization. It was at this point in 1980 that Rod was appointed as The Vice Chancellor in the new administration of Chancellor Michael Heyman, giving Rod the authority to advance the reorganization of biology with Heyman's enthusiastic support.

Park and Heyman adopted two strategies to move this revolution forward characterized by the carrot and stick approach. The carrot for the reluctant faculty was the promise of three new biology buildings: Life Sciences Addition, Koshland Hall and the Valley Life Sciences Building. The stick was the report of an external Blue Ribbon Review Committee of eminent biologists who were invited to Berkeley in 1981. Their report criticized the obsolete campus biology research and teaching facilities and linked them to our declining national reputation. This was the cudgel that Rod used to convince campus administration and faculty to accept the sweeping changes in biology at Berkeley. The reorganization of the biological sciences at Berkeley catapulted this discipline into the top tier nationwide. Rod summarized his administrative achievements in a delightful, semi-autobiographical book, "It's Only the Janitor," which he published in 2009. This book is a must-read for any aspiring university administrator.

After stepping down as the vice chancellor in 1990, Rod returned to the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology where he began a program of research on phloem, the living transport tissue in plants. He also became acting director of the University and Jepson Herbaria from 1991 to 1993 and continued to serve the Herbaria in various capacities, including service as Trustee of the Jepson Endowment from 1991 and Chair of the Jepson Trustees from 1993.

Rod was appointed interim chancellor at the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1994. He was very successful in resolving many of the administrative and governance problems at Colorado. He resigned in 1997, leaving that campus a much stronger institution. Rod accepted the position of Acting Chancellor at UC Merced serving from September 2006 until March 2007, and he continued as Senior Associate to UC Merced's Chancellor until his death.

While Rod Park enjoyed a brilliant career as university professor and administrator, he was highly accomplished in many of his other activities. His love of sailing from his school days as First Mate of the Tabor Boy became one of Rod's passions, and he sailed successfully from San Francisco Bay to Hawaii more than eleven times. He made one of these as the lone sailor and he was first across the line in the race in 1980.

This love for sailing schooners was combined with his scientific inclinations when in 1952 Rod served as Assistant Oceanographer on the research schooner Blue Dolphin for a nearly three month oceanographic and biological expedition along the Labrador coast. All of the participating scientists also served as sailors. The voyage was led by Commander David C. Nutt, a professor at Dartmouth College, and was under the auspices of the Arctic Institute of North America.

Rod was also a successful farmer. His first venture into farming was with Chuck Muscatine when they bought more than 50 acres of vineyards on Howell Mountain in the Napa Valley. This vineyard remains famous, as several wines made with grapes from this location are still sold with the Park-Muscatine appellation. The Howell Mountain ranch was sold in the late 1990s and Rod bought the Rockpile Ranch property, which he proceeded to develop into a successful vineyard with highly sought-after fruit. Rod's interest in viticulture and enology led to his appointment as a member of the Board of Visitors and Fellows of the Department of Viticulture and Enology at UC Davis in 2002, and he chaired this group from 2003-2008. His administrative

expertise was of great value to the Department, and he also provided key philanthropic support to their Teaching and Research Winery. Because of his expertise as a plant biologist, Rod also served on the Winegrowers Critical Research Initiative Committee. Using this background and experience, Rod spearheaded the effort that led to the recognition of the Rockpile region as an American Viticultural Area, a designation that marks the region as an area of special note for the growing of grapes.

Rod Park's success was due in large part to his personality. He was an up- beat, outgoing and inspiring leader. He will be remembered by his friends and colleagues as a tough and caring individual who demanded the best of himself and his friends. He leaves an indelible legacy.

John Cummins
Russell Jones
Andrew Waterhouse