

Gunn awarded Poulsen Gold Medal

J. B. Gunn, an IBM Fellow at the IBM Research Center in Yorktown Heights, New York, has been awarded the Valdemar Poulsen Gold Medal of the Danish Academy of Technical Sciences. This medal, which is given for outstanding research in the field of radio techniques and related fields, has only been awarded ten times since its institution in 1939. It is given to Gunn in recognition of his discovery of the "Gunn effect"—spontaneous oscillations of current that can occur in certain semiconductors when a steady voltage is applied to them. Gunn's discovery of this effect provides the first solid-state source of microwaves.

Gunn was born in Cairo, Egypt, of English parents and was educated at the University of Cambridge. From 1948 to 1953 he was a research engineer involved in the study of semiconductor physics at Elliott Brothers, Ltd, and he was subsequently with the British Ministry of Supply as a junior research fellow. He worked for three years as an assistant professor in the department of physics at the University of British Columbia before joining IBM in 1959.



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Five on NBS staff receive Gold Medals

The US Department of Commerce has awarded the Gold Medal for Exceptional Service to five staff members at the National Bureau of Standards. The award, which is given for outstanding contributions to the public service, the nation or humanity, went to Ruth M. Davis, a mathematician and physicist who directs the Center for Computer Science and Technology; Myron G. Domsitz, acting deputy chief of the Institute for Applied Technology; Jerome Kruger, a physical chemist in charge of the Corrosion Section, Metallurgy Division of the Institute for Materials Research; James R. McNesby, manager of the Measures for Air Quality Program of the Institute for Materials Research, and Lewis V. Spencer, a nuclear physicist in the Radiation Theory Section, Center for Radiation Research of the Institute for Basic Standards.

Warga retires from OSA post

Mary Warga, Executive Secretary of the Optical Society of America, retired on 31 December 1972. After taking office in 1959, Warga established the society's first national office. During her tenure, as the society grew from 2600 to 6000 members, she oversaw the establishment and development of the various sections and technical groups of OSA, and she assisted in the organization of many of its national meetings.

At the society's annual meeting in San Francisco in October a resolution was adopted honoring her for her long years of dedicated service. She was also chosen to be the first recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal. Upon her retirement from the Optical Society post, Warga was named professor emeritus of physics and engineering at the University of Pittsburgh.

North American Rockwell has promoted **T. L. Loucks** to vice-president and director of its Science Center in Thousand Oaks, California. **Thomas Wolfram** has been named associate director.

George B. Field, professor of astronomy at Harvard University, will become the new director of both the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and the Harvard College Observatory on 1 July.

Robert W. Conn and **Gilbert A. Emmert** have been promoted to associate professorships in the nuclear-engineering department at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. **Richard S. Post**, of Columbia University, has joined the department as an assistant professor.

At Cornell University **Peter J. Giersch**, formerly of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, has joined the department of astronomy as an assistant professor.

John E. Alberghini, chairman of the department of physics and director of the college Environmental Studies Center at Manchester Community College in Manchester, Connecticut, has been promoted to associate professor.

The science adviser to the Governor of Georgia, **John E. Mock**, has been elected chairman of the National Governors' Council on Science and Technology.

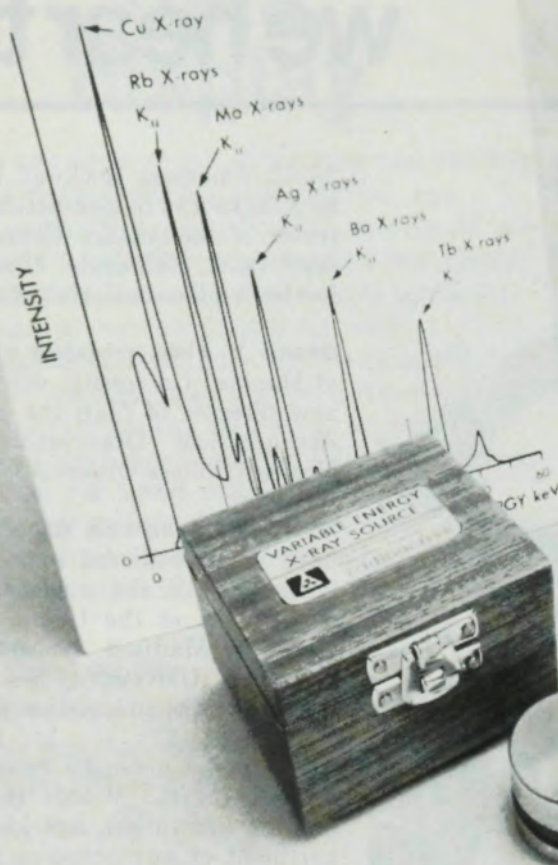
The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville has appointed **Carol Jean Webb**, formerly at the University of Texas, and **Donald O. Pederson**, of Texas Tech University, assistant professors in the department of physics.

Sir Fred Hoyle has been named an Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large at Cornell University.

Promotions in the department of physics at the University of Pennsylvania include **Walter D. Wales**, to professor, **Eugene W. Beier** and **H. Terry Fortune**, to associate professor, and **Kenneth W. Rothe**, to adjunct associate professor.

At Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory **Charles E. Ragan, III**, formerly a Captain in the US Air Force, has joined the physics division; **Bruce R. Erdal**, of the University of Iowa, has joined the chemistry-nuclear-chemistry division,

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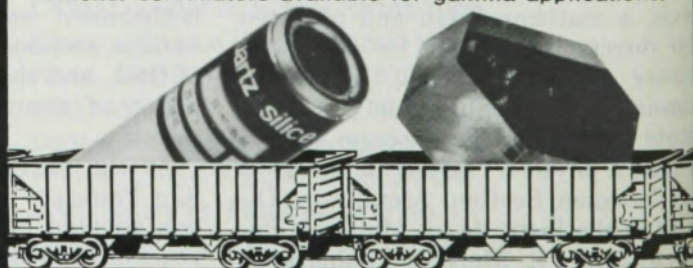
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we hear that

and Lawrence M. Scherr, from the University of Illinois at Urbana, has joined the theoretical-design division.

Charles H. Townes, professor in the department of physics at the University of California at Berkeley, has been awarded the Remsen Award of the Maryland Section of the American Chemical Society.

The new chairman of the department of physics at the University of Southern California is John Marburger.

Formerly IBM Professor of Engineering at Cornell University, Norman Rostoker has joined the University of California, Irvine, as professor of physics.

Roland C. M. Beeh has been promoted to vice-president for research and engineering at Packard Instrument Company, Inc in Downer's Grove, Illinois.

obituaries

Reed Hobart Ellis, Jr

Reed Hobart Ellis Jr, who was Editor of PHYSICS TODAY from 1965 to 1969, died on 23 October 1972. Ellis was a physicist by training, having done his undergraduate work at Bowdoin College, served as a radar officer during World War II, and taken his MA and doctorate in physics at Columbia University. However, Hoby chose to use his physics as an editor, writer and teacher. He was, by turns, Assistant, Associate and then Managing Editor of *Nucleonics*, founding editor of *Nuclear Fusion*, the International Atomic Energy Agency magazine, Executive Editor and then Editor of PHYSICS TODAY, a founding editor of *Smithsonian* magazine, head of the Information Office of the Population Council, and most recently a senior scientist at George Washington University.

According to those closest to him, it was his accomplishments with PHYSICS TODAY that he found most fulfilling. During his four years as editor of PHYSICS TODAY the magazine grew from what many regarded as merely a house organ for AIP to become a highly respected news magazine.

Hoby had a deep passion for simplicity and directness in scientific communication. It led him more than once to lively disputes with authors and with those who worked for him. But even in the heat of those disputes one had to marvel at the concern, the conviction that led him to express his views with force where others might compromise.

Here is a story Hoby used to tell to emphasize the need for clarity from writers submitting work to him during his years as an editor. During the local campaign of a New England politician running for a minor office, a group has gathered on the village green and is straining to understand the rhetoric of the speaker. A passerby squeezes into the rear ranks, turns to one of the

crowd and asks, "What's he talking about?" to which the member of the crowd responds, "He don't say!" It was always Hoby's feeling that an article could be learned—and still comprehensible. Non-physicists were often surprised to be able to understand highly technical articles in physics that he had edited.

One of the most popular innovations he brought to PHYSICS TODAY was the column attributed to Phimsy. Phimsy



ELLIS

was a mystical character who had a boss called Hoby. Phimsy poked fun at life and overly serious physicists and fellow editors. For example, in March 1969 Phimsy says: "My monthly mission is a simple one: to frustrate the efforts of the editors who try to take back the little corner from which I talk to my friends."

Although the authorship of the column was never officially revealed "Phimsy" was, of course, written by his boss Hoby.



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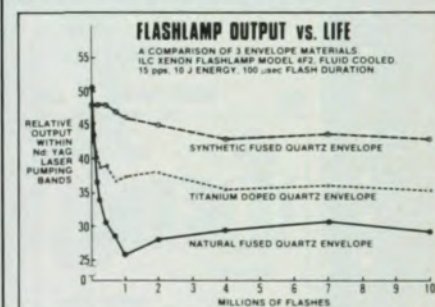
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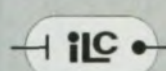
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