

## Morris Katz

### A pioneer of air pollution research in North America.



**MORRIS KATZ**

1901-1987

Dr. Morris Katz, a pioneer of air pollution research in North America, died in Toronto, Ontario on March 24, 1987.

Morris was born April 7, 1901, in Kiev, Russia, and came to Montreal with his parents in 1905. He attended High School in Montreal and in 1926 graduated from McGill University, as a scholarship student, with a B.Sc. degree in chemistry. He was awarded the British Association Medal and University Bursary for Graduate Studies. He then did his post-graduate work at McGill University where he earned, in 1927, his M.Sc. in chemistry and in 1929, his Ph.D. in organic chemistry and biochemistry.

Dr. Katz began his career in air pollution in 1929 when, as a chemist for the National Research Council of Canada he studied the effects of smelter fumes on vegetation in Trail, British Columbia. This work, published in 1939 by the National Research Council is a classic dissertation on the effects of air pollution, in particular sulfur fumes, on vegetation and is still referred to in the modern literature. During his 35 years with the Canadian Public Service he became

consultant and Director of Environmental Assessment. His main interest was research in air pollution and environmental health. He pioneered the development of air pollution measurement and sampling methodology and was among the first to demonstrate the presence of ozone damage to vegetation in Ontario.

As an educator he spent four years as professor of chemistry, graduate school, at Syracuse University. He then joined the chemistry staff at York University where he remained Professor Emeritus to the end of his life. At York University his research activities centered on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and their carcinogenic properties.

During his illustrious career, Dr. Katz authored or co-authored more than 150 books and articles, mostly on air pollution, and received many major scientific awards and honorary degrees. Prime among these awards were the Plummer Medal from the Engineering Institute of Canada in 1956, and the Frank A. Chambers Award from the Air Pollution Control Association in 1965.

Dr. Katz served on many national and international committees including W.H.O. and O.E.C.D.; his opinions and recommendations were frequently sought after and highly respected. He was a member and Fellow of several scientific and professional societies such as C.I.C. and APCA.

Despite Morris' intense dedication to his professional career, he found time for his family and for other interests. He followed with pride and interest his children as they developed their careers and always respected their individuality. Music was another part of Morris. He was an accomplished violinist and will be remembered by those who listened to his concerts, given during the lunch hours, at the National Research

Council in Ottawa.

Morris is survived by his wife, Sophie; five children: Mortimer (Dr. M. Katz of Ottawa), Vivian (Mrs. Paul Coats of Philadelphia), Helen, Joel and Mark, all of Toronto; five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

I knew this great man as a colleague and a friend and like all truly great men he was humble. He was an outstanding scientist with a warm jovial personality. His sense of humour was subtle and he was compassionate and sensitive to the needs of others. He believed in the equality of all men. Many of us who had the opportunity to work with Morris are the benefactors of his determination and courage to seek the best for his students, staff and those about him. He was truly a 20th century pioneer in air pollution research and technology. It is thus only fitting that a memorial celebrating his life and dedication to science is being established at York University, in the Canadian Institute for Research in Atmospheric Chemistry (CIRAC). It will be an annual lectureship, highlighting new advances in atmospheric chemistry.

Those of you whose lives he touched, or in appreciation of his contribution to science and a cleaner environment, may contribute to the memorial of this great man by sending your contribution to CIRAC at York University in care of the author.

Rather than mourn his passing let us celebrate his life.

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