



Remembering Ray Rogers

A Personal Reflection On The Man And His Work

Presented by

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Created October 2014
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In the past few years, I have sadly witnessed a growing number of personal attacks impugning the integrity, character and credentials of the late Raymond N. Rogers, STURP chemist from Los Alamos National Laboratory. Although his research on the Shroud is empirically honest, is published in highly regarded peer-reviewed journals and speaks for itself, I believe it is time that the public get some background about the “other” Ray Rogers that he never revealed to the “Shroud crowd” himself. That is the primary purpose of this short presentation.

First and foremost, Ray was my colleague and my friend for more than 30 years. He wasn't the easiest man to get along with, especially if he witnessed some bad science taking place in his presence. In fact, I had dubbed him "The Gunfighter" during the STURP examination of the Shroud.

Ray never talked about his work at the laboratory to his Shroud colleagues and never talked about the Shroud to his colleagues at the lab. He kept them completely separate from each other and I did not know this for sure until after he died.



I think it is important that I present some background information about Rogers before going any further:

- On his thirteenth birthday, Ray's father, the chief chemist at an oil refinery, was killed in a tragic, accidental explosion.**

- Two years later, at the start of WWII, many men at the refinery left their jobs to join the war effort, leaving the facility without qualified workers. Already recognized as extremely gifted in chemistry, Ray Rogers was chosen to become the chief chemist at the refinery where his father had worked. He was 15 years old.**

- In early 1945, Ray lied about his age (he was only 17) and enlisted in the U.S. Navy to join the war effort himself.**

- After the war Ray went to college in California, but did his graduate work at the University of Arizona, working in both chemistry and archaeology.**

- He first came to Los Alamos in April 1952. He became the Group Leader for the Explosives Research group and was named a Laboratory Fellow in 1981. That program was created in 1981 to recognize scientific excellence, and only 22 men were selected for that first group, including Ray Rogers.**

He received a Distinguished Performance Award in 1984 from Los Alamos National Laboratory and retired in 1988.

•He was a member of the United States Air Force Scientific Advisory Board from 1987 to 1991, and received a Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service from them. The certificate reads, in part:

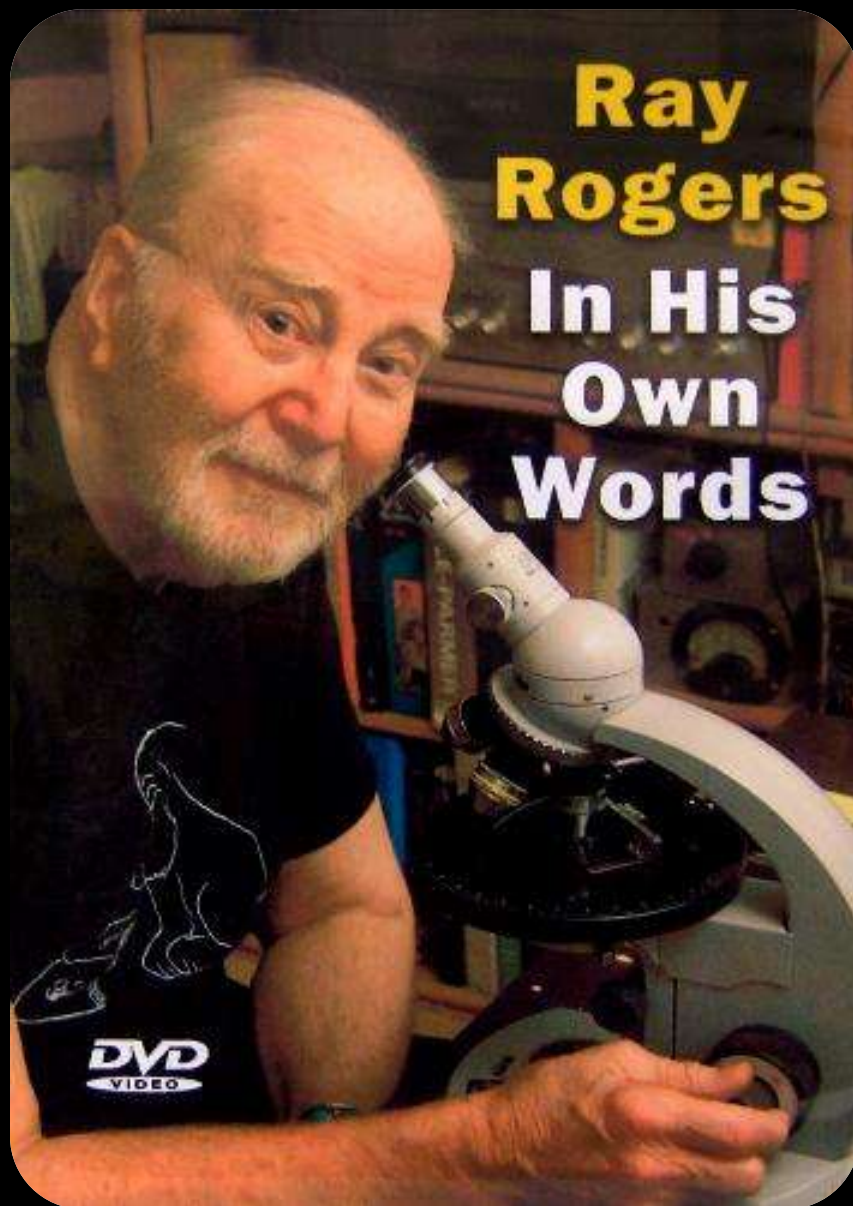
•"Citation: In recognition of his distinguished performance as a member of the United States Air Force Scientific Advisory Board from 1987 to 1991. During this period, Mr. Rogers' expertise in high explosives played a key role in several Board activities... Mr. Rogers' performance and devotion to the ideals of the Scientific Advisory Board reflect the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

• Finally, here is a quote from a Summary Ray wrote describing how he got involved with the Shroud:

•"I developed a method for fluorine analysis of archaeological bone samples and became involved in museum conservation problems, leading to an invitation to work on the Shroud of Turin project."



Rogers' research with the STURP Team is well known in the Shroud world and documented in the many papers and articles he published over the years, so I will not repeat it here. However, his colleagues in the thermochemistry field had little awareness of this work.



**Ray
Rogers**
**In His
Own
Words**

Shortly after Rogers' death on March 8, 2005, I began the post-production of a thirty minute video program I was planning to premiere at the upcoming Dallas Shroud Conference scheduled in September 2005. The program was taken from 5 ½ hours of on-camera video interviews I made with Ray at his home in May 2004. The purpose of the video was to provide everyone with an opportunity to hear about his final work on the Shroud "in his own words."

In May of 2005, I was contacted by Jim McCarty of the North American Thermal Analysis Society (NATAS). Jim was a friend and colleague of Ray's and a thermochemist himself. He was preparing a memorial article and obituary for the NATAS journal and requested permission to use some of our photographs of Ray. The memorial would provide a retrospective of Rogers' life and work and honor his contributions to the field of thermochemistry. Two separate memorial presentations would be delivered at the upcoming NATAS conference scheduled for September 18-21, 2005, one by McCarty and another by Jimmie C. Oxley, an old friend and colleague of Ray's from the University of Rhode Island.

During our conversations, the subject of the video came up and Jim immediately put me in contact with Larry Judovits, organizer of the event. Both thought it would be a great idea to screen the video to the entire group as a tribute to Ray at the NATAS conference banquet taking place on the evening of September 20th.

I was deeply honored to be given such an opportunity and agreed to attend. After a wonderful dinner, I presented the DVD program. Although NATAS is primarily a North American group, the scientists in attendance came from all over the world, including Europe and Asia.

It wasn't until after the screening that I received the biggest surprise. They set up a microphone and for the next hour and a half, scientists from all over the world came up to share their personal stories about Ray and his impact on their education, careers and the thermochemistry field itself.

I wish I had been videotaping *that* event, because the praise, respect and accolades by his peers were overwhelming. The most common theme I heard was that Ray had been a mentor and a teacher to many of these scientists. He was a pioneer in his field that broke new ground in thermal analysis of explosives, but was equally loved for his willingness to help his colleagues when the need arose. Many praised him in very emotional terms. It was very obvious that he meant a lot to them.

In one of his e-mails, Larry Judovits summed it up very nicely:

“Ray was a rare species - a genuinely objective scientist who sought the truth, whatever it might turn out to be.”

That is the Ray Rogers many of us were lucky to know personally and why I felt the need to make this presentation. Rogers would have been the first one to agree that criticism and disagreement were part of the scientific method, but, unlike some of his critics, he never made ad hominem personal attacks on their integrity. He might attack the science, but never the scientist. Of course, Ray did often refer to non-scientists as the “lunatic fringe,” particularly when they postulated on scientific matters about the Shroud beyond their expertise. However, if you knew him at all, you understood that his bark was worse than his bite. In the end, he helped anyone with a sincere interest in the truth.

If you would like to read the article written by Jim McCarty, here is a link to the NATAS Notes for the 2005 conference:

<http://natasinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/natasnotes-3723.pdf>

Ray would have welcomed the many critiques of his research that have been published in the ensuing years and would have defended the rights of those who disagreed with him to say so publicly, whether they were right or wrong.

In the end however, Ray was much more than the “mid-level scientist” that some of his most vocal critics have labeled him. He was a true leader that consistently demonstrated his knowledge, honesty and scientific integrity, not only in his chosen field of expertise, but in every facet of his research on the Shroud of Turin.

Anyone who says otherwise is simply wrong.

Thank you!

