

Memorial to Troy Lewis Péwé

1918–1999

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Troy Péwé, internationally eminent Quaternary geologist and geomorphologist, died in Phoenix, Arizona on October 21, 1999.

Troy was born at Rock Island, Illinois, on June 28, 1918. He took all his academic degrees in geology: his A.B. at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, in 1940; his M.S. at University of Iowa, Iowa City, in 1942; and his Ph.D. at Stanford University, Stanford, California, in 1952. At Stanford he worked with Professor Siemon W. Muller, compiler of the first U.S. in-depth study of permafrost (Permafrost or permanently frozen ground and related engineering problems, Special Report, Strategic Engineering Study No. 62, Military Intelligence Division, Office Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army, Washington, D.C., August 1945 [second printing with corrections]). Troy's doctoral research dealt with the history of permafrost in the Fairbanks area.



Troy's first professional employment, aside from classified research in 1942, was in 1943–1944 as a civilian instructor in map reading and air photo interpretation for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Rock Island, Illinois, an affiliation he continued in the summers of 1944 and 1945 as a research scientist.

In 1946 Troy served as instructor in geomorphology at Stanford. In the same year, he began a long affiliation with the U.S. Geological Survey, a geologist with the Alaskan Geology Branch, Military Geology Branch (1946–1958), and from 1958 on, W.A.E. (When Actively Employed) geologist with the Alaskan Geology Branch.

In 1954–1958, Troy was associate professor of geology, University of Alaska, Fairbanks (part time), and from 1958 to 1965 he was professor and head of the Department of Geology. His long association with Alaskan research was recognized by the University of Alaska (Fairbanks): he was awarded an honorary doctorate of science degree in 1991, and in 1999 the university designated the important research site at Gold Hill as the Troy L. Péwé Climatic Change Permafrost Reserve. These and many other aspects of Troy's career are discussed in an excellent memorial by Hugh French in *Arctic, Antarctic and Alpine Research* (v. 32, no. 2, 2000, p. 212–215).

From 1965 to 1976 Troy served as professor and head of the Department of Geology at Arizona State University in Tempe, and from 1976 on as professor of geology and director of the Museum of Geology at Arizona State University.

Troy was a member of numerous professional societies and held office in many. These included: Alaska Academy of Engineering and Sciences, chairman, Seventh Alaskan Science Conference, 1956; American Association for the Advancement of Science, fellow, and president of the Alaska Division 1956–1957; American Quaternary Association, president 1984–1986; Arctic Institute of North America, fellow, and member of the Board of Governors 1969–1974; Arizona-Nevada Academy of Science, fellow, and president 1982–1983; Chinese Academy Society

of Glaciology & Geocryology, international honorary fellow, 1985; Cosmos Club, Washington, D.C.; Geological Society of America, fellow, *Bulletin* associate editor 1975–1981, chairman of the Cordilleran Section 1979–1980, and chairman of the Geomorphology Division 1981–1982; International Geographical Union, Periglacial Commission, 1967–1972, 1981–; International Permafrost Association, vice president 1983–; Iowa Academy of Science, fellow; National Academy of Science Organizing Committee, First International Permafrost Conference (1963), U.S. Planning Committee chairman for Second International Permafrost Conference (1973), Third Conference (1978), and Fourth Conference (1979–1984), Polar Research Board, chairman 1975–1981.

His honors included membership in Sigma Gamma Epsilon (geology) from 1940, Sigma Xi from 1945, and Gamma Theta Upsilon (geography) from 1948, the Antarctic Service Medal of the U.S. Department of the Interior (1966), and the 100 Years International Geophysics of USSR Medal (1985).

Most fittingly, Troy's accomplishments and stature were posthumously honored by his being awarded the 1999 Distinguished Career Award of the Geological Society of America's Quaternary Geology and Geomorphology Division.

Health problems in his later years barely slowed Troy down. He still led Grand Canyon field trips by boat. He accompanied his son Rick on a Jeep rally as late as May 1999, despite a history of heart surgery, a kidney removal, two bionic knees, and a recently broken ankle that still required crutches (Rick Péwé, In Memoriam, Jp Magazine, April 2000, p. 4, and illustrations showing Troy and Jeep, p. 86–87, 92–93).

Troy is survived by his wife, the former Mary Jean Hill, whom he married on December 21, 1944, and by sons Richard (Rick) Hill Péwé and his wife, Laura, of Malibu, California; David Lee Péwé and his wife, Stella, of Casa Grande, Arizona; daughter Elizabeth Anne and her husband, Gary Clay, of Phoenix, Arizona; and five grandchildren.

SOME MEMORIES

I probably first met Troy briefly in Washington, D.C., in 1942 while he was working on World War II–related research, but I did not get to know him well until we served together on the planning committee of the First International Permafrost Conference, held at Purdue University, Indiana, in 1963 (Proceedings, Permafrost International Conference, National Academy of Sciences–National Research Council Publication 1287, 583 p.).

It was not until Troy and Dick Reger led the Fairbanks-Anchorage field trip of the Fourth International Permafrost Conference (Péwé, T.L., and Reger, R.D., 1983) that I more fully appreciated Troy's talents. It was the best-organized and best-led field trip in which it has been my pleasure to participate.

David and Stella Péwé wrote the following on October 22, 1999, the day after Troy's death. It was included in the program of the memorial service held for Troy at the First United Methodist Church in Tempe, Arizona, on October 29, 1999.

To the Hills of Heaven

(Dad's Song)

by David & Stella Péwé

The hills of heaven majestically rise

The hills of heaven, they are mine, they are mine.

I hiked among them on a brisk autumn day,

The hills of heaven have summoned me away.

I hike the hills of heaven, so far away

Thinking of my loved ones, I miss them today.

Filled with love for them, even though I could not stay

To the hills of heaven, angels carried me away.

TROY L. PÉWÉ ARCHIVES

U.S. National Permafrost Committee Records

While he was still active, Troy Péwé archived his U.S. National Research Council Permafrost Committee records at the Elmer E. Rasmusen Library at the Alaska and Polar Regions Department of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. In many cases these records include official reports dealing with science policy. Files include:

Permafrost Committee, U.S. National Research Council, files of actions and meetings, 1976–1981 (Troy L. Péwé, founding chairman, 1973–1981);

Files for U.S.-Canada participation in the Second International Conference on Permafrost, Yakutsk, Siberia, USSR, 1973 (Troy L. Péwé, chairman of the U.S.A. Organizing Committee, U.S. Academy of Sciences, 1972–1973);

Fourth International Conference on Permafrost, Fairbanks, Alaska, 1983, files 1980–1984 (Troy L. Péwé, chairman of the Organizing Committee).

Personal Library

Troy's personal library, except for reprints, will be housed at the Geophysical Institute of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Reprints

Troy's reprint collection from around the world, including a collection of Antarctic reports, is to be archived at the Quaternary Research Center of the University of Washington, Seattle. Catalogued by Troy with respect to author and subject, the reprint collection will be available for perusal by visitors to the Quaternary Research Center, and selected items can be copied for a fee if they are not protected by copyright laws.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF T. L. PÉWÉ

Note: This list illustrates the progress of Troy's career; these are not necessarily the best of his more than 350 publications.

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