Reported Death

John George Seeley

Professor Emeritus John George Seeley died on 9 May 2007 in Ithaca, NY. He had been a member of ASHS since 1939, was named an ASHS Fellow in 1970, and served as president in 1983. He won countless awards from ASHS and other organizations throughout his career.

John was born in North Bergen, NJ, on 21 Dec. 1915. As a child he started his life long interested in plants. His goal, when he started college, was to become a greenhouse carnation grower. In 1937, John received his undergraduate education at Rutgers University and graduated with a B.S. degree majoring in Floriculture. While an undergraduate student he was elected to Alpha Zeta (National Agriculture Honorary Society) and awarded by that society "Best Senior in the College of Agriculture." John found his real love for teaching and research during his years at Rutgers and knew he required more training. He studied for his M.S. at Rutgers under Professor O. Wesley Davidson, a noted floriculturist and received his degree in 1940. He was superintendent of the ornamental horticulture gardens at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station during 1940–1941.

He matriculated at Cornell in 1941 as an instructor to teach floriculture. In 1941, he left for a research position in South Carolina with the USDA, as part of the WWII effort, to study growth and extraction of rubber from

field grown goldenrod. In 1944, he was a chemist in the Rubber Materials Laboratory of the Wright Aeronautical Corporation in Paterson, NJ.

In 1945, he returned to Cornell as an instructor to continue his graduate studies under Professor Kenneth Post, who, at the time, was one of the worlds leading researchers in the field of floriculture. The U.S. floriculture industry was changing and expanding rapidly. Post's research was a major factor in theses changes and expansion.

John received his Ph.D. in 1948 and was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture

at Cornell University. In 1949, he was appointed at The Pennsylvania State University as Associate Professor of Floriculture in the Department of Horticulture, and ultimately Professor and Chairman of the Floriculture Section.

John was elected to the American Society of Florists' Hall of Fame in 1979. Professor Seeley was active in the American Society for Horticultural Science. John a long time member of 68 years, was elected a Fellow of the Society in 1970, served on numerous committees and in 1981 was elected president. He also was active in the International Society for Horticultural Science, headquartered in the Netherlands. He was the U.S. representative to the Section for Ornamental Plants from 1962 to 1986, served as secretary from 1962 to 1964, and chairman from 1964 to 1970 and again from 1982 to 1986.

In 1986 his colleagues in the Department of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture and Department of Plant Pathology organized the "Seeley Conference," where invited (100 limit) leaders of the floriculture industry of the world came to Cornell for 4 days to a "think tank" analysis of major problems/changes facing their industry. This past June was the 21st conference and honored John.

John had a long and productive life, his accomplishments were many. He touched and improved the lives of many people, including hundreds of students. We are all pleased to have had the opportunity to know and work with him.

MARVIN PRITTS
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York