

Memorial to James Herbert Zumberge

1923-1992

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James Herbert Zumberge died on April 15, 1992, after a distinguished career as a geologist, academic leader, author, science advisor, and university president.

Jim's enthusiasm for whatever he was involved in was contagious, and his students and colleagues were caught up in his vision of the future. Herbert E. Wright, Jr., his doctoral advisor, said of Jim when accepting the Distinguished Career Award from the Quaternary Geology and Geomorphology Section of the Geological Society of America, "Just as students learn from students, so do professors learn from students. Jim Zumberge, as my first graduate student, taught me an appreciation for the importance of undergraduate teaching, and he subsequently followed a distinguished career as a college and university president."

Jim was born on December 27, 1923, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the oldest of three children in the family of Herbert and Helen Zumberge. He graduated from Minneapolis Central High School in June 1941. In the fall of 1941 he entered the University of Minnesota with a declared major in chemical engineering. In January of 1943 he transferred to the School of Mines. On March 23, 1943, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and was sent to San Diego for boot camp. He was selected for Officer Candidate School, and in July he began studies at Duke University as a Marine private in the United States Navy V-12 program. He was in the liberal arts program with a major in geology. In September 1943 he was transferred to the University of Michigan V-12 program.

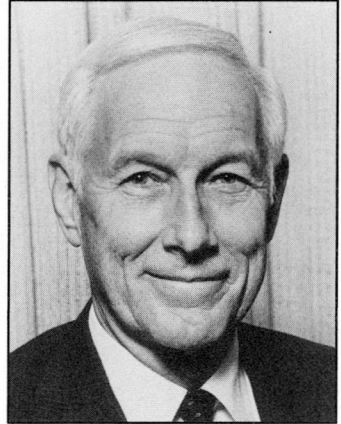
From April through July 1945 Jim attended the U.S. Navy Language School at the University of Colorado, where he studied Japanese. He was promoted to staff sergeant at that time. In July he was transferred to Oklahoma A&M University for additional study in Japanese and was promoted to second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He received his honorable discharge on December 27, 1945.

He returned to the University of Minnesota to continue his studies in geology and graduated in June 1946 with a B.A. He spent the summer as a field assistant for the U.S. Geological Survey in the Navy Petroleum Reserve on the North Slope of Alaska. Upon his return from Alaska he served as an instructor in geology at Duke University during the 1946-1947 academic year.

Jim married Marilyn Edwards on June 21, 1947, and for their honeymoon he took her to Fairbanks, Alaska, found her living quarters, and left for another summer of field work with the USGS in arctic Alaska. Marilyn found work as a librarian in Fairbanks.

Jim began his graduate studies at the University of Minnesota in the fall of 1947, and he received his Ph.D. in June 1950, the first of many students to receive their degree under the guidance of Herb Wright. Jim's thesis, "The Lakes of Minnesota: Their Origin and Classification," was published as Minnesota Geological Survey Bulletin No. 35 in 1952.

Jim was a dedicated teacher with a love for geology. Dissatisfied with the laboratory manuals for freshman geology courses, he wrote his own, first published in 1951 by William C. Brown. That manual is now in its ninth edition and has been in print for 42 years.



In the fall of 1950 Jim and Marilyn moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where Jim was appointed as an instructor and was promoted to assistant professor (1951). In the summer of 1952 he went to Greenland to conduct research on lake ice. He continued his interest in frozen lakes and glacial geology during the mid-1950s. In 1954 he was promoted to associate professor, and in 1955 he spent a year at his alma mater, the University of Minnesota, as a visiting professor.

Jim's work in Antarctica began in 1957 during the International Geophysical Year where he served as chief glaciologist for the Ross Ice Shelf Study. He established Camp Michigan on the Ross Ice Shelf and did pioneering work on the study of ice shelf deformation. He returned to Ann Arbor, organized the second University of Michigan Antarctic Expedition, and presented several papers at international conferences that followed the IGY.

In the fall of 1959 he returned to Antarctica with the third University of Michigan Antarctic Expedition, but health problems kept him from joining the group in the field. He resumed his teaching and research at Michigan, was promoted to full professor in January of 1960, and spent the last half of that year on sabbatical leave in Denmark and Austria, where he studied alpine glaciers. Upon his return from Europe, he resumed teaching at the University of Michigan, established the Glacial Geology and Polar Research Laboratory and in June of 1961, started his geological investigations of Lake Superior.

Jim's academic administration career began when he was appointed the first president of Grand Valley State College, Allendale, Michigan, in February 1962. His leadership during the formative years of that institution was essential and is now recorded for posterity by the James H. Zumbege Library at Grand Valley College.

In 1968 Jim resigned his presidency and became the first director of the newly formed School of Earth Sciences at the University of Arizona, a position he held until February of 1972, when he was named chancellor of the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. In the same year he was appointed to the National Science Board by President Gerald Ford, and he replaced Larry Gould as the U.S. delegate to the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

In October 1975, Jim became the seventh president of Southern Methodist University, in Dallas, Texas. He continued his active role in Antarctic affairs through his chairmanship of the Polar Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences, and his involvement in SCAR not only as the U.S. delegate but also as president from 1982 to 1986.

The University of Southern California appointed Jim president in May 1982; he held that post until his retirement in February 1991. His tenure as president was marked by an increase in the endowment of USC by more than \$700 million, a campaign that Jim was immersed in for the last five years of his presidency. During this time, he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as the first chairman of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission.

Involvement in polar activities led Jim to travel to many of the nations involved in Antarctic research. He was internationally recognized by that group not only for his leadership and insight into the needs of Antarctic science, but also for his sense of humor, his ability to achieve consensus, and his energy. Jim served in many community groups, and as director for a number of firms, including Dresser Industries, General Motors Institute, Dallas Power and Light, Bankers Life Nebraska, Security Pacific Bank, Texas Utilities, Litton Industries, and Pacific Enterprises. He was a member of the Explorers Club, University Club of New York, Cosmos Club, California Club, and Bohemian Club. He was the recipient of honorary degrees from Nebraska Wesleyan University, Grand Valley State College, Kwansai Gakuin University in Japan, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Chapman College, and Chung-Ang University in Seoul, Korea. He received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Minnesota, held the Antarctic Service Medal, and was honored by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names by having two features in Antarctica, Cape Zumbege and Zumbege Coast, named for him.

He was a member of the Geological Society of America, Sigma Xi, American Geophysical Union, International Glaciological Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Arctic Institute of North America, Society of Economic Geologists, and National Association of Geology Teachers.

Jim and Marilyn had three sons and one daughter, and he was a dedicated family man. He was proud of his heritage and was a Germanophile—Oktoberfests at the Zumberge's were renowned by all who were privileged to attend.

Jim was a talented musician—he played the violin and guitar, but his international musical reputation arose from his skill on the accordion and piano. His ability to remember songs and to get diverse groups to sing along were a part of his leadership tools. He was also a wood carver, and the family cabin at the foot of the Tetons is marked by a sign Jim carved, "Haus Zumberge."

It was to this cabin that Jim went to relax, and it is in a small rural cemetery just a short distance away that Jim was buried in April 1992, after succumbing to the ravages of cancer of the brain. At his request, his grave is marked by a big granite boulder.

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