

RESOLUTION ON THE RETIREMENT OF  
SAMUEL SUTCLIFFE  
ADOPTED BY THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES OF  
TUFTS UNIVERSITY

May 15, 1995

The members of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Tufts University, hereby record our warm appreciation for our retiring colleague, Associate Professor Samuel Sutcliffe. Tufts has benefitted from Professor Sutcliffe's contributions to the university community throughout his past 31 years of service.

Sam was born and raised in New Britain, Connecticut. He received his BS from the University of Connecticut in 1955, and MS and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in 1958 and 1960 respectively. At Illinois he worked on problems in structural and theoretical mechanics, and studied under the famous structural engineer Professor Nathan M. Newmark. They thought so highly of him that he remained another four years at Illinois as an Assistant Professor.

Earle Littleton was the prime mover in bringing Sam to Tufts. Back in the early 1960's, the department was in transition, making the leap from having only a small undergraduate civil engineering program to establishing graduate programs in structural and environmental engineering. A search was conducted, and, with the help of a growing network of Tufts alumni, Sam was hired and came to Tufts in the summer of 1964. His charge was to teach graduate and undergraduate courses in structural mechanics, analysis and design, and to solidify the Department's new graduate program in structural engineering. His close work with graduate students and his theoretical and experimental research in dynamic elastic instability were successful features of the program and led to his promotion to Associate Professor in 1970.

Over the past twenty-five years Sam has played a number of unique and important roles in the department. To mention a few:

1. Established graduate level course work in solid mechanics jointly with the Mechanical Engineering Department.
2. Developed a course in community and urban planning which was very popular in the early 1970's.

3. Served as Acting Chair of the Department.
4. Filled teaching needs across the board. Although mechanics and analysis are his bread and butter, he has taught probably the widest range of courses in the department (over 15 at last count!), from surveying and materials to applied elasticity, structural stability, and analysis and design of plates.

His outside activities are as varied as his teaching interests:

1. He has been involved with community theatre, both in acting and in set design and construction.
2. He is an accomplished craftsman, practicing carpentry and woodcarving, furniture making and cabinetry.
3. His public service has been exemplary: town planning boards, acting town engineer of Acton, and Selectman in the Town of Ashby.

Over the past decade, Sam has been working on a major scholarly work, a new text entitled Statistics and Dynamics for Civil Engineers. He has a complete draft of the book and it is quite a refreshing alternative to the traditional type of mechanics text. It attempts to put much of this body of material into readable, historical context, stressing the links between classical and modern views of mechanics. It uses everyday problem settings to demonstrate the utility and elegance of the theorems and laws of mechanics.

Professor Sutcliffe will be missed for what he brings to the department, the quality of his intellect, his love of mathematics and its application to problems in mechanics, his tactical insight in launching department initiatives, his healthy skepticism of fashion, and of course, his dry humor. One quality that perhaps we all should better emulate is his ability to relax in the face of stress, not to get too excited, and to be patient and think clearly. He has been a knowledgeable, dependable, trusting and supportive colleague.

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Professor Sutcliffe's plans for retirement include many options. We're told that one includes moving up north to spend more time with his crafts, both manual and intellectual. As with most milestones, this one we observe with mixed emotions. A tinge of sadness in losing a colleague who has contributed to the intellectual fabric of the department, a bit of envy knowing that he does not have to prepare a lecture on "tensor analysis" to some skeptic graduate students. Whatever his endeavors, we wish him well and the genuine hope that retirement will bring to Professor Sutcliffe the freedom to pursue that backlog of unfinished projects and to embark on new adventures. We also hope that he will make Tufts and the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department a regular stop on his future path.

For the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department

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Linfield C. Brown

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Lewis Edgers

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Masoud Sanayei

We move that this resolution be spread upon the permanent record of this faculty, and that a copy be sent to Associate Professor Sutcliffe.

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