

In Gratitude to the Late Professor Howard Myron Swarm

by N. Narayana Rao

As a faculty member from 1951 to 1981, the late Professor Myron Swarm is still fondly remembered today. Swarm received both his BSEE ('40) and MSEE ('50) degrees from the UW. He was hired as an instructor in 1941 and became an assistant professor in 1951. As a successful electromagnetics researcher, Swarm, along with Professors Don Reynolds and Irene Peden and three graduate students, traveled to Antarctica to lay a 21-mile antenna for propagation and measurements in the Antarctic regions.

Below is a tribute from N. Narayana Rao, one of his former graduate students. If you would like to share a fond memory of Myron Swarm, or any other former or current EE faculty member, please send it to:

alumni_relations@ee.washington.edu

Fifty years ago in 1958, I arrived in Seattle from India to become a graduate student of Myron Swarm. With him as my advisor, I received my MS and PhD degrees in 1960 and 1965, respectively. I then went to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and served on the faculty of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering for 42 years, before retiring in 2007 as the Edward C. Jordan Professor Emeritus of Electrical and Computer Engineering. During these 42 years, I was involved in research, teaching, writing textbooks, administration, and international activities, thanks to the solid academic foundation received from the University of Washington.

Professor Swarm was a great academic advisor, always willing and ready to help his students. He was also a very kind person. In this article, I would like to share with you a personal story involv-

ing his kindness. We co-authored a 1959 paper from my MS thesis work, "Lunar Tidal Variations in the Ionospheric Layers," that was accepted for presentation at the URSI (International Scientific Radio Union) meeting in San Diego, Calif. Professor Swarm wanted me to attend the meeting to present the paper, even though he would also be attending the meeting.

He approached the department for travel support for me, but the department's policy did not allow it for graduate students. Instead of going alone and presenting the paper without me, he asked if I could afford to pay for the trip myself. When I replied in the negative, he immediately pulled out a \$100 bill from his wallet and gave it to me, with which I made the trip to San Diego to present the paper. I can still visualize him doing this very kind act on the spur of the moment.



Pictured (L to R): Myron Swarm, unknown, Milton Scovill from Pacific Bell, Donald K. Reynolds.

I strongly believe in a saying by a late spiritual guru: "Gratitude and appreciation are the key virtues for a better life. They are the spell that is cast to dissolve hatred, hurt and sadness, the medicine which heals the subjective states of mind, restoring self-respect, confidence and security." I am grateful to Professor Swarm for his kindness and contributions to my successful professional career.