

Dr. Leo Smith Retires Today

Leo F. Smith, a man who played a major role in shaping the present academic program and a number of other major developments at Rochester Institute of Technology, will retire June 30 after 33 years of service.

Dr. Smith, 65, of 1685 Highland Ave., Brighton, executive assistant to RIT President Paul A. Miller, is leaving the Institute he served for nearly his entire professional career.

Of Dr. Smith's many contributions to RIT, these are most often extolled by his colleagues:

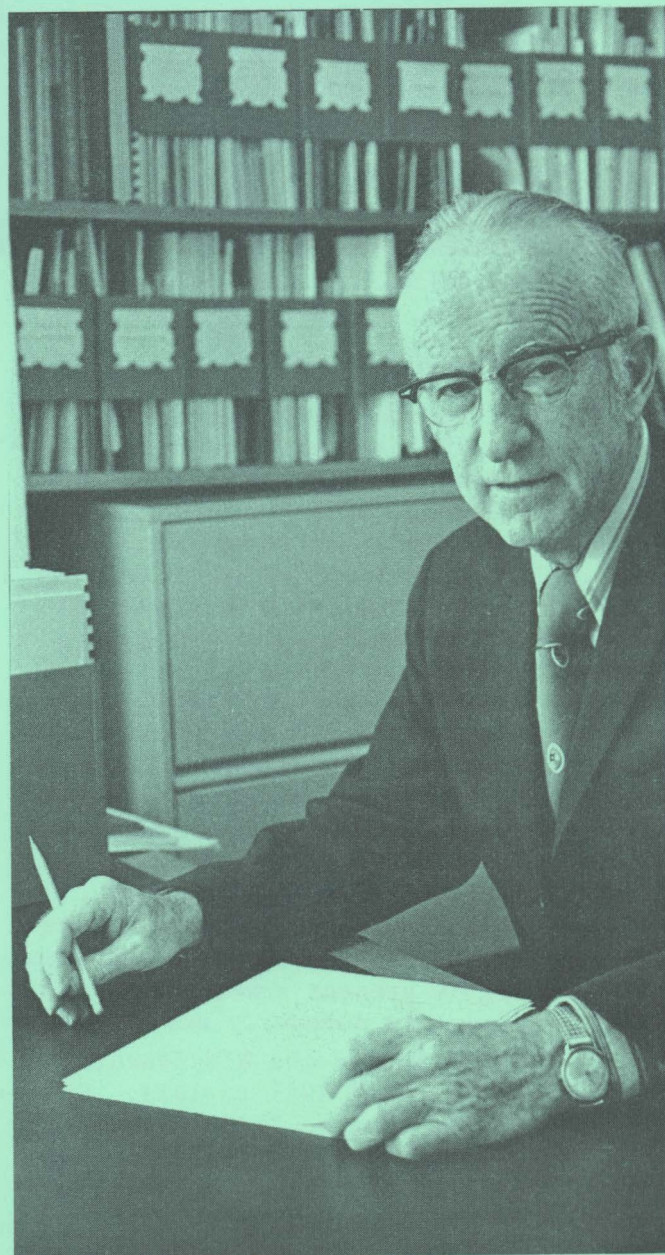
Leo Smith founded the Counseling Center and directed it from 1942 to 1953. He guided the self-study program which the Institute undertook that eventually led to accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. He supervised the development of the curricula for associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees.

He directed the academic planning for the new campus in Henrietta. His sound management of the academic programs helped keep the Institute in the black for 30 years.

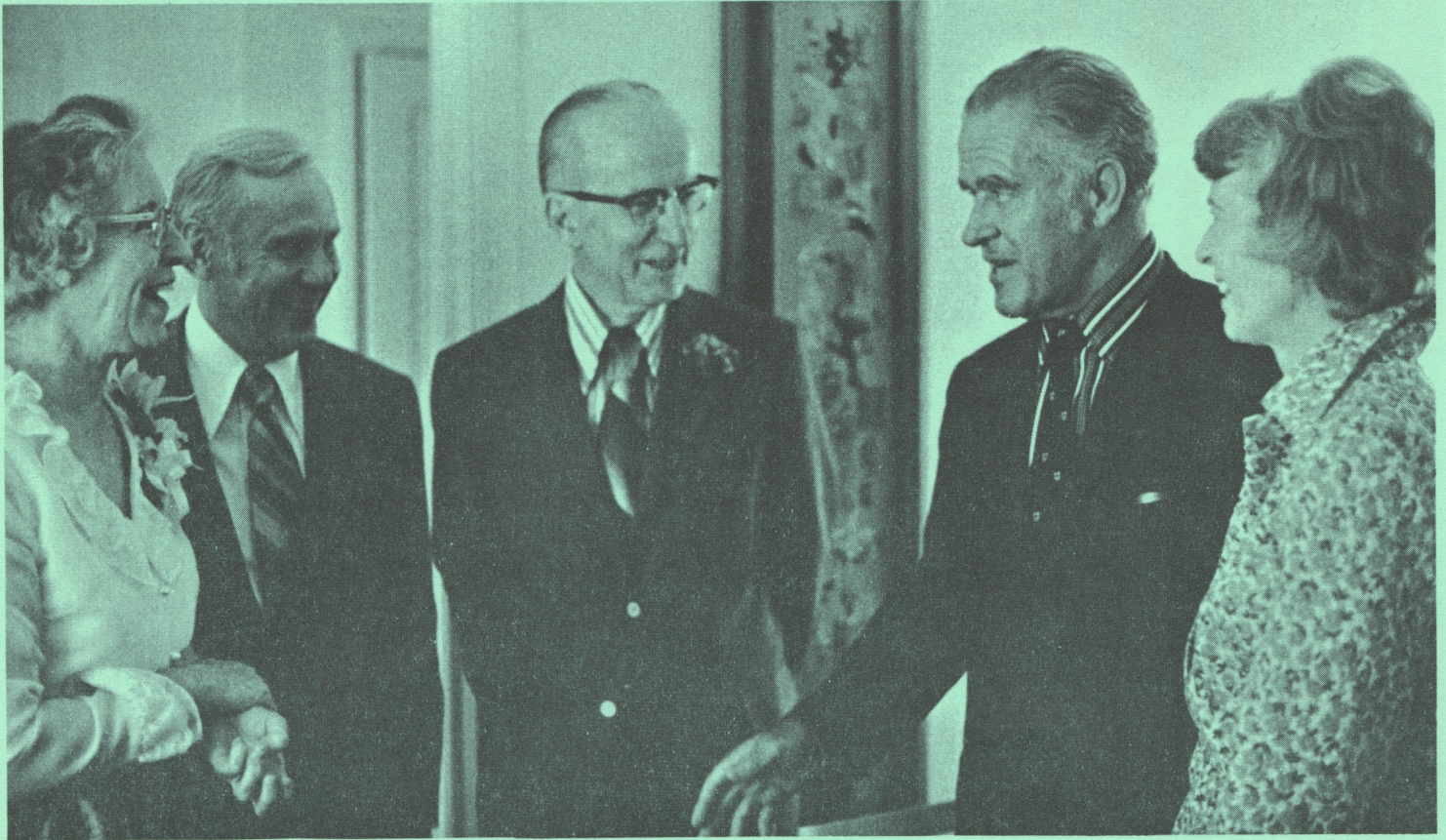
Dr. Smith championed cooperative education--combining school and work experience--before it achieved its present acceptance as a useful educational tool. He became an advocate of technical, job-preparatory education--but not at the expense of a solid general education core.

Dr. Smith was born in Burlington, Ill., and moved to Los Angeles at the age of 12. He graduated in physics and mathematics from Occidental College in Los Angeles in 1929 and went to work as a research engineer.

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Dr. Leo F. Smith



Mrs. Leo F. Smith, Dr. Paul A. Miller, Dr. Smith, Dr. Mark Ellingson and Mrs. Miller chat at Millers' reception for Dr. Smith.

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eer for Bell Telephone in New York City from 1929 to 1933 and as a sales representative for Associated Oil Co. in Los Angeles from 1933 to 1935.

The opportunity to enter education came in 1935 with an offer to be an educational adviser for the U.S. Office of Education, Civilian Conservation Corps, in Boston.

Dr. Smith and his wife, Mary, came to Rochester from Los Angeles in 1939. He had a General Education Board fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation which enabled him to work in personnel and evaluation at RIT and to complete his graduate degrees at the University of Chicago.

The Smiths intended to return to the West Coast, but they soon became attached to Rochester by greater commitments at RIT and involvement in community activities.

Dr. Smith headed the RIT Educational Research Office from 1941 to 1953. Simultaneously, from 1942 to 1953, he founded and directed the Institute's Counseling Center which now serves students, businesses, and the community.

From 1953 to 1960 he was dean of instruction, and from 1960 to 1969 was the

first vice president for academic administration. In 1969 he became executive assistant to the president.

For his first 30 years at RIT, Dr. Smith worked under President Mark Ellingson, now retired. Dr. Ellingson praised Dr. Smith as "one of the outstanding American educators."

"He has stood consistently for high quality in education," said Dr. Ellingson. "He made one of the major contributions to the Institute during its period of growth. He always stood for raising the quality of the educational programs. He was deeply concerned and active in bringing about accreditation."

Dr. Ellingson said Dr. Smith is well-known nationally as an authority on technical education, and was chairman of numerous accrediting teams for other institutions. "That shows what your colleagues think of you," said Dr. Ellingson.

On a personal level, Dr. Ellingson found Dr. Smith "always very easy to work with. He never went off half-cocked. He was always thoughtful, considerate, and open-minded."

Other colleagues added their tributes. Dr. Paul A. Miller, present RIT pres-

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ident, said, "More than anyone else I've met here, Leo Smith embodies as a person the philosophy of RIT. He is a major student, observer and writer about technological institutes. One of the major books on technical institutes was written by Leo Smith."

Dr. Miller praised his executive assistant for being "consistent, cooperative, loyal, and a great servant of the community in a quiet way."

Dr. Miller said Dr. Smith developed distinctive programs at RIT--cooperative education, institutional self-evaluation, use of audio-visual media in the classroom, independent study--long before they became the mode on a national scale.



Dr. and Mrs. Leo Smith

Alfred L. Davis, administrative secretary to the RIT board of trustees, who has worked with Dr. Smith for 30 years, said of his colleague, "I don't know if I've ever known anyone more conscientious about his work. He's totally committed to RIT and its educational program."

Dr. Edward S. Todd, vice president for instructional development and planning, praised Dr. Smith's versatility.

"In his years here, RIT was 30 different institutions, so he had to do 30 different jobs," Dr. Todd said.

Faculty members remarked about their pleasure in working with Dr. Smith.

Dr. Ralph Van Peursem, dean of the College of Science, said, "He's a very reasonable person to work with. He and I didn't always agree on everything, but he disagrees in a professional manner. He's willing to sit down and work out something we both can live with. That's all you can ask of any man."

Miss Edwina B. Hogadone, retired dean of the College of Business who worked with Dr. Smith for 31 years, said, "He's probably one of the finest men I've ever worked with. I always felt I could go to him and get a hearing. He boosted the people who worked with him. He had a good sense of humor, too--not a belly-laughing

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Dr. Smith with secretary Barbara Blickwede

Smiths To Remain Active In Community

For Dr. and Mrs. Leo Smith, retirement will mean more time for travel and hobbies, winters away from Rochester's cold weather, and continued involvement in community affairs.

The Smiths will keep their Brighton home, but as the weather gets colder, they plan to visit their two sons and then move on to the Pacific Southwest for the winter.

Their sons are Donald, assistant dean of students at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, and Kenneth, assistant professor of psychology at George Peabody Teachers College in Nashville, Tenn.

The Smiths have long been active in community work.

Dr. Smith plans to remain on the boards of the Genesee Hospital School of Nursing and the Rochester Better Business Bureau.

Mrs. Smith works with the elderly at the Presbyterian Home in Rochester.

They have both been active at the Central Presbyterian Church.

The Smiths are gardeners and amateur bird watchers. Dr. Smith likes to carve bowls and free form objects from wood.

Mrs. Smith is a pianist and organist.

Commenting on her husband's retirement from RIT after 33 years, Mrs. Smith noted what RIT has done for Dr. Smith as well as what he has contributed to the Institute.

"I'm sure he's grown a great deal with RIT, as a person and in his professional life," she said. "He didn't take other opportunities outside because he felt he wanted to be with RIT. He's gotten so much from RIT."

Mrs. Smith said her husband consistently has been concerned with the Institute's becoming more and more academically respectable.

"The development of RIT into a more prestigious institution has been one of the really exciting things," she said.

Another of her husband's major concerns, said Mrs. Smith, was trying to preserve a "family feeling" at RIT as the school grew.

"At first we considered it a small family. We knew everybody," she said. "With the coming of the large school you lose some of that family feeling. One of the things Leo's striven for is to keep

that feeling."

The couple's close friends have been at RIT. "Since both of our families were from the West Coast, we've been fortunate to make such good friendships here," said Mrs. Smith.

Of their pending retirement, Mrs. Smith commented, "We're looking forward to doing some things we'd like to do but still keep up with our work in the community. It's going to be fun."



Dr. and Mrs. Leo Smith view plaque announcing their honorary life memberships in the Nathaniel Rochester Society.

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kind, but clever."

Stanley H. Witmeyer, associate dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts who has worked with Dr. Smith for 26 years, said, "He's one of the warmest men I've ever known, a man of humility, warm and personable, and a great administrator."

Dr. Smith's secretary of many years, Barbara Blickwede, said simply, "It's been a pleasure. He's been very patient, understanding and considerate."

Long active in the community, Dr. Smith is on the board of directors of the Genesee Hospital School of Nursing and the Rochester Better Business Bureau, and is president of the Phi Beta Kappa Iota Chapter of New York. He was a member of the Irondequoit School Board from 1945 to 1952 and a member of the board of directors of the Health Association of Rochester and Monroe County from 1962 to 1968.