

James Snow, Otorhinolaryngology

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James Snow

James Byron Snow, Jr., an emeritus professor of otorhinolaryngology in the Perelman School of Medicine, passed away on May 28. He was 90.

Dr. Snow was born in Oklahoma City in 1932, the son of a prominent pediatrician. The family moved to San Antonio, TX during World War II, but returned to Oklahoma City, where Dr. Snow graduated from Central High School as valedictorian. He then earned a BS from the University of Oklahoma in 1953 and earned an MD cum laude from Harvard Medical School in 1956. Afterwards, he served his surgical internship at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD and completed a residency in otolaryngology at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary in Boston, MA. From 1960 to 1961, he served as a Captain in the Army Medical Corps at the 121st Evacuation Hospital in Korea, where he was the only otolaryngologist in the Eighth U.S.

Army.

After completing his military service, Dr. Snow joined the faculty of the University of Oklahoma Medical Center in Oklahoma City in 1962. The next year, he was promoted to chief of staff of the hospitals of the University of Oklahoma, and in 1964, he became a full professor and the head of the department of otorhinolaryngology. While at Oklahoma, he won the Regents' Award for Superior Teaching in 1970, and a certificate from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. In 1972, Dr. Snow came to Penn to become a professor and the chair of Penn's School of Medicine's otolaryngology department, which was renamed otorhinolaryngology and human communication for the occasion (*Almanac* July 11, 1972 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/v19pdf/n01/071172.pdf>)). Two years later, he assumed a secondary appointment as an adjunct professor of oral medicine in Penn Dental Medicine.

While at Penn, Dr. Snow's academic work and contributions to his field were extensive. He published more than 150 peer-reviewed articles describing his work on the pathophysiology of the inner ear, the olfactory system, and the treatment of head and neck cancer with combined surgery and radiation therapy. He wrote *Introduction to Otorhinolaryngology* and *Controversy in Otolaryngology* and co-authored several other books, and edited several editions of influential textbook *Ballenger's Otorhinolaryngology: Head and Neck Surgery*. He served on boards of several prominent scientific societies, including as director of the American Board of Otolaryngology and as president of the American Broncho-Esophagological Association and the American Laryngological Association. In 1990, he became the first director of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. In this position, he served as a liaison between the NIH and NASA. In 1997, he presided over the prestigious conference of the Collegium Otorhinolaryngologicum Amicitiae Sacrum. He retired from Penn in 1991 and took emeritus status.

Dr. Snow was widely recognized for his service. In 1991, he was inducted into the Society of Scholars of Johns Hopkins University, and two years later, he received the Distinguished Achievement Award of the Deafness Research Foundation. The collegium Dr. Snow had presided over in 1997 created the James B. Snow, Jr., MD Tinnitus Research Award in his honor, and in 2003, he won the Award of Merit of the American Otological Society. In his free time, Dr. Snow was active at the St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Oxford, PA.

He is survived by his sons, James (Susan Sprenger) and John (Meryl Bilotta Snow); his daughter, Sallie (Daniel Sharer); five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and his "dearest companion" Anna Jane Mercer. A burial service was held on June 21. In lieu of flowers, a contribution to Jenner's Pond Retirement Community Benevolent Fund, 2000 Greenbriar Lane, West Grove PA 19390, may be made.