

jnm / IN MEMORIAM

Raymond Loring Libby, M.D.

1903-1976



Raymond L. Libby, nuclear medicine pioneer and member of the faculty of the UCLA School of Medicine from its inception in 1948 until his retirement in 1971, died on Oct. 24, 1976. A native of Portland, Maine, Dr. Libby studied at Rutgers University where he received his Ph.D. in 1938. He was Assistant Director of Biological Research at Lederle Laboratories until 1948 when he became Chief of the Radiation Biology Division, Atomic Energy Project, University of California, Los Angeles. In 1955, he became Professor of Radiology and Chief of the Division of Radiation Biology at the UCLA School of Medicine.

During the 22 years of his association with the UCLA School of Medicine, his career was distinguished by faithful and excellent teaching. He organized one of the earliest courses to teach the new field of nuclear medicine to physicians of the community and from other medical centers. He organized and directed summer workshop programs on the use of radioactivity for high school and college teachers under the auspices of the United States Atomic Energy Commission and the National Science Foundation. He also played an important role in establishing the medical physics graduate program at UCLA Medical School, which was based in large measure on courses that he had organized and taught during the previous decade.

Dr. Libby was a mainstay for many of the scientific investigators at UCLA who depended on his guidance. He was also a leader in developing new techniques and methods in nuclear medicine as well as a collaborator with his colleague, Dr. Benedict Cassen, in the development of the radioisotope scanner. He performed some of the original work on the use of radioiodine I-125 for the detection of thyroid gland lesions. He also developed an extracorporeal irradiator for experimental use in organ transplant and leukemia research.

Dr. Libby was an advisor to the government of Greece on nuclear medicine matters and was cited by the Greek Atomic Energy Commission in 1962. He was a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences and a longstanding member of the Society of Nuclear Medicine. As one of the founding members of the Southern California Chapter of the Society, he later went on to serve as Chapter President during the period 1960-1961. In addition, he was a member of the Board of Trustees and chairman of the Bylaws Committee of the Society from 1964 to 1965.

The passing of Raymond Libby is a profound loss to all who knew him and especially to those in the field of nuclear medicine. He will be remembered for his pioneering spirit in furthering the growth of the new discipline of nuclear medicine.

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