

## In Memory of Ted Taylor

By Michael P. Filosa



Two contemporaries at the 2010 Boston ACS Meeting: (L) Myke Simon, Harvard A.B. 1946, Ph.D. 1949 and (R) Ted Taylor, Cornell A.B. 1946 and Ph.D. 1949. (Photo by Michael Filosa).

The passing of Ted Taylor is not just the passing of an icon of Organic Chemistry, but the loss of a long-time friend and mentor.

In addition to Ted's well-known consulting activities with Eli Lilly that led to the development of the anti-cancer drug, Alimta, Ted was a long-time consultant to the Polaroid Corporation. He followed Saul Cohen and Nobel Laureates, Robert B. Woodward and Sir Derek H. R. Barton in that role.

Ted had a natural connection to Polaroid. His expertise and that of his students in heterocyclic chemistry was very valuable to Polaroid's organic chemistry efforts.

One of his Ph.D. students, Alan Borrer was the head of Organic Chemistry at the time of my arrival at Polaroid in late 1979. In 1988 John Warner joined Polaroid after receiving his Ph.D. with Ted.

Director of Chemical Research, Lloyd D. Taylor, had a great affinity for Ted, his work, and his students. Lloyd encouraged John to study hydrogenbonded complexes and use them to solve some of Polaroid's chemical problems. These complexes were the genesis of John's interest in the principles of Green Chemistry.

Around 1991 Ted stopped his consulting relationship with Kodak and became the Organic Chemistry consultant for Polaroid Chemical Research. After a year or two I became the host for his quarterly visits.

Ted loved to stop in Cambridge on his way to Vermont and would stay at the Marriott in Kendall Square. We would meet for dinner at the Legal Sea Foods downstairs. This was one of his favorite places. I think I developed my taste for Cajun-style blue fish at those dinners.

The next morning we often enjoyed the breakfast buffet at the Marriott. We then spent the day discussing Polaroid chemistry.

Steve Telfer would talk about his latest efforts to reinvent imaging with acid-amplifiers or the thermal imaging efforts that led to the invention of ZINK paper and the Opal photo kiosk technology.

We would talk about the dye chemistry and developer chemistry we were working on to support our legacy silver halide imaging products.

This work included the dimethylterephthalamide-hydroquinone complexes developed by John Warner, which solved stability, and solubility issues with several of our preferred hydroquinone developers.

As Polaroid's chemical research effort diminished through the 1990's it became harder to find a full day of topics four times a year. Given Ted's wide-ranging interests and enthusiasm, it was never a problem.

Ted, as much as he could, would tell us about his work leading to Alimta, the toxicity issue encountered in its testing and its solution (addition of folic acid to the treatment), or his experiences as an expert witness at various trials. These included trials in which his own inventions were attacked.

One interesting story I recall is the industrial espionage that happened during his Alimta efforts. New targets were drawn up and were in a briefcase belonging to one of his

students. The briefcase was stolen and the structures inside it started appearing in the patents of a foreign competitor.

Another story was the fishpond he attempted to have constructed on his 500-acre property in Woodstock, Vermont. It turned out to be an expensive, but entertaining fiasco except for the fish stocked in the failed pond.

Ted was also a passionate golfer. He told us the story of how he was a passionate tennis player until he reached 60. At that point he decided he needed a new sport and that it would be one he could share with his wife. Ted decided that sport was golf and he became a low-handicap golfer.

A number of us would meet Ted on his visits to play golf. I remember one time meeting him at Stow Acres and playing the old South Course. We had extra time so we went to the driving range and spend the end of our session using wedges to aim at the flagsticks.

During our round I had one of the more successful experiences in my mediocre (and limited) golf career. On the 18th hole I hit a nice (straight) drive from the elevated tee that carried the pond in the middle of the fairway.

My fairway wood left me about 80 yards short of the green on the par 5. I pulled out my sand wedge and the shot I hit was dead on. I was jumping up and down thinking it was going in. I ended up with a 1-foot putt for birdie. I would say it was the best golf hole I ever played and it was with Ted and a direct result of our little game of target practice at the range.

Ted was a remarkable organic chemist. I remember bumping into him in San Francisco at the March 2010 ACS Meeting. Ted was there to receive the Alfred Burger Award in Medicinal Chemistry from the ACS for his work on Alimta. The award was truly an amazing achievement, the foundation of which was his earliest work on the pigments in butterfly wings. By the end of 2010, Alimta stood as the most successful new cancer drug, based on sales, in the history of the pharmaceutical industry.

Ted was an amazing scientist with great charisma. He was an extraordinary role model and friend. I have great memories of my times with Ted and will miss him greatly.