

Heber W. Youngken, Jr. (1913-2001)



Heber W. Youngken, Jr., passed away October 22, 2001 at the age of 88. He was Professor of Pharmacognosy and Dean of the College of Pharmacy, University of Rhode Island from 1957 to 1981. He was also Provost for Health Sciences Affairs at the University of Rhode Island.

Born in Philadelphia, he received his A.B. from Bucknell University in 1935, his B.S. from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy in 1938, his M.S. In 1940, and his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1942. Before moving to Rhode Island to become the first Dean of the College, he was Professor and Chairman of the Department of Pharmacognosy at the University of Washington. He was Chairman of the Plant Science Seminar (the progenitor of ASP) from 1950 to 1951, and the President of ASP from 1969 to 1970.

He was a pioneer in the biosynthetic and pharmacological approach to pharmacognosy research and curricula. In Rhode Island, he saw the potential of marine natural products as drugs, and pursued this area of research. He hosted the first Drugs from the Sea Conference at University of Rhode Island in 1967 and again in 1969, which triggered tremendous interest in marine natural products in the following years.

After his retirement in 1981, he continued to be active on and off campus, and served in various capacities. The entire University community honored him for his contributions just a week before his sudden death. We have lost another monumental person. He is survived by his wife, Daphne, and two sons, John and Richard.

---Yuzuru Shimizu