

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WISCONSIN-MADISON**

**ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS PHILIP G. KESSEL**

Philip Gerald Kessel passed away on Sept. 8, 2013, at the age of 79. He was born on Nov. 12, 1933, to Philip Joseph and Leona Angeline Kessel in Saginaw, Michigan. He was united in marriage to Mary J. Gerhardt Kessel on Sept. 8, 1956, at SS Peter & Paul Parish in Saginaw, Michigan. Philip graduated high school from SS Peter & Paul Parish in 1951. He attended the University of Notre Dame, receiving bachelors and masters degrees in mechanical engineering in 1956 and 1957, respectively. He worked for a short time as a Research Engineer at Dow Chemical Co. in Midland, Michigan, where he was awarded U.S. Patent No. 3,233,306. Philip then attended the University of Michigan where he received his Ph.D. in engineering mechanics in 1964. He was a teaching fellow at the University of Notre Dame and a teaching assistant at the University of Michigan. He joined the Department of Engineering Mechanics at the University of Wisconsin in 1964 as an Assistant Professor, was promoted to Associate Professor in 1968, and to Professor in 1972. His research areas included dynamics, vibrations, variational mechanics, and space structures. He was the principal investigator on several grants funded by NSF, NASA, and others. His publications appeared in many of the leading journals, including the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Journal, the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, the Journal of Applied Mechanics, and the International Journal of Solids and Structures. He supervised many M.S. and Ph.D. students, and he developed several new courses including Space Applications of Robotics, and Satellite Dynamics.

Philip served as department chairman from 1980 to 1992. During his tenure as chair, the department gained strength under his leadership, significantly expanded its activities in astronautics, implemented an Astronautics Option to the undergraduate degree program, and added "astronautics" to the department name. As chairman, Philip guided several young faculty through the tenure and promotion process, and thoroughly prepared the documentation needed for this; these faculty will forever be grateful for his mentoring and attention to details.

Philip was a registered professional engineer in Wisconsin, and he served as a consultant for numerous companies. Philip was a member of several professional societies including Sigma Xi, American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE), American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). He was also a member of the American Association of Engineering Mechanics Chairmen, and served as its president in 1988.

On June 30, 1994, after a 30 year career at UW, Philip retired from the Department of Engineering Mechanics and Astronautics. Philip enjoyed his winters in Florida, gardening, and watching his grandchildren grow. He is survived by his wife, Mary; his children, Philip Kessel (Kathy), Susan Perkins (Dwight), Karen Christiansen (James), Robert Kessel (Kari), and Kathleen Bly (Daniel); his grandchildren, Philip, Blake and Amanda Kessel, Alysa (Matthew Bunke), Tyler and Hilary Christiansen, Kaelyn, Bryce and Kinsey Kessel, Hannah and Jacob Bly, and Michael, Daniel, Jessica and Steven Birkle; and 13 great-grandchildren. He will be dearly missed by his family, colleagues, and friends.

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