

Memories of Johnny Toll – Wally Greenberg

I regret very much that I cannot be here today. Jordan Goodman has kindly agreed to read my memories of Johnny Toll.

I first met Johnny Toll in January 1961, when he invited me to Maryland as a candidate for a position in the rapidly growing Physics Department that he was building. He invited me to stay in his parents' home on Newlands Street off Connecticut Avenue where he was living. He and his parents greeted me warmly and made me feel very much at home. After my talk he offered me a position as assistant professor that I was happy to accept. He hired 11 faculty the same year he hired me!

That started my work at Maryland, which is now in its 51st year. To say he changed my life is an understatement. When I visited him in his office before the semester started he gave me a copy of his impressive PhD thesis on causality relations. In my early years at Maryland, 1961 to 1965, he welcomed me to use his office as a place to leave books, and whatever else I had, whenever it was convenient. He led by example, not by authority. When the department outgrew the original building, and the fourth floor and the rear part of the present building were being constructed, he moved his own office to a building across campus to make things easier for the rest of us. He often went to lunch with us at the corner

drugstore which is now the Bagel Store, and kept a meal ticket which, when punched enough times, gave the holder a free lunch. His energy and enthusiasm are legendary, as were his consideration for junior members of the department.

We often discussed physics, especially quantum field theory. When he had already accepted his appointment as President of New York State University at Stony Brook, he still had the drive, and found the time, to write a paper on parastatistics with Huzihiro Araki and me, just before leaving for Stony Brook.

When I received the award in physical sciences for 1971 from the Washington Academy of Sciences, Johnny came from Stony Brook for the award ceremony. No doubt he had also nominated me for the award. When I visited Stony Brook while he was President he always made time to see me. I was the beneficiary of his kindness, especially when I was very junior.

We have all been empowered by of his energy in building a great physics department and supporting the people in the department. He has been a role model for all our chairs, including Drew now. I feel a special debt to Johnny for 51 years of support. We are all indebted to him for creating an excellent department of physics and for creating the friendly, collegial culture of our department.