

**Dear David,**

I wish to express my sincere condolences to you and your family upon hearing of the passing of your father Professor H. Tracy Hall. I first met him in 1952 while a student at the New York State University College in Albany. I was an assistant in the Sunday School in the Albany Branch and he was the Albany Hudson District Sunday School Superintendent

While I was working for the Atomic Energy Commission in Idaho Falls, Dr. Hall contacted me and invited me to come to BYU and work on a project which he had contracted with the National Bureau of Standards. This was an opportunity of a lifetime and gave me many significant opportunities in my professional life which I would not have otherwise achieved in my previous employment.

Dr. Hall was a good Christian gentleman in his relations with everyone. He is a world renowned scientist, a well deserved accolade. He not only accomplished the first reproducible synthesis of diamond in the laboratory, but invented the equipment necessary to reach the high pressures and temperatures. After coming to BYU when the government put a secrecy restriction on his original invention, he invented another original remarkable high pressure multi-anvil press.

When Marie and I were called on a mission to the Ukraine, Brother and Sister Hall sent us \$500 to help on our mission. We used this money to help Ukrainian missionaries to prepare for their mission. It was used to buy clothes, luggage, etc. In one case a sister was called to serve whose teeth needed much work. We arranged for her to visit a local dentist. About a couple of months later she came in with a big smile. You can't imagine the happiness that this brought to this sister as she left on her mission no longer having to feel self conscious of her teeth. Every time I think of Tracy and Ida Rose Hall, I think of their depth of spirituality and their strong commitment to doing good.

I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity that I had to be mentored under Dr. Hall's direction. This opened so many wonderful opportunities for our family. It has been an honor to know the Hall family. As the time of the funeral comes and goes I hope you will feel the goodness and influence that continues to emanate from this great heritage.

Sincerely,

Leo and Marie Merrill

David,

Enclosed are some of the responses we received from scientists as they were notified of your father's passing. I have also talked to several on the phone and everyone has great admiration and respect for his lifetime of accomplishments. They see him as one of the giants in physical chemistry who left an important professional and personal legacy. Leo

**From Professor William A. Bassett:** Geology Department, Cornell University

Thank you so much for letting me know about Tracy Hall. I have such fond memories of the time I spent working in his lab back in 1967-68. He was certainly one of the most interesting people I have known, and I am so glad that I had a chance to see him one

more time when we were in Hawaii.

Bill

**From Dr. Sergei Stishov:** Director Institute of High Pressure Physics, Moscow, Russia  
Sad news. Thank you for the info. Will you prepare an obituary for Phys. Today and the AIRAPT news letter?

Regards,  
Sergei

**From John Cannon:** A graduate student under Dr. Hall and Chemist at BYU  
Thanks for sending the notice of Tracy's passing. It was a privilege to know him and to work with him. Shari and I are in St. George these days doing a service mission at the Family History Training Center here, so we probably won't be able to attend the funeral. If you have the opportunity and it seems appropriate, please extend my condolences to the family, especially to Virginia who, of all Tracy's children, I knew best.

John

**From Professor Giuseppe Angilella,** University of Catania, Italy

I have placed your contribution in the form of an obituary on the webpages of both the EHPRG and AIRAPT.

I have also sent an e-mail to the general high pressure mailing list, but since I am presently attending a conference, I am out of office, and I am not sure whether the e-mail was sent properly. Could you please acknowledge its receipt?

We all join Professor Tracy Hall's family in their sorrow.

Many thanks and best regards,

Giuseppe Angilella

AIRAPT Secretary

EHPRG Secretary

**Russell Hemley:** Geophysical Laboratory of Carnegie Institution

Tracy was one of our heroes, and this surely marks the end of an era. Thank you for the news and for this excellent obituary. I was privileged to attend the 50th anniversary of the GE diamond synthesis, which was held on Dec. 16, 2004 in Provo -- the last time I saw Tracy (and you I believe!). You may wish to clarify that Tracy was not Henry Eyring's first graduate student. Eyring had graduate students during his illustrious career at Princeton (e.g., Joe Hirschfelder) before he moved to the University of Utah. (Tracy may have been his first graduate student at Utah).

I hope all is well with you.

Regards,

Rus

**From Dana Griffen:** BYU Dept. of Geology and Assistant Dean

Thanks, I saw this in the obituaries this morning -- Dana

**From Professor James J. Schilling:** Washington University

Dear Professor Merrill,

Thank you so much for the information regarding Tracy Hall. He made very important and lasting contributions to his field.

Best regards,

James Schilling

**From Ion Benea:** Formerly of Romania

Dear Dr. Merrill:

I am deeply saddened by the passing of Dr. Hall.

It is a sad day for the diamond industry who has lost its brightest star and pioneer. For a young physicist who grew up in a communist country he represented the scientist I dreamed of becoming one day. Dr. Hall was the icon I looked up with great admiration and respect. Thought my whole career of thirty four years in diamond industry he was my inspiration. In September 1998, I was extremely fortunate to spend a couple of hours with Dr. Hall and Ida-Rose in their house, after a lovely dinner at Sundance. We had a very interesting and lively conversation on all sorts of topics, of course, all related to diamond synthesis. With that occasion, Dr. Hall was extremely gracious to sign the book "New Alchemists" for me; he signed on the chapter that's dedicated to the first successful diamond synthesis by man – Dr. Hall. I treasure his autograph as one of my precious possessions. Unfortunately, I am leaving for Europe this afternoon and I cannot be at the funeral. I would like to extend my deepest and sincere condolences to Dr. Hall's family; particularly to David Hall who I personally know.

May Dr. Hall rest in peace!

Ion

*Ion C. Benea, Ph. D.*

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**From Robert Hazen:** Geophysical Laboratory of Carnegie Institution

Dear Leo,

Thanks for keeping me informed on the situation. Tracy was certainly a pivotal person in diamond history, and he leaves a rich personal and professional legacy.

All the best,

Bob

**From Marcus Skeem:** Hughes Christensen

Dear Leo,

Thank you for letting me know about Tracy...I am sorry at his passing. He leaves a remarkable legacy. I am currently visiting Jon in Colorado but I will forward the news to

Redd and Dan in Houston. I hope you and your family are well... I have been meaning to call.

Best Regards,  
Marc

**From Richard Hall:** Vice Pres., Saint Gobain Corporation, Worcester, Massachusetts  
Dear Leo

I was saddened to read your message this morning, but am grateful to you for enabling me to meet Tracy at the 50th anniversary celebration. His was one of the great names in our industry.

Please pass on my condolences to his family.

Richard

**From K. Lawrence DeVries:** Retired, Former Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Utah

Dr. Merrill. Thanks for the news, albeit sad. Tracy has left a great legacy both professionally and personally. He will be missed. Please extend my condolences and best wishes to his family. Larry

**From Professor Stan Tozer:** Florida State University

Dear Dr. Merrill,

Thank you for your note. His name has been invoked many times in my lab as I nudge my students to stretch their minds and look for solutions in the unconventional. I wish that I had had the opportunity to meet Professor Hall as I have read many wonderful stories about his life. Do you know of individuals within the high pressure community who will be attending the service? And may I ask if Robert Hazen and Bill Bassett have been informed of his passing?

With best regards,

Stan Tozer

**From Eric VanValkenburg:** President of High Pressure Diamond Optics. His father was a pioneer in high pressure research at the Bureau of Mines and then the Bureau of Standards

Hello Leo,

Thank you for the email.

Eric