John Ertle Oliver (Jack), Professor of Geological Sciences, died peacefully in his home at the age of 87 at Kendal of Ithaca on January 5, 2011. Jack was the son of the late Chester Oliver and Marie Ertle Oliver of Massillon, Ohio.

Jack was born on September 26, 1923 in Massillon, Ohio. He played football on Massillon high school's national championship team, coached by the legendary Hall-of-Famer Paul Brown. He attended Columbia University on an athletic scholarship and received his BA and MA in Physics, and his Ph.D. in Geophysics.

In 1943 Jack took a leave from Columbia to serve in the 129th U.S. Naval Construction Battalion (the Seabees) in the South Pacific and returned in 1946 to earn his bachelor’s degree in physics in 1947 and his Ph.D. in geophysics in 1953.

Jack was a geophysicist specializing in seismology and tectonics. He loved to learn, discover, and teach. He was a pioneer in the use of seismological observations to study the Earth’s crust and in the 1960s together with Bryan Isacks and Lynn Sykes, wrote "Seismology and the New Global Tectonics," a seminal paper on the topic published in the AGU's Journal of Geophysical Research, 15 September 1968. He became Professor of Geology and Chairman of the Department of Geology at Columbia University and also head of the program in earthquake seismology at Columbia's Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory.

In 1971, Jack came to Cornell University as chairman of the newly reorganized Department of Geological Sciences and shaped it into a top national research institution. During his chairmanship, Jack envisioned a concentration on the problems of continental geology, particularly the deep continental crust, and built a department that emphasized geophysics and the applications of plate tectonics theory. He was the founding Director of the Institute for the Study of the Continents, and together with Sidney Kaufman established the Consortium for Continental Reflection Profiling (COCORP), the first national program for the systematic exploration of the continental crust with modern seismic reflection technology. COCORP
became the stimulus and model for large scale studies of the crust around the world, resulting in a revolutionary new view of the structure and origin of the continents.

Jack was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and is former president of both the Seismological Society of America and the Geological Society of America. In 1958 and 1959 he was a seismological advisor on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and a delegate to negotiations in Geneva. He received numerous awards and honors during his career including the Kaufmann Gold Medal of the Society of Exploration Geophysicists in 1983, and the Penrose Medal of the Geological Society of America, its highest honor, in 1998. He authored or coauthored over 200 scientific papers and visited over 55 countries during his years of geophysics research. He also wrote several books including The Incomplete Guide to the Art of Discovery and Shocks and Rocks: Seismology in the Plate Tectonics Revolution", and Shakespeare Got It Wrong: It's Not "to Be," It's "to Do": the Autobiographical Memoirs of a Lucky Geophysicist.

At both Columbia and Cornell Jack served as a mentor and inspiration for generations of students, many of whom have gone on to become international leaders in both industry and universities around the world.

Jack loved hiking and met his wife, Gay van der Hoeven, on a hike outside of New York City while they were both members of the Appalachian Mountain Club. In 1964 they married and in 1971 moved to Ithaca where they raised their 2 daughters, Nell and Amy, and remained for the rest of their lives. As a family they enjoyed many trips around Ithaca and in the Adirondacks canoeing, hiking, camping, and cross country skiing. When he was in his eighties he still hiked the Taughannock Falls loop regularly.

Jack was predeceased by his wife, Gertrude (Gay) Oliver. He is survived by his brother, William Oliver, also of Massillon, Ohio, daughter Cornelia (Nell) Oliver of Pacific Palisades, CA, daughter Amy Mascolo (Richard) of Doylestown, PA, and grandchildren Philippa, Katherine and Georgina Thomas of Pacific Palisades, CA, and Monica, Christina, and Jack Mascolo of Doylestown, PA.

Dean of Faculty Office
(Information gathered from Ithaca Journal Obituary and Cornell Chronicle Online)
Jay Orear had a distinguished career as an educator and researcher in physics. He grew up and received all of his education in Chicago, a Ph.B. from the University of Chicago in 1944, an M.A. in 1950, and a Ph.D. in Physics, also from the University of Chicago, in 1953. His career path was: Research Associate, University of Chicago, 1953-54; Instructor and Assistant Professor at Columbia University, 1954-58; Associate Professor Cornell University 1958-64, and Professor of Physics, Lab of Nuclear Studies from 1964 until he retired in 1993. Jay continued to live in Ithaca until the last few years of his life.

Jay was the Chairman of the American Federation of Scientists 1967-68.

Jay was a co-author, while still a graduate student, of one of the first nuclear physics texts, based on a course at Chicago by Enrico Fermi. He also authored a successful introductory physics text *Fundamental Physics*, published in 1961, with a second edition in 1967. This was a rather innovative text at the time, introducing modern physics concepts such as relativity and quantum theory at the start of the course, which Jay taught for many years. It preceded similar efforts at Berkeley and Cal Tech. This book was also translated into Russian and published in the Soviet Union, which took the unusual step of paying royalties to Jay. Since there was no currency exchange at the time from rubles to dollars, Jay was given a numbered bank account in the USSR, which he used to help out friends and colleagues there.

Jay was very much influenced by his close association over a seven-year period with Enrico Fermi (1901-1954), who was his thesis advisor. He was Fermi’s last student. Over the years since Fermi died, there have been a number of Symposia dedicated to Fermi’s life and accomplishments, including one at Cornell in 1991 which was organized by Jay. Jay was an invited speaker in six of the one-hundredth birthday celebrations devoted to Fermi in 2001, five of which were in Italy. After his retirement, in 2003, Jay wrote a manuscript: “Enrico Fermi, The Master Scientist,” based on the video taping of the 1991 Cornell conference. This is available online. It contains many interesting talks on Fermi, from all aspects. Among others, there were talks by Hans Bethe, Dale Corson, and Bob Wilson.
Jay’s other published educational work was a paper on statistical methods for physics *Statistics for Physics*. This was originally based on lectures by Fermi. It was first published as a UCRL report in 1958. It was reprinted many times under Jay’s name since then for the Advanced Lab in Physics at Cornell. This is a very useful compilation of statistical methods for the analysis of experiments. It is still used in this lab, since it is a well-written and succinct description of essential techniques needed by every experimental physicist.

Jay’s research career was spent as a high energy experimentalist. When he came to Cornell in 1958 he joined Professor Guiseppe Cocconi’s group, which was then doing experiments at Brookhaven and at Cornell. After Cocconi left Cornell in 1963 for CERN, Jay took over the leadership of the Cocconi group. Although Cocconi had done experiments at both Brookhaven and Cornell, Jay never did experiments with the accelerator at Cornell. Jay became the leader and administrator of a successful group, originally consisting of physicists and graduate students from Cornell and physicists from Brookhaven. Later, this group included people from many other universities and laboratories. Jay’s group performed experiments at Brookhaven, and later, at Fermilab. Their specialties were high energy elastic scattering and the total crosssections for different particles on proton targets. Perhaps the most famous experiments by this group were the observation of a backward peak in positive pi meson scattering from protons in 1965, which was a follow-up of an experiment started at CERN in 1964 by Cocconi, and, later, anti-proton and proton elastic scattering at very high energies. These last experiments were done at Fermilab. Jay was a co-author of 33 peer-reviewed publications, mostly in Physical Review and Physical Review Letters. There were also many conference reports and proposals. His publications totaled over 70 papers in all.

*Louis Hand and Donald Holcomb*
Professor Christian F. Otto died on March 27, 2013 after serving more than forty years on the faculty of the College of Architecture, Art and Planning. He was 72. Known as a passionate and committed educator, he counted modernism among his architectural specialties, a circumstance that placed him at the very center of teaching and intellectual life in the Department of Architecture for more than four decades.

Chris was born on June 16, 1940 in New York City. His orientation to the architectural traditions of Central Europe, the key geographical and cultural focus to his life and research, was shaped early during his undergraduate years at Swarthmore College (1958-1962) during which he studied at the University of Freiburg (1960-1961). After receiving a B.A. from Swarthmore in 1962, Chris spent a postgraduate year at the University of the Saar. He then entered Columbia University to begin doctoral work under the renowned art historian Rudolf Wittkower. He received an M.A. in 1966 for his work on German architecture and the November Revolution, and a Ph.D. in 1971. His dissertation, which focused on 18th century Central European church architecture, later formed the basis for numerous publications including his influential monograph
Chris joined the Cornell faculty as an assistant professor in 1970 following short term appointments at Vassar College and the University of Wisconsin. Over the next decade, he became a well-known academic figure on the national canvas through his leadership roles at the *Journal of Architectural Historians (JSAH)*, the publication of record in the field. He was the book review editor from 1970-73 and the general editor for two terms from 1974-1981. His colleagues in architectural history came to know him through these roles as well as through an ever expanding list of publications which included works on modernism. *Weissenhof 1927 and the Modern Movement in Architecture* (with Richard Pommer) University of Chicago Press 1991 was a major work that appeared in the following decade. Chris’ next major publication was an unusual and poignant extension of his experience as an editor and teacher. A former Ph.D. student, Samuel John Klingensmith, then a newly minted assistant professor of art history at Tulane University, was killed in New Orleans in 1986 during a robbery. Klingensmith’s dissertation was edited for publication by Chris with the assistance of colleague and close friend Mark Ashton. It appeared posthumously as *The Utility of Splendor: Ceremony, Social Life and Architecture in Bavaria 1600-1800*, Chicago University Press 1993.

It is thus Chris’ scholarly profile and academic leadership in the History of Architecture and Urban Development Program (HAUD) at Cornell which has been quite naturally central to his legacy among his colleagues and graduate students. A detailed and eloquent tribute to his work as a scholar by Lauren M. O’Connell (HAUD Ph.D.1989), now a professor of art history at Ithaca College, appeared in the *JSAH* in September 2013. Nonetheless, a much more broadly constituted band of students, primarily design students in the flagship five-year undergraduate professional program, was introduced year after year to architectural history through the rigorous two semester freshman architectural survey.
Chris was the public face of this two term baptism into world architecture for nearly the entire time he taught at Cornell. In this role he is remembered as a paragon of pedagogical preparation. This is how Margaret Webster, the long term director of the College visual resource facility, also known as “the slide library” has conjured up our collective visual memory of Chris at work, “I remember Chris as a gifted teacher, mentor, and scholar. In some respects the slide library was a catalyst for both his teaching and mentoring activities. He, of course, built large portions of the collection mainly in the areas in which he taught and published, but he was particularly uncanny in his ability to find images that others had ordered and using them to construct his own lectures. I remember seeing Chris in the slide library pulling a huge quantity of slides, placing them on a light table, then placing image pairs on another light table, and finally placing the paired slides first into boxes for the projectionist and then later into carousels. The magic occurred in the transformation of that big, undifferentiated pile of slides into a coherent, well organized lecture. It gave me great pleasure to watch this process from beginning to end. He was always thinking visually. I also remember Chris working with his TA's as they developed discussion sessions for the introductory course. Sometimes Chris would work one on one with a student who needed help in the slide library organizing images for classroom presentation. For a long time, the slide library was the locale for an active process that promoted learning, teaching and collegial interaction on many levels. Chris in his gentle way contributed to building this community.”

Chris was keenly interested in exporting the material of architecture outside of the classroom as well as to non-traditional and general audiences. He was an active participant in the dining discussion program in Residential Life for many years. He led undergraduates on summer study trips to Europe and with his wife Roberta (HAUD Ph.D. 1995) co-taught summer courses in Cornell’s Adult University. He taught in the College program in New York. He also participated in a university-wide introduction to architecture organized with colleagues during the 1990’s which at its peak attracted more than 800 students a term. By this time, he had acquired a pair of illuminated running shoes whose blinking red
lights sparkled in the dim light as he strode across the stage in Statler Auditorium.

Chris was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in January 2012. His medical team at Weill-Cornell made a valiant effort to effect a cure. Chris continued to teach and advise students until his death in March 2013. He is survived by his wife Roberta and four children.

The authors express their gratitude to Roberta Moudry, Lauren O’Connell and Margaret Webster for all the assistance they provided.

Bonnie G. MacDougall, Chairperson;
D. Medina Lasansky, Leonard J. Mirin
Arthur Ovaska, an Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture, died at the age of 67 on March 26, 2018 at his home in Ithaca, New York after a long struggle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Sherri, his two sons, Eric and Alan, and his daughter, Wynter.

Originally hailing from the coast of Massachusetts's Cape Cod Bay, Arthur began his study of Architecture at Cornell as an undergraduate student in 1968, graduating with a B.Arch. in 1974. Two years later he went on to his Master of Architecture degree, with Oswald Mathias Ungers and Colin Rowe as his initial advisors. From 1974 to 1978, he collaborated with Ungers in Ithaca and in Cologne, Germany, on a number of international architectural competitions, as well as on three landmark Cornell Summer programs: “The Urban Block” in Ithaca, and both “The Urban Villa” and “The Urban Garden” in Berlin. He was a major contributor to The City in the City: Berlin, A Green Archipelago, a 1977 manifesto by O.M. Ungers and Rem Koolhaas.

In 1978, he co-founded the office Kollhoff & Ovaska with Hans Kollhoff, who had also been engaged with Cornell's graduate program and a collaborator on "The City in the City" project. Their office produced significant designs for Berlin's International Building Exposition 1979-1984/87, including the original master plan as well as several constructions including the Lindenstrasse Apartments and the Museum Gardens (near the Berlin/Jewish Museum) and the Luisenplatz Development (near the Charlottenburg Castle), to name a few. He then returned to Cornell from Berlin, accepting a tenure track position and developing a number of independent competitions as well as projects in collaboration with other faculty members.

In other words, Arthur was highly regarded as an architect of notable talent, well versed in the professional aspect of architecture as well as gifted within an artistic realm. He excelled in covering the field from the largest scales of urban and landscape design to the meticulous development of small details. He had a special fondness for trees as formal elements and for researching town greens, a passion that he and his wife Sherri shared.

But Arthur was a rare breed. Despite his accomplished professional resume, his ultimate passion was for teaching. He was known to be a strong advocate for the students. He embraced difference with unsurpassed generosity and enthusiasm: students were celebrated for their individuality. He was always able to uncover architecture in the most obscure and unexpected places. His technique of teaching never involved overwhelming students with
his extensive knowledge, experience, and passion in architecture, but instead listening to the individual student’s concerns and questions so as to eventually find a resolution together, inevitably enabling the growth of the student’s individuality and insight into an expansive concept of the profession of architecture. Students’ comments characterize his capacity and impact as a teacher: “Arthur Ovaska is one of the most thoughtful and dedicated design professors at Cornell. His enthusiasm for Architecture is contagious. Years later I can still hear his voice encouraging us to really LOOK at the world around us.” Or, “Thank you for instilling in me a passion for design by spurring me to recognize and question my physical environment, whether it is a landscape, a structure, or an urban place.”

During his 31-year tenure at the Department of Architecture, Arthur occupied a number of academic and administrative positions. He served as a faculty advisor to the Cornell Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students. At one time, or another, he was associate chair and coordinator of graduate programs in architectural and urban design. As administrative head and director of undergraduate programs he found a way to accommodate thirty-six students from Tulane University, evacuated by Hurricane Katrina. He was actively involved in architectural juries and often lectured both nationally and internationally at universities that included Syracuse University, Oxford University, Technical University Berlin, Tunghai University in Taiwan, and the University of Puerto Rico. He was also a guest professor of architecture and urban research at the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg, Germany.

Arthur Ovaska was a modest person who rarely spoke about himself. Still, we all knew him as a thoughtful, warmhearted, sensitive soul whose roots were firmly grounded in New England soil: practical, straightforward, unsentimental, with a dry wit, and ready to face whatever storm was gathering on the horizon. Everyone was taken with Arthur’s calm and dignified anticipation of the end of his life. This is how he approached everything—his practice, his teaching, and his engagement with his colleagues—without fuss, always to the point, and never without humor. And being much more than just a clearheaded New Englander, having lived and practiced architecture in Germany before returning to the United States, Arthur Ovaska was very much like Mark Twain's Yankee in the court of King Arthur: he always saw things from many perspectives and with scrupulous logic. He often spoke of looking forward to retiring to his mother’s house on Cape Cod. Unfortunately, his illness did not allow this. Countless times over the years, Arthur would go to restaurants specifically chosen for their selection of raw oysters. He loved oysters, since they returned him to his roots.

And Arthur had courage. In facing death with his characteristic resolve, he reminds us of Ishmael, Herman Melville’s narrator in Moby Dick. On the eve of his great Nantucket ocean voyage, Ishmael visits a chapel where seafaring men have found their rest. As he considers that he may face the same fate, he cheers up at the prospect of encountering Eternity. Melville writes:

“Methinks we have hugely mistaken this matter of Life and Death. Methinks that what they call my shadow here on earth is my true substance. Methinks that in looking at things spiritual, we are too much like oysters observing the sun through the water, and thinking that thick water the thinnest of air. Methinks my body is but the lees of my better being. In fact take my body who will, take it I say, it is not me.”

Godspeed, friend. What you have left behind cannot be erased.

Written by Werner Goehner, Andrea Simitch, Val Warke and Jerry Wells
The Horticulture Section in the School of Integrative Plant Science (formerly Department of Horticulture, formerly Department of Vegetable Crops), and the Office of International Programs in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences lost a dear friend and colleague with the passing of Edwin Burnell Oyer at the age of 89 on November 15, 2016 in Ithaca, New York. Many people in these units, and throughout Cornell University and the world, will always remember the kindness, expertise, and wise counsel they received from Ed during his professional life and beyond. Chris Wien, International Professor Emeritus of Horticulture, remembers Ed as a most kind, generous and outgoing man, who had sincere interest in fostering international agricultural development.

Ronnie Coffman, the current director of International Programs, remembers Ed at many junctures in his career, starting from his first recollection dating back to 1971 when he arrived in Los Baños, Philippines to take up his new post as a rice breeder at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). Ed was serving as the last Director of the University of the Philippines Cornell (UPCO) project. The project had operated very successfully for 20 years, but it had been agreed by all concerned that it was time for Cornell to move on and leave the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) to its business. Winding things down was a delicate matter, so Cornell had sent Ed, one of its most diplomatic administrators, to do the job. He was more than up to the task. Professor Ruben Villareal, who eventually served as Chancellor of UPLB, remembers Ed as “…so intelligent that he could discuss anything under the sun as if he was simply plucking ripe grapes from the vine. He seemed to have a complete grasp of varied subject matter and could offer solutions to every challenge presented to him.” It was clear that Ed’s colleagues at UPLB and IRRI respected him tremendously.

Bob Herdt, Adjunct Professor in Agricultural Economics and International Agriculture, shared office space with Ed and remembers him for his generous, humble, cheerful attitude toward life. Ed was always ready to share recollections of his career and bits of wisdom he had accumulated over the years. His grandchildren described him as authentically curious with a knack for expressing the genuine; an extremely loving grandfather who read the books of their choosing so that he could have more meaningful conversations with them.
These were some of the traits that endeared him not only to family and friends but to colleagues of many cultures worldwide.

Ed was born in **Ft. Wayne, Indiana** on June 18, 1927 to Eli J. and Minnie L. Oyer. After graduating from Central High School in Ft. Wayne in 1945, when **World War II** was nearing its end, he joined the U.S. Navy and served on **Guam** in the Pacific Ocean theatre. Although raised a **Mennonite** in the pacifist tradition, Ed felt compelled to defend his country because of the aggressiveness of the attack on **Pearl Harbor**. After completing his military service, he attended Purdue University and received B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from that university. Following completion of his studies, Edwin joined the faculty of the Department of Vegetable Crops in the New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University in February 1955. He was awarded a NATO Fellowship in Science in 1961 to conduct vegetable research at Le Phytotron in Gif-sur-Yvette, France. He joined Purdue University's **Department of Horticulture** as a faculty member from 1963 to 1966 after which he returned to Cornell as Chair of the Department of Vegetable Crops.

His experiences in international agriculture began in 1971 when he was tapped by Cornell to serve as the final Project Leader of the Graduate Education Program of the University of the Philippines College of Agriculture – Cornell University (UPCO) Project that ended a 20-year collaboration between these two institutions of higher learning. While in the Philippines he was invited to join the late Robert F. Chandler, Jr. in the establishment of the **Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center (AVRDC)** on Taiwan where he served as Deputy Director of Research while on leave-of-absence from Cornell from 1972 to 1974. He returned to Cornell as Director of the International Agriculture Program in July 1974.

The attraction of Southeast Asia was too strong to resist and Ed resigned from Cornell in January 1977 to join the newly established International Agricultural Development Service where he served as the Project Leader for a World Bank financed project to establish the **Indonesia Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD)**. Dr. Sugiono Moeljopawiro remembered Ed’s extraordinary contribution to the establishment of IAARD in the form of accessing and training human resources. Ed identified some 190 young scientists to receive English language training before sending them for degree programs abroad. This assignment extended to September 1982 when he returned to Cornell once again to resume his position as Director of the International Agricultural Program in which he served until he took semi-retirement in 1987 and fully retired in 1992.

In addition to a distinguished career, Ed led an exceptional life. He was a good man in the deepest and best sense of that phrase, someone beloved by his family, a man who was rarely moved by anger but often by kindness. Ed was deeply interested in the world he lived in. His wide-ranging interests encompassed literature, politics, global economics, the New York Yankees, Denver Broncos and much more. He could talk about all of these subjects with equal knowledge and enthusiasm and he maintained a keen intellect and curiosity throughout his life. He was a practical man, some might even say he was a serious man, but Ed always had a ready laugh and a generous spirit, especially when his grandchildren (and grand-dogs) were around. For family and those who knew him, his passing diminishes the world. Ed was eternally optimistic and, as such, will live on as an inspiration to us all as we face the future.

Ed is survived by his loving and beloved wife of 64 years, the former Mary Ann Jones. They met at Purdue on a blind date in November of 1949 and quickly discovered that they were well matched in their conservative family backgrounds. Mary Ann’s great grandmother was Amish and spoke only German. Mary Ann was the fourth generation to live on the farm established by her great grandparents in **Tippecanoe County**, IN in 1860.
They had two daughters, Ann Oyer (Tom) Keith of Ft. Collins, Colorado and Janet Oyer (Kevin) Van Cleave of Los Alamos, New Mexico; four grandchildren, Megan Oyer Keith of Berkeley, California, Amy Glenn Keith of Denver, Colorado, Cameron Van Cleave of Fort Collins, Colorado and Ryan Van Cleave of Los Alamos, New Mexico. His only sibling, a sister, Naomi Oyer Pollitt predeceased him.

Written by Ronnie Coffman (Chair), Chris Wien and Robert Herdt