

2009 Baking Hall of Fame



Louys A. Rumsey

In his nomination for the Baking Hall of Fame, Louys A. Rumsey was described as the individual perhaps most responsible for the establishment of the Baking Science program at Kansas State University. Interestingly, the longtime professor of baking never held a position at Kansas State.

Dr. Rumsey's career in baking spanned 35 years, but it was during the final decade, the period until 1959, that he had a truly lasting impact on the industry. It was during these years that, as a result of Dr. Rumsey's vision, a baking science program was established and flourished at Florida State University in Tallahassee.

A native of Stryker, Ohio, Dr. Rumsey received bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry from Denison University, Granville, Ohio. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1922 in cereal technology, milling and baking. While studying for this degree, Dr. Rumsey developed the standard method for determining diastatic enzyme activity and sugar values in wheat, flour and dough.

Also during this period, Dr. Rumsey had a fellowship at the American Institute of Baking, which was part of the University of Minnesota at the time. Later, he was named director of research at A.I.B. and was involved in the relocation of the Institute to Chicago.

While his career was rooted in science, the business of baking was a focus. He took time off from A.I.B. to work with the Wheat Council to promote bread consumption. He organized and directed a national campaign to "Make Toast Your Breakfast Food."

Seven years after joining A.I.B., Dr. Rumsey took the position of national secretary at the American Bakers Association.

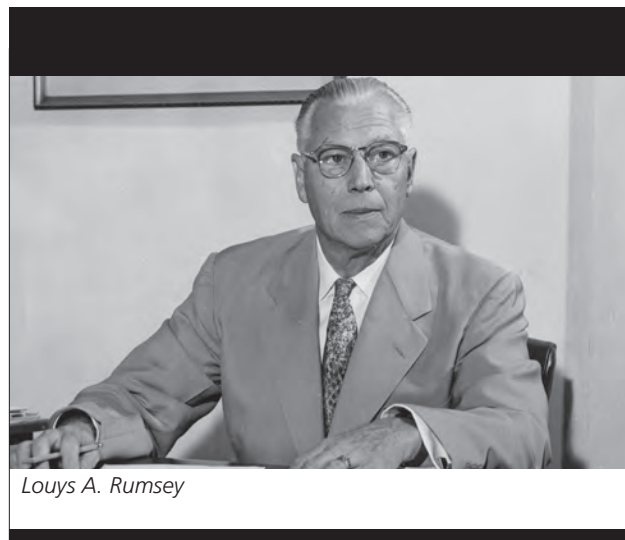
The longest stretch in Dr. Rumsey's career was at W.E. Long Co. where he served in several capacities until 1948. He was editor of the cooperative's in-house publication, organized conventions and general manager's conferences and devoted himself to sales promotion.

After leaving W.E. Long, Dr. Rumsey established an industrial advertising agency involved with sales promotion for baking and other parts of the food industry.

He then joined Florida State University as head of the Baking Science and Management department, an assignment that tapped into his background both in baking technology and the business of baking. His vision for the department was the direct outgrowth of his experience in the industry.

"He realized the need to educate future baking executives not only in the science of baking, but the need to educate young men and women in many other areas," according to the letter nominating Dr. Rumsey to the Hall of Fame. "These areas included engineering, sales management, marketing, human resources, identifying customer and market needs, expansion, cost management and many other challenges facing an executive in the baking industry."

Reflecting the business focus of the curriculum, the



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program was incorporated into the F.S.U. School of Business.

The program produced over 100 graduates (bachelor's, master's and doctorates) while it continued until 1965.

While the school was located in Florida, it has hardly a regional program. At one time as many as 30 states were represented in the Baking Science and Management Program with students coming from as far away as California. In fact, Floridians generally represented only one or two students in the program.

"Graduates went on to set their mark in the baking industry and allied fields," the letter said. "Four graduates are past presidents of the American Society of Baking."

Dr. Rumsey was responsible for organizing the curriculum and managing the department until he retired

in June 1959. He died less than a year later at the age of 71.

In 1963, a concurrent program was established at Kansas State University, and the baking program was discontinued at F.S.U. in 1965. The two-year overlap helped minimize the loss of graduate students for the baking industry. The shift was made because of K.S.U.'s

central location and the school's milling and feed science program.

"Had it not been for the vision of Dr. L.A. Rumsey, the Baking Science program would not be in existence at Kansas State University today," the nominating letter said. "The transition was smooth and seamless, and the program continues in earnest at Kansas State."

A scholarship at K.S.U. was established in 1986 in Dr. Rumsey's memory by the Southern Bakers Association. The group was credited as central in subsidizing the F.S.U. program during Dr. Rumsey's tenure and supporting his efforts. This support included subsidizing Dr. Rumsey's salary, funding laboratory equipment and helping exempt students (almost all of whom were not from Florida) from out-of-state tuition. Other major supporters included Continental Baking Co., American Bakeries and Campbell-Taggart. MBH



Louys Rumsey's vision while head of the Baking Science and Management department at Florida State University in the 1950s laid the groundwork for what has become a successful baking science curriculum at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kas. (Photo from K.S.U. in 2009).



Byron Baird presenting Mr. Rumsey's grandson, Jeff Rumsey, with the plaque of Louys A. Rumsey.

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