

Roy C. Rom



Dr. Roy C. Rom, University Professor Emeritus, passed away at the age of 102 on June 15, 2024.

Roy received a B.S. degree in Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin in 1945. His academic career was interrupted by WWII when he became a second lieutenant as a trainer for P-51 fighter pilots.

As a student at Wisconsin, he was a member of the championship crew, and then a coach of the 1946 national championship lightweight crew. He was lightweight crew coach at Yale where he also won the national championship. He eventually returned for graduate work and in 1958 completed a PH.D. in horticulture under Dr. “Mac” Dana studying strawberry physiology and nutrition.

He joined the faculty of the University of Arkansas in 1958 until his retirement in 1989 after having achieved the distinguished honorific title of University Professor. At Arkansas he had a productive research and teaching career as a tree fruit scientist and pomologist focusing primarily on apple and peach rootstocks and cultivar development.

He was active American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) member and recognized as a Fellow of the ASHS in 1981. He was long serving Secretary and subsequently Vice President and President of the American Pomological Society where he received the Wilder Medal for significant contributions to pomology.

He was a founding collaborator of the NC-140 project and conducted several cooperative trials for the program.

The National Peach Council recognized his contributions to southern peach production with the “Mr. Peach” award and the International Dwarf Fruit Tree Association recognized him with the Outstanding Researcher award.

He was a frequent and popular speaker at grower conferences. He owned and operated the Rom Family Orchard where he practiced horticulture producing apples for the community.