



## EMERITUS NO. 215 APRIL 2019

An occasional newsletter for the Emeritus Faculty Association

*Provost's Office Contact: Faith Mirabile*  
([faith.mirabile@stonybrook.edu](mailto:faith.mirabile@stonybrook.edu), 631-632-4360)

### **Next Meeting:**

Our next meeting will be held Friday, April 5, 2019 at 11am in the Provost's Conference Room (407 Administration Building)

Our guest speaker will be **James Lattimer**, Nuclear Astrophysics with a focus on Neutron Stars, Department of Physics and Astronomy.

**Bio:** Jim Lattimer has been at Stony Brook 40 years, and is now a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Physics & Astronomy. He has won Sloan and Guggenheim Fellowships and was a recent recipient of the Bethe Prize, the highest award in nuclear astrophysics from the American Physical Society. His research involves neutron stars, supernovae and dense matter physics.

**Topic:** "How Heavy Elements are Made"

This talk is about the history of the r-process, the way in which half of all heavy elements are created. In some ways, it is also a partial history of nuclear physics and involves several interesting personalities, including 15 Nobel Laureates. For 70 years it was believed that this process only takes place in supernovae, the violent explosions marking the end of the lives of massive stars. However, as initially suggested in my

1976 PhD thesis, an alternative site is the merger of neutron stars with a black hole or another neutron star. Recent observational evidence, including the neutron star merger event GW170817 observed in both gravitational waves and light, has now virtually proven this speculative idea.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Keep an eye out for the formal invitation to the May Luncheon!**

**May 3: LUNCHEON, 12-3pm in SAC Ballroom B**  
**Nicole Sampson, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. “SBU: The College of Arts & Sciences on the Horizon”**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Participate in the Faculty Emeritus Documentation Project**

The 2017-2018 academic year is a milestone in Stony Brook University history, as it marks the 60th anniversary of the institution. In an effort to document and preserve the unique and varied experiences of the university’s emeritus faculty, a questionnaire has been designed to elicit the personal reflections of faculty members’:

- impetuses for accepting academic positions at Stony Brook University.
- early experiences on the campus.
- views on the evolution and growth of the institution.
- contributions to departments and to the university.
- interactions with academic and administrative leadership.
- views on the institution’s role in the community (local and wider).
- assessments of the university’s mission and successes as a research university.

**Your participation is vital to documenting Stony Brook University history.**

Access information about the project and the questionnaire at:

<http://www.library.stonybrook.edu/special-collections-university-archives/university-archives/>

\*\*\*\*\*

**In Memoriam:**

**Ted O’Brien**

Ted O’Brien came to Stony Brook in 1963. He was born in Brisbane Australia and educated here. He was the dean of Engineering when the campus moved from Oyster Bay to Stony Brook. The College of Engineering had been given graduate status even before the move, in anticipation of the building of the research university. His wife

Estelle and 6 children survive him. Besides Soledad there are 3 doctors and 2 lawyers, a real achieving family. Soledad has had contact with the Journalism school.

### **Bev Birns**

Beverly Birns (Atkins) (1929-2019) came to Stony Brook in the early 1970s with a Ph.D. from Columbia and graduate work in Geneva with Piaget and his students on early childhood development. She came as a member of Stony Brook's Education Department after working at Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. When that Department of Education was retrenched in the mid-1970s – with the effective firing of its tenured faculty – she joined the Interdisciplinary Social Science Program with the idea that it was now time to create a program in Women's Studies. She did this with great success, Women's Studies eventually becoming a major and Bev Birns being for many years a devoted mentor, a role model for students and colleagues, and a dedicated fighter for women in academia and in the wide world. She did this while continuing to be a productive scholar in her original area of concentration – the personalities and developmental patterns of new-borns (neo-nates), and while on a sabbatical in Washington she worked with Congressman Charles Rangel in the fight to preserve the federal government's Supplemental Food Program. Her husband Hal Atkins (d. 2015) had been chair of Nuclear Medicine at Stony Brook and Bev Birns is survived by four children and numerous grandchildren. Upon her retirement Women's Studies named its conference room in her honor.

### **Arnie Feidgold**

Arnold Feingold (1920-2019) was a member of the Physics Department from the days when Stony Brook was still at Planting Fields (Oyster Bay). World War II interrupted his academic career and after a B.A. from Brooklyn College and the beginnings of graduate work at Harvard he left academia to become part of a physics/vibration group at Langley Air Force Base, dealing with adjustments to combat aircraft and helicopters. He resumed graduate work at Princeton and was awarded his Ph.D. with Eugene Wigner as his advisor. He was proud to tell of having heard lectures from Einstein. After brief teaching stints at Illinois, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Utah, he came to the Physics Department of the SUNY College on Long Island in 1960 as dean of the Graduate School, this step toward university status already being on the drawing board in preparation for the move to Stony Brook. He stayed at Stony Brook until his 1989 retirement and the Physics Department named a prize in his honor (to which contributions can be made: the Feingold award, c/o the SB Department of Physics). He was a supporter of liberal and conservation causes, a lifelong Democrat, and survived by sons, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Events around Campus:**

**April 3, Provost's Lecture Series: Seeing Human Rights Through Film**, 4:00pm, Wang Center- Lecture Hall 1.

**Speaker:** Mark Gibney is the Belk Distinguished Professor at UNC Asheville and an Affiliated Professor at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Lund, Sweden.

Although human rights has achieved near-universal acceptance in political discourse, violations of those standards continue unabated. This talk will address how film – feature films, documentaries, animations, and even personal videos – can assist us in seeing human rights violations, including our own contributions to such egregious practices, but also in understanding the manner in which human rights can (and should) be protected and enforced. <https://calendar.stonybrook.edu/event/provosts-lecture-series-seeing-human-rights-through-film/>

**April 5, Stars of Stony Brook Gala**

Honoring distinguished alumnae and President of the Simons Foundation, Marilyn H. Simons, '74, PhD '84, Hon.'08. <https://calendar.stonybrook.edu/event/stars-of-stonybrook-gala-2/>

**April 11, Provost's Lecture Series: Transnational Families as Public Spaces: Multilingualism, Ideologies and Identity Online**, 4:00pm, Wang Center- Lecture Hall 2.

**Speaker:** Elizabeth Lanza is Professor of Linguistics at the Department of Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies, and Director of the Center for Multilingualism in Society Across the Lifespan, University of Oslo, Norway. Her main research interests cover bilingualism/multilingualism. Lanza has published on language ideology, linguistic landscape, language policy, identity in migrant narratives, the language socialization of bilingual/multilingual children, and research methodology. She became Elected Fellow of The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters in 2013 and Elected Head of the Group in Philology and Linguistics, the Humanities and Social Sciences Division, in 2018. <https://calendar.stonybrook.edu/event/provosts-lecture-series-elizabeth-lanza/>

These and more Events can be found: <https://calendar.stonybrook.edu/>

\*\*\*\*\*

Please visit our website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/emeritus/index.html>

It always contains the latest emeritus news (click on "Next Meeting"), a list of members' email addresses, a list of officers, newsletter archives, and many other useful links.