

## **In Memory of Dr. Johan J. Groot**

*By John H. Talley*

Dr. Johan J. Groot, former State Geologist and Director of the Delaware Geological Survey, passed away on September 28, 2009 at the age of 90 in Chestertown, Maryland. He was the first director and state geologist of the second Delaware Geological Survey. The Survey started its investigations in July 1951 at the University of Delaware with Dr. Groot as State Geologist and Lecturer. He later became Professor of Geology and upon his retirement, Professor Emeritus. Under his leadership and guidance, the Department of Geology grew out of the Survey and in 1956 Dr. Groot was appointed to the chairmanship of the Department of Geology while still serving as state geologist and director. Both the Survey and the Department grew significantly under his leadership. In 1969 the separate positions of state geologist and chairman of the Department of Geology were created when Dr. Groot left the Survey.



Dr. Groot authored or coauthored many Survey publications that provided an initial understanding of the geology, water resources, and natural resources in Delaware. These reports established the importance of the work of the Survey; a science-based, public-service driven organization, and provided the foundation for more detailed investigations as well as a path to the future.

Dr. Groot left the Survey in 1969 and joined the United Nations in Bolivia where he served for five years investigating groundwater resources. He later worked for the FAO on groundwater projects in the Lake Chad Basin and conducted hydrogeological investigations in the Arabian Peninsula. He also consulted in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger. Following his retirement from the UN he returned to Newark, Delaware and began working at the DGS once again around 1982. He officially retired from the Survey and University of Delaware in January 1992.

He continued to serve the DGS as a volunteer authoring or coauthoring nine additional publications. His work on stratigraphy utilizing pollen contributed significantly to our understanding of the geologic history of Delaware. Dr. Groot's mentoring of junior staff and sharing of ideas and experiences will have a lasting impact on them.