

Remembering Dick Marsh

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My first meeting with Dick Marsh occurred in 1956 when I went to Caltech as a postdoctoral fellow working with Professor Bob Corey. The department was headed by Linus Pauling who had just recently received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. In his laboratories there was a person who ensured that everyone knew everyone, that they knew where the equipment they needed was, that they knew how to use the equipment and who gave advice on how to determine the crystal structure from the experimental data. He was a friend for life to us. Those were the days when Caltech was recovering from the addition of women scientists and he made sure we were all well treated. He would help when we did something wrong in our experiments but was not pleased if carelessness had been involved. So that was the beginning of "Marshing," that is noting errors in crystal structure determinations. I will describe what it was like to be in the department on the mid 1950s and particularly the work that Dick, and several others of us, were doing on small peptides.