



## **OBITUARY – VERNON JAMES HURST**

Vernon Hurst, 83, Research Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geology at the University of Georgia at Athens (UGA), died on July 28, 2006.

Dr. Hurst was born on July 18, 1923, in Glenmore, Georgia. A member of the 97<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry, Hurst served in both the combat

European theatre and during the occupation of Japan. Following World War II, Hurst received his BSc degree from the University of Georgia and MS from Emory University. Hurst worked with Ernst Cloos, as well as with Hatton Yoder at the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution to earn his PhD in geology from the Johns Hopkins University in high-P-T hydrothermal mineralogy. He founded the Geology Department at UGA in 1965 and served as department head for eight years and chairman of the Physical Sciences Division for four years. Hurst held a University Research Professorship for 22 years, trained 9 PhD and 26 MS students, and published over 150 scientific papers.

An early proponent of transmission electron microscopy, Hurst studied mineral weathering and crystal growth, incorporating fundamental research findings into such economic applications as improved clay mineral beneficiation via selective flocculation and magnetic separation. In addition to basic and applied mineralogical research, Hurst performed extensive fieldwork and helped pioneer geologic mapping of highly saproilitized terrains. During his long career, he published many details on the stratigraphy and mineralogy of Georgia's Cretaceous and Tertiary sediments and contributed significantly to our understanding of the role of microbial processes and the origin of Georgia's world-famous soft and hard kaolins. Hurst was first to recognize classic Barrovian metamorphism in Georgia and published geologic maps of twelve counties. He also published on the gold districts and talc deposits in Georgia. He was a 50-year fellow of the Geological Society of America and the Mineralogical Society of America. He was also a member of Sigma Xi and Phi Kappa Phi. The Clay Minerals Society, in recognition of a lifetime of scientific achievements, selected him as a Pioneer in Clay Science Lecturer in 2003.

W.W. Barker