

## *Alfred State College Centennial*

Name: Lauren M. Soule  
Department: Mathematics  
Dates Employed: September 1953-July 1977  
Fall Semester only 1977-1987

### Memories:

Lauren Soule graduated from Watkins Glen High School. He entered the Navy and served in the Atlantic and Pacific in World War II. After the war he attended Alfred University where he completed his Bachelors and Masters Degrees. Throughout his time at Alfred State College, Lauren continued to do graduate work in the summers, attending Georgia Tech, University of Oklahoma, University of Miami, and Oberlin College. Of particular interest at this time was the beginning of the "computer concept", and Lauren was in on the ground floor, learning about computers when one computer occupied an entire room!

The first offices for the Mathematics Department were located in the Industrial Building on the Alfred University campus. They then moved to the Place House, at the current site of the Terra Cotta Museum. When the "new" Alfred State campus was being constructed, the Math Department moved to "Temporary Quarters" on the campus, and remained in the temporary quarters for the remainder of his career. During Lauren's time at Alfred State, he taught Calculus and Analytic Geometry. He held the position of Department Chairman for many years, until he decided that he preferred teaching and interacting with the students to sitting in meetings. His students might remember that his exams were designed without the need for use of calculators, but knowledge of the slide rule was critical! After calculator use was accepted, Lauren was fond of telling stories of students announcing that (s)he could no longer finish an exam due to calculator failure, which, in his view, was hogwash! Lauren was involved in the Engineering Science curriculum at Alfred State, preparing students for transfer into major engineering schools as qualified juniors. This work led to a year at the College of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia where he was instrumental in establishing a similar program.

The Alfred State College Faculty was like a big family. There was a Fall Dish-To-Pass Picnic at Stony Brook State Park, which later was held at the Lake Lodge and a Family Christmas Party (also a dish-to-pass). The closeness of the faculty and their families was reflected in the outstanding attendance at these events and the eager anticipation by the children. Families never wanted to miss an Alfred State basketball game, often arriving 45 minutes early to find a place to park and a seat in the packed bleachers. An annual Drama Festival, which showcased outstanding performances from high schools throughout western NY on the Alfred State campus, involved entire families. A Fall Festival was a wonderful collaborative effort of students and faculty, bringing many visitors to Alfred State as well, culminating in a lovely Harvest Ball. The Great Issues Conference occurred during the 1960's, challenging times in the US. It was incredible being able to listen to, query, and debate with the likes of Carl Rowan, Julian Bond and leaders of South Vietnam at Alfred State College.