

PDRC Turns 50

More than 200 current and former faculty, staff and students gathered recently to celebrate the milestone 50th anniversary of the Poultry Diagnostic and Research Center. Distinguished guests at the May 16 event included the directors of PDRC throughout its half-century history, including Sam Schmittle (1958-68), Dave Anderson (1969-72), Stan Kleven (1972-82 and 1990-2003), Oscar Fletcher (1982-89), and current director John Glisson (2003-present).

Dave Anderson and John Donahoe, along with a pre-recorded video and slideshow from Dr. Sam Schmittle, each served the attendees a slice of PDRC history. Dr. Anderson, who also served as CVM dean from 1975-96, provided insight and early history of the PDRC with photos from its beginnings in 1957 until 1963. Dr. Donahoe, who trained under Dr. Kleven for his doctoral degree and now works in Japan as a virologist, gave a rousing presentation about the “teen years” of the center from the mid-60s to 70s. Dr. John Glisson focused on the PDRC’s progress up to the present day.

“This truly was an historic occasion,” says Glisson. “To have so many present and former PDRC faculty and staff gathered together to celebrate the 50th anniversary was such a tribute to the dedication of those who work at this institution.”

The Poultry Diagnostic and Research Center began in 1948 as the poultry diagnostic service, started by Dr. Clifford Barer in the Department of Pathology and Parasitology. In 1955 it was

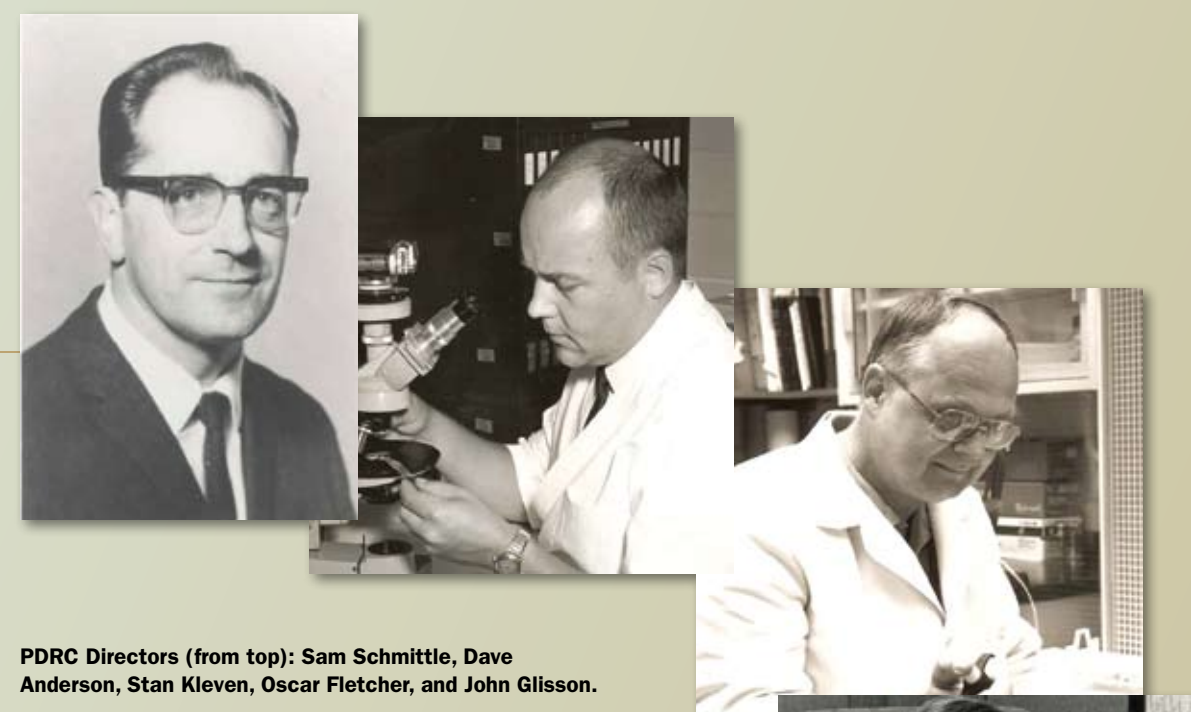
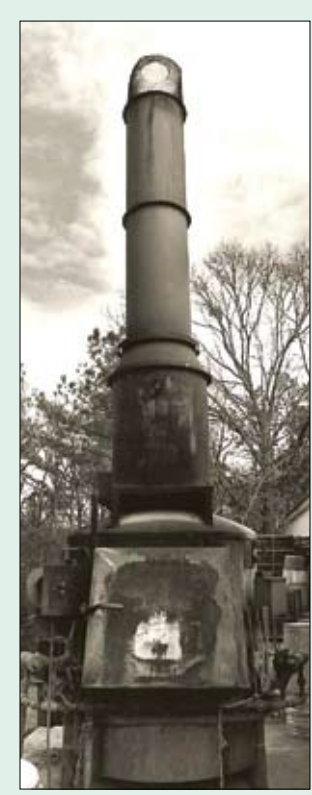
transferred to the Department of Veterinary Hygiene as the avian medicine section, and two years later the name of the Department of Veterinary Hygiene was changed to the Department of Microbiology and Preventative Medicine. Then in 1958, Poultry Disease Research Center was formally organized as a laboratory, constructed on College Station Road approximately two miles from campus. The center was built in response to the needs of the rapidly growing poultry industry in Georgia and was headed by Sam Schmittle. It was administratively placed under the auspices of the Agricultural Experiment Station of UGA’s College of Agriculture. In 1968 PDRC was transferred to the College of Veterinary Medicine where it now resides.

Today the Poultry Diagnostic and Research Center is part of the Department of Population Health, one of seven departments in the College of Veterinary Medicine. In addition to graduate programs, the PDRC offers course work for DVM-degree seeking students, courses for undergraduate students in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and diagnostic assistance and consultation to the world’s poultry producers. The PDRC houses well-equipped laboratories for virology, bacteriology, mycoplasmaology, biotechnology, immunogenetics, histopathology, and molecular sequencing, as well as diagnostic laboratories with separate ancillary laboratories for bacteriology, serology, and PCR, and state-of-the-art animal care facilities.

For photos and video from the 50th anniversary celebration, please visit www.avian.uga.edu. 



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PDRC Directors (from top): Sam Schmittle, Dave Anderson, Stan Kleven, Oscar Fletcher, and John Glisson.



Below: Presentation of original acrylic painting by artist Carly Glisson in honor of the PDRC's 50th Anniversary. From left, John Glisson, Mike Giles (senior vice pres., Georgia Poultry Federation), Carly Glisson, Abit Massey (pres., Georgia Poultry Federation).

