Howard Jenkins

January 30, 1928 - November 23, 2015
Emeritus Associate Professor Howard Jenkins died peacefully in his sleep in Minneapolis on November 23, 2015. He was born in Pocatello, Idaho on January 30, 1928. He received a BS in physics from MIT in 1945 and then his PhD in mathematics under Prof. Robert Finn from the University of Southern California in 1958. After a brief stay at Stanford, he came to Minnesota in 1962 as an assistant professor, and was promoted to associate professor in 1965. During the period 1971-79 he was Associate Head of the Department, serving under Prof. Johannes Nitsche. He retired from the University of Minnesota in 1996.

His research was focused on partial differential equations and the calculus of variations. His collaboration with Regents Prof. James Serrin made a very important contribution to the important and well-studied minimal surface equation, as documented by Louis Nirenberg’s commentary in the Serrin Selected Papers volume.

Howard was an accomplished woodworker, making kitchen cabinets, shaping his own trim molding, and such. He also enjoyed working with concrete, doing his driveway embankment and front steps. His other passions included playing classical piano, bridge, photography, science fiction, squash, downhill skiing, and his vegetable garden. He is survived by children Thomas Howard Jenkins, James Russell Jenkins, & Elizabeth Bryner Jenkins, as well as 4 grandchildren, Genevieve, Alexander, Gabriel, and Samuel. He will be missed.