

Thomas B. Steel

SHARE representative who was deeply involved in the development of basic software for the IBM-700 series of computers, including the SHARE Operating System (SOS), and a universal language named UNCOL; later a pioneer in the promulgation of industry standards in information processing.

Honors and Awards: ACM Distinguished Service Award, 1977; fellow, ACM, 1994.

The announcement that Steel was to receive the ACM Distinguished Service Award in 1977 stated:¹

It is hard to avoid mentioning Steel's many areas of technical activity, especially in programming languages and in the theory of information handling, but those are not the areas for which he is now being honored. His most important area of service has been Standards, an area in which he has worked continuously and productively since he was a member of the SHARE 709 Standards Committee in 1957-1959 and a member of the ASA X3.4.2 Language Standards Committee in 1966-1961. He was chairman of the USASI X3.4 Subcommittee on Common Programming Languages (1965-1969), and was a member of the ACM Standards Committee (1963-1975) and of its Steering Committee (1963-1968). He was chairman of the ANSI X3 Standards Planning and Requirements Committee (SPARC) (1969-1974) and has been the SHARE representative to ANSI X3 since 1971. He has chaired the ANSI/X3/SPARC Data Base Study Group since 1973.

He has been the AFIPS (and hence the US) representative to IFIP TC-2 (Programming Languages) since 1963, and the chairman of that group since 1969. He has been the AFIPS (and hence the US) member of the IFIP TC-2 Working Group 2.2 (Formal Languages Description) since 1966, and chairman of that group from 1966-1972.

Tom Steel was one of the founders of SHARE, the first and still the most prestigious user group. He served SHARE in many capacities, including membership on its executive board (1965-1966) and its board of directors (1973-1975). He was on the committee that produced the well-known SHARE study of data processing in the period 1980-1985. In addition to his work on the ANSI Standards Committee previously mentioned, he was a member of the ACM National Program Committee (1963-1966) and an ACM National lecturer in 1968-1969. He was the first chairman of ACM SICSoft (1975-1976).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Significant Publications

Steel, T.B., "UNCOL: The Myth and the Fact," in Goodman, R., ed., *Ann. Rev. Automatic Programming*, Pergamon Press, London, Vol. 2, 1961, pp. 325-344.

¹ *Comm. ACM*, Vol. 20, No. 9, 1977, pp. 682-683.

UPDATES