Harold Leever

1914 -

"His vision, his integrity, his enthusiasm, his spirit and his passion make him special. The greatest gift he has given has been himself."

- Dr. Phyllis DeLeo, 1995. President of Teikyo Post University

Born in Detroit, Michigan in 1914, the athletically inclined Harold Leever followed high school with football scholarships, first to the University of Detroit and later to Michigan State where he graduated with a degree in chemical engineering.

In 1938 Archibald MacDermid, who founded MacDermid Inc. in 1922, recruited Leever to be a research chemist for his Waterbury company. Leever immediately made his mark by developing Anodex, a reverse current alkaline cleaner that prevents the formation of metallic film on ferrous metals, thus providing great adhesion and tremendous savings in production time. The revolutionary Anodex was MacDermid's entry onto the national scene.
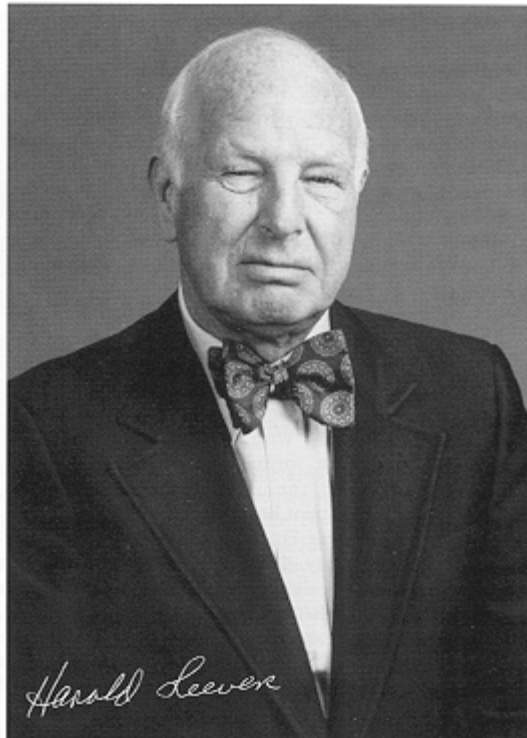
In 1954, he was tapped by his good friend and fellow Scotsman Archie MacDermid to become president of the company whose symbols were the kilt and bagpipes. In 1959, Leever and a number of his employees bought MacDermid from his mentor and its founder. With his ever-present bow tie, cigar and executive-cut gray suit, he now became a dominant figure in the Waterbury Business community, leading MacDermid through the turbulent '60s and '70s into the technological revolution of the 1980s. MacDermid expanded its markets beyond metal finishing into high tech metal cleansing processes for printed circuits and plating on plastics.

The only Waterbury manufacturing company listed on the New York Stock Exchange, MacDermid has emerged as a recognized leader in the field of specialty chemicals with a presence in 20 countries. Leever was the guiding force, according to The MacDermid Story, "that sustained MacDermid for over fifty years and inspired countless individuals to achieve more than they dared dream." He infused "positive religious, moral, ethical and philosophical ideas so much a part of his own character, into the bloodstream of the organization."

MacDermid has honored Waterbury through the years while gaining worldwide recognition under the stewardship of Harold Leever, former president and CEO Arthur LoVetere and its current Chairman and CEO, Daniel Leever. Daniel carries on the tradition of his father, Harold, who remains as Chairman Emeritus.

Harold Leever said, "It was never a goal of mine to be President or CEO, I just wanted to help other people" and "you can't accomplish much without people." His civic, philanthropic and religious contributions have become legendary as he continues to exhibit his affection for others and his concern for the human condition. Beneficiaries have included Waterbury Hospital, United Way, Teikyo Post University, the Waterbury Girls Club, A Community Vision for Waterbury, the Waterbury Foundation and the local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Among the many positions he has held are: President of the United Way, Waterbury Hospital and the Rotary Club, Chairman of the Board and Trustee of Teikyo Post, member of the School Building commission, Vice President of the Waterbury Chamber of Commerce, National Bible Week Corporate Gifts chairman, Sunday School Teacher and Superintendent of the First Church of Bethlehem and member of the Genera Synod, United Church of Christ.

His awards include: the Frederick D. Kellogg Award, the Outstanding Volunteer Fund-Raiser Award, the 1988 Citizen of the Year Award for Leadership and Dedication to the Community, the Hiram Hayden Award, and the Industrialist of the Year Award. His ties to Teikyo Post are clearly evident on campus where the Leever Student Center bears his name and MacDermid Hall honors the international company.

Harold Leever cares deeply for his church, his family, his company and his community. Robert Thornton of Teikyo Post University stated, "He's really challenged us to care about Waterbury." Harold Leever has the unique ability to get others involved and motivated while "following the road less traveled". This perhaps is his greatest legacy.