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CELEBRATING WOMEN IN MATHEMATICS

OLGA TAUSSKY TODD

1906-1995, Austro-Hungarian Empire now Olomouc, Czech Republic -Olga felt a powerful call to mathematics early in life. Her first research, at the University of Vienna (DPhil 1930 under Philipp Furtwängler), was on algebraic number theory, and she never stopped regarding that as her primary field.



She was awarded a doctorate in 1930 and her thesis was published in Crelle's Journal in 1932. After the award of her doctorate she earned a living by tutoring but also continued to work hard on her mathematics, continuing to develop the ideas from her thesis.

In 1955 Taussky-Todd and her husband, John Todd, spent a year's leave at the Courant Institute in New York where she taught a matrix theory course and her husband taught a numerical analysis course. Although Taussky-Todd enjoyed working at the National Bureau of Standards she missed teaching.

In 1957 Olga and Jack both accepted appointments at the California Institute of Technology and in 1977 she retired becoming Professor Emeritus, but she continued to lead a very active mathematical life.

Todd received the Ford Prize from the Mathematical Association of America in 1971 for a paper on the sums of squares. She was elected to several academies: elected to the Austrian Academy of Sciences (1975); elected to the Bavarian Academy of Sciences (1985); elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1991). She was honoured by the Austrian government in 1978 with their highest award, The Cross of Honour in Science and Arts, First Class and, in 1980, received an honorary doctorate from the University of Vienna. She also was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Southern California in 1988.

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