

Special Chemistry

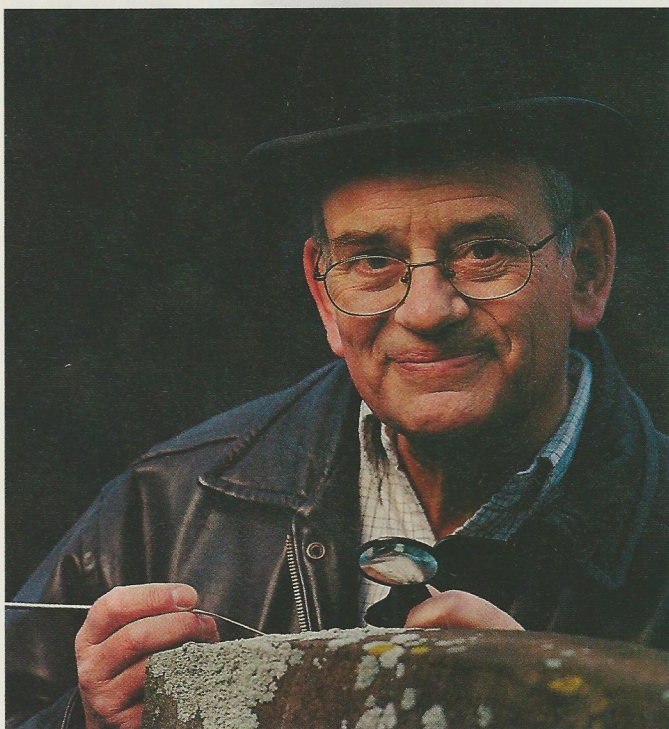
Dennis Fenton (GSNB'77), a young Rutgers graduate student in the mid-'70s, was contemplating a gloomy future after one of his experiments failed miserably. That's when his advisor, Douglas Eveleigh, popped into the lab. "Doug taught me, 'It is from your failures that you learn the most,'" says Fenton. "That is a lesson I've used my entire life."

After receiving his doctorate in 1977, Fenton found his own road to success as one of the earliest employees of Amgen,

now the world's largest independent biotechnol-

ogy company. He was named the California-based company's first executive vice-president last year.

Doug and Linda Fenton recently honored Eveleigh's good advice with a \$2 million gift to endow a chair in applied industrial microbiology at Rutgers. The chair will bear the names of Drs. Eveleigh and Fenton as well as their wives, both named Linda. Eveleigh will hold the



Eveleigh has always been passionate about microorganisms. His idea of fun is to stretch out in a meadow and explore lichens.

position until he retires, then another professor will be selected to fill it.

Eveleigh, whose primary research involves using microbes to produce a clean-burning gasohol fuel from wood and agricultural waste, notes that the gift has arrived at a particularly fortuitous time. "We were the first soil chemistry and bacteriology department in the country, and this is our 100th anniversary,"

says," he says.

Eveleigh can't help but feel like he's on a roll. The department

[now biochemistry and microbiology] has received funding to turn the Martin Hall lab of streptomycin-creator Selman Waksman into a commemorative room, complete with archival photographs, film clips, and elaborate displays. "It's the birthplace of streptomycin, one of the most important medical discoveries of the 20th century, says Eveleigh. "I consider it a shrine."