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FOR A.M. NEWSPAPERS OF
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NOTTINGHAM DINNER

A Massachusetts Institute of Technology physics professor who retires this June was honored Thursday night (March 26) by some 250 former students and colleagues for his own special program for continuing the education of scientists and engineers.

For more than 25 years -- excluding only the years of World War II -- Professor Wayne B. Nottingham has organized and conducted a by-invitation-only Physical Electronics Conference at M.I.T. in the Spring.

It began in 1935 as an effort by Professor Nottingham to provide his ex-students and others working in the field of physical electronics with a unique kind of annual forum where formality would be at a minimum and exchange of information and knowledge would be at a maximum.

Success of the effort was shown by early popularity of the conferences and, in order to maintain informality, attendance was limited to 250 selected individuals. No fixed time is alloted to any paper and unlimited and spontaneous discussion is permitted so long as it is pertinent.

This year's conference -- the 24th annual and the last to be held before Professor Nottingham's retirement -- opened in the Little Theatre of M.I.T.'s Kresge Auditorium Wednesday (March 25) and ends Friday (March 27).

Professor Nottingham received his surprise honor at a conference dinner Thursday night at the M.I.T. Graduate House when this year's attendees, in recognition

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of his pending retirement, presented his with a leather-bound volume of letters of appreciation, regard, and affection sent in by scores of former students and associates.

The presentation was made by Dr. John F. Waymouth of Sylvania Electric Products, Inc., at Salem, Mass., who heads a committee of five former Nottingham students that will take over organizing and conducting the annual conferences after the professor's retirement. Other members of the committee -- all former students of Professor Nottingham -- include Professor Edward A. Coomes of Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana; Dr. Andrew R. Hutson, Bell Telephone Laboratories, Murray Hill, N.J.; Dr. David B. Langmuir, Space Technology Laboratories, Redondo Beach, Calif.; and Dr. John M. Houston, General Electric Research Laboratories, Schenectady, N.Y.

Theme of the dinner was "Fifty Years of Physical Electronics" and, except for the presentation and a talk by Dr. Waymouth reviewing Professor Nottingham's own research contributions to the field, had been planned by Professor Nottingham himself. Professor Nottingham is recognized as a leading authority in physical electronics.

Physical electronics is defined as the physics of free electrons -- in solids, in gases, in vacuum, or at the surfaces of materials. Subjects at this year's conference have dealt with electronics of solid state materials, electron emission across material boundaries, and direct conversion of heat to electricity by thermionic and thermoelectric means.

Professor Nottingham, a native of Tipton, Ind., was graduated from Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind., in 1920. From 1920 to 1921, he was a Benjamin Franklin Fellow of the American-Scandinavian Foundation and studied at the University of Upsala, Sweden. Upon his return to the U.S., Professor Nottingham joined the staff of the Bell Telephone Laboratories at Murray Hill, N.J., and continued his graduate education at

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Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., receiving his A.M. degree there in 1926 and his Ph.D. in 1929. Also in 1929 he received the degree of Electrical Engineer from Purdue. From 1926 to 1931, he was a Bartol Research Fellow at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.

Dr. Nottingham joined the M.I.T. faculty in 1931 as an assistant professor of physics, was made an associate professor in 1936 and a full professor in 1942. During World War II, he served as a special representative of the M.I.T. Radiation Laboratory to the federal Office of Scientific Research and Development in Washington, D.C.

In 1932 Professor Nottingham received the Louis E. Levy medal of the Franklin Institute in recognition of his pioneering work with thyatron tubes which eventually came to be used in the radar sets of World War II.

Professor Nottingham and his wife, Evelyn, reside at 50 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge. Avid skiers, Professor and Mrs. Nottingham operate the Stowe-Tok Inn, Stowe, Vt.

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