February 2006

Remembering Papa Lyman

Mike Markwith
michael@teldan.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Markwith, Mike (2006) "Remembering Papa Lyman," Against the Grain: Vol. 18: Iss. 1, Article 35.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4864

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
Remembering Papa Lyman

20 September 2005 — Lyman W. Newlin
San Fernando Cathedral, San Antonio, TX

Remembrance by Mike Markwith <michael@teldan.com>

It was 34 years ago exactly to this day, January 20, 1972, that Lyman became an institution in my family. Lyman and I had worked together for about two years prior to this day in 1972 and on this day my first daughter, Aimee, was born at 6:30 am. By noon, Lyman decreed she was engaged to Fred Newlin, his eldest son who was two or three. This is only one reason why I will always be close to Lyman.

Lyman was my bookselling mentor and I was not alone as “young lads” mentored by Lyman. We met by phone in 1970 but not in person until 1971. He was in New Jersey responsible for Publisher Relations at Abel and I was newly appointed manager of Approval book purchasing (or Advance Information Acquisitions) in Portland.

Lyman introduced me to the professional world of bookselling. He also introduced me to New York City in 1971. West coast boy goes east for the first time and has real New York publisher meetings with Elsevier, McGraw-Hill, Random House, and Academic Press including lunch at the Netherlands Club complete with gin & tonic. He also introduced me to the wonders of room service breakfast: fresh hot eggs, toast, bacon, strawberries, black coffee, and meeting while eating. Glorious.

Lyman and I worked together for Richard Abel for three years before I was moved into sales. We enjoyed early morning and late afternoon phone calls (Oregon time) as well as many, many conversations about books and the people who inhabited bookselling lore. He knew them all.

Lyman was a role model, even a hero to this young professional. He was always positive and supportive and never negative about someone (unless that person wanted to give us less discount!). He did not harbor negative feelings though he lost a career (Abel), lost many books (fire), and lost income (Abel). We should all have Lyman’s attitude about how we deal with one another.

And he was a damn good democrat.

Lyman was a friend and “father figure.” When we saw each other at conferences, most recently in his motorized cart, it was always: “Hi dad” “Hi son.” He was a robust man who in later life used a cane and then the cart to get around, but he was always a friend to me and so many others. Lyman unified people. I believe he played a major role in coaxing Dick Abel from “exile” to attend the Charleston Conference and share his valuable perspective on bookselling and libraries. It meant a lot to those of us who worked for Dick to see him again and Lyman was primarily responsible — remember this is the man who could have but didn’t carry a negative thought regarding Abel.

Lyman never quit working. At age 85 he contacted me at Swets to help him with a client of his in Mexico regarding journals (he called them “magazines”). He said to me, “I don’t know anything about this journal business, hell I only know Capn’ Billy’s WhizBang or some such title, but I have a client who has some questions and hope you can help….” I did what I could.

He was a damn good democrat.

Our relationship ended as it began: on the phone. Last August I called and we talked and reminisced. He told me at ALA in Chicago about the new cancer and that he was going to go through chemo. I didn’t realize it was the last time we would ever talk. We made plans for dinner in Charleston in November and he said it would be his last conference. He was excited about the new issues in our business as he was excited about seeing friends and continuing his work. But it was just too tough to travel.

Lyman was my friend for 35 years. How many of us meet someone for the first time when that person is 60 years old and can say that they are a friend for 35 years? To say Lyman was special doesn’t do justice to the word “special” or to Lyman. My late mother always said that “growing old isn’t for wimps.” Lyman was not a wimp.

Lyman had a strong faith in his God, in you and me, in his love for his family. He was an avid naturalist and it may be comy but I find these words of the 91st Psalm the best way to memorialize Lyman:

And he will raise you up on Eagles wings
Bear you in the breadth of dawn
Make you to shine like the sun
And hold you in the palm of his hand.
Thanks “Dad.”

Rumors
from page 1

ation and CrossRef. Her ability to represent the views of the library world to the publishing world and the views of publishers to librarians during her 30-year career continues to have a profound and positive influence within our industry. Electronic journals as we know them today, and indeed, the electronic delivery of scholarly communication has been shaped by Karen Hunter’s thoughts and deeds. Ms. Hunter has earned both the respect of librarian and publisher colleagues and the 2006 CSA/Ulrichs Serials Librarian Award. Ms. Hunter was a library assistant and librarian at the Cornell University Libraries before joining Elsevier in 1976. Her undergraduate degree is from the College of Wooster and she earned graduate degrees in history, library science, and business administration from Cornell, Syracuse and Columbia universities respectively. This award for distinguished contributions to serials consists of a citation and $1,500 donated by CSA. The announcement was made by Marilyn Geller <mgeller@lesley.edu>, Chair, CSA/ulriuchs Serials Librarianship Award and Collection Management Librarian, Lesley University Library. Congratulations to Karen, most deserving of this Award!

Speaking of Awards, Denise Beubien Bennet, Pam Cenzer, and Paul Kirk have been awarded the 2006 Reference Service Press Award from RUSA/ALA for the most outstanding article published in RUSQ (Previously RQ) during the preceding two volume years. Here’s a citation to the article: “A Class Assignment Requiring Chat-Based Reference”, Reference & User Services Quarterly, Winter, 2004, Vol. 44 Issue 2, p. 149-163. Pretty exciting! And remember that the awesome and energetic Pam <pam.cenzer@gmail.com> (with cohort Susan Campbell) were the mentors at the 2005 Charleston Conference and will be the same at the 2006 Conference. They can answer any questions you might have especially if you are a “newbie” planning on attending the 2006 Conference. Come on down! Paul Ginsparg, physicist and Internet scholarly communications pioneer, is the latest recipient of the Paul Evan Peters Award. This was announced by the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and EDUCAUSE. The award will be presented on April 3, 2006, at the CNI Membership Meeting in Arlington, VA, where Ginsparg will deliver the Paul Peters Award lecture at the opening plenary. A professor of physics, computing continued on page 10

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>