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Judy Webster Remembered-Pt. II

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Judy Webster Remembered — Part II

Editor's Note: There was a memorial service for Judy Webster during ALA Midwinter at the First Presbyterian

Church in Philadelphia. Well over a hundred of her friends attended to pay tribute to this wonderful woman. Below are several reminiscences, first from Bill Britten, Judy's husband, and second from Aubrey Mitchell of the U. of Tennessee who worked with Judy for over thirty years.—KS

Memories of Judith Webster

by Bill Britten

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Judy was born in Knoxville, Tennessee and attended the University of Tennessee. She began working at the University of Tennessee Libraries as a circulation clerk in 1969, and in 1972 was appointed Head of the Main Reserve Department. In 1978 Judy received her Master of Science in Library Science, and in 1979 she was appointed Head of the Acquisitions Department.

Judy's philosophy in her personal and professional life was to stay oriented towards the positive, always look for the good in people, strive for acceptance of whatever life sent her, and to make her contribution every day. Judy's sparkle,

warmth, and kindness touched everyone she met. Judy and I shared a personal viewpoint that was a lighthouse metaphor: have faith in your own light, always keep it turned on, and try to let your light reflect the true qualities of your inner spirit and soul.

Judy loved her work. She had a straightforward and compassionate management style that earned the respect and loyalty of her staff. In her position as a library manager, Judy was always a voice for fairness and tolerance of the diversity of human viewpoints. In her associations with those in the publishing and bookselling business, Judy was constantly doing quality assurance testing on herself to make sure that she was being fair and meeting her standards of integrity. Judy loved the annual Charleston Conference and the ALA conferences. She would always get animated and dizzy with the excitement of her creative juices flowing during the conference trips.

The musical part of Judy's life was large, perhaps more than most people who knew her realized. She had a professional-quality voice, and after college she considered pursuing a career in music and was urged to do so by her teachers. She sang all over town, in the Knoxville Choral Society, an Early Music ensemble, as well as the Westminster choir. Judy's musical voice had the capacity to assure strangers and friends that the person behind the voice was honest and true.

When I think of the love that Judy and I shared, it's always the sweet companionship that comes to mind. We just liked being together, just being pals and enjoying the days. When we traveled on our many beach-and-lighthouse treks, Judy always wanted to stay at fancy places that would invoke meaningful memories: Monhegan Island's grand hotel—a special place steeped in art and history; the restored Victorian resort on Jekyll Island, where we played on the championship croquet lawn at New Year's, the 19th century whaling captain's house on Nantucket, and the Bananas Foster in Key West. Judy loved to garden and to go on hikes in the Smoky Mountains. She loved her pets, and at one time we had three dogs and two cats living with us.

Judy was diagnosed with breast cancer in the fall of 1996. After an initial round of chemotherapy we had hopes for a recovery, and for 9 months we were able to get our lives almost back to normal. But in the spring of 1998 the cancer reappeared in her liver, and we knew it would be terminal. In those last months I came to realize that when a person loves their life and they know they are going to die, they don't want anything special—no trip around the world, they just want some more of the life that they love. So Judy chose to go on working and enjoying her life to the last possible day. She hid most of her pain and the deterioration of her health from friends and co-workers, wanting to preserve her life as it had been. 🌿

From Judy Webster's Memorial Service

First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, PA, January 30, 1999

by Aubrey Mitchell (Associate Dean, University of Tennessee, John Q. Hodges Library)

We have gathered here today to celebrate the memory of our friend and colleague, Judy Webster.

So many persons come our way,

Who we forgot by end of day.

Our friend, Judy, will not find,

Her loveliness ever leaves our mind!

I first met Judy in 1969 when she joined our staff at the University of Tennessee Library. I remember her as a tiny, big-eyed young woman not long out of college with lots of questions - and a great big smile. Soon her talents of organization and leadership were recognized and she was promoted to be the Head of our Reserve Room operations. During these days, her career goal became firm - she wanted to become a librarian. So, while working in a regular job and also raising her son, Charlie, she entered library school at LIL. In 1978 she received a Masters of Science in Library Science. A prouder person

I've never seen! Almost immediately an opportunity came to head the Acquisitions Department of the Library. She went for it! She was appointed Head in 1979. Though various reorganizations and changes have occurred since that time, Judy basically remained in the position until she passed away.

What will our memories of Judy be?

Of much respect and honesty.

Of gracious smiles and loyalty.

Of intellect and integrity.

It was my privilege to work daily with Judy on a variety of matters. The most complex of these were related to budgets. These can also be the most frustrating. Also we constantly worked together on license and contract issues, on facility and equipment needs, and on many library-wide issues. She was always well-prepared and knowl-

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Judy Webster's Memorial Service
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edgeable. She was always helpful and supportive. She was wise and forward-looking in the opinions she expressed. And she was always pleasant and gracious-regardless of the anxiety of the issue. She was a delight and great friend to work with! She got the tasks done-and done well!

Judy was involved in many outside things.

And, again, to all these tasks she brings.

Lots of light to what was dark

Beyond her job, she left her mark

Judy was a chronic learner. She never tired of a new experience, a new challenge, a new friend and a new opportunity. An unusually quick study, she would quickly absorb the details of the challenge, make constructive and well-thought out comments, and move on to assist with implementation. Constantly she was a team player.

These traits she also applied to professional and personal activities outside the Library. She became a keystone of the Charleston Acquisitions Conferences. She was constantly involved in issues related to scholarly publishing. She constructively sought to keep the peace between librarians, vendors, and publishers.

On campus, she was often active regarding women. In 1986 she was tapped by our Chancellor to be chair of the Commission on Women. I recall gently suggesting to her that the acronymic, COW, was a bit awkward. Soon after, Judy changed the name to the Commission for Women!

This sort of action was typical for Judy-always striving to make a good thing better.

Judy was a private person. While I well-knew how she loved music and singing, in the thirty years I worked with her, I never heard her sing! Music was one of her private, personal joys. She was an active member of Westminster Presbyterian and she sang in the choir.

And now, dear Judy, take your rest.

Please know your friends, think you're the best.

And when you hear the angels sing,

Just join right in and heaven will ring!

We miss you, Judy.




Something About Books
from page 59

Dunning's second (and he says last) book in the **Cliff Janeway** series is *The Bookman's Wake*. Many feel this is a better-written book, and certainly from the standpoint of allowing readers to learn details about the world of private press printing, book pricing and the book world in general, this is the most valuable book to own. And lucky for readers, this book can be had for less than one-twentieth the cost of the first Dunning book. As the blurb says: "The story starts and ends, aptly, with a book, a very special book: a 1969 edition of **Edgar Allan Poe's** *The Raven*, published by the tiny, prestigious Grayson Press, of Northbend, Washington. No bibliography mentions the 1969 edition. If it indeed exists, it could be worth a fortune to the right

collector. It's the kind of book someone might kill for."

Finally, and most recently, Dunning has come out with a short story, *Bookscout*, published as a pamphlet, limited to 3,000 signed copies, and sold at six antiquarian bookfairs held in St. Paul, Denver, Seattle, Arlington, Virginia, Chicago and Boston (500 copies sold at each bookfair).

If you would like to read more about the world of books as written about in mysteries, there is an article in the April 27, 1998 issue of *AB Bookman's Weekly* by **Steven E. Smith** called "The Antiquarian Bookseller as a Hero in Bibliomysteries" (pp. 1141-1146) and also an excellent, but scarce book written by a librarian from Los Angeles, **Betty Rosenberg**, *The Letter Killeth* (Los Angeles, Kenneth Karmiole, Bookseller, 1982). 

Why Book Section is a Signature

The term 'signature' dates back to the early days of printing when book signatures were folded by hand. The folders had to initial or pace their signatures on their own work so that errors could be traced. A book signature commonly consists of 16 or 32 pages, any multiple of four is possible.

— excerpted from Nat Bodian's
The Joy of Publishing

Profiles
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Professional Activities: Ann has managed the Press's program of 14 scholarly journals since 1993. Before that, she accrued more than 20 years of experience in the Press's Books Division, primarily as an acquiring editor in literary studies, with occasional special assignments in Marketing (direct mail and advertising). She started out as a copy editor, back in the days of typewritten manuscripts and red pencils.

Avocations: Gardening and hiking.

Last Book Read: Caroline Alexander's new volume on *Sir Ernest Shackleton and the Antarctic*. 