OBITUARIES

Frances Humphrey Howard, 1914–2002

Frances Humphrey Howard, a special assistant to the associate director for extramural programs at the National Library of Medicine (NLM) from 1970 until her retirement in 1999, died of congestive heart failure in Washington, DC, on September 23, 2002.

The sister of the late Vice President Hubert Humphrey, Frances was a force in her own right. Energetic and passionately committed, she made countless contributions to NLM and to medical libraries in general. MLA named her an Honorary Member in 1990, a distinction reserved for those who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the purposes of the association.

Frances’s imprint is on many of NLM’s programs and services, and her legacy will endure long after her remarkable life. During her tenure at NLM, she worked to improve communication programs for medical research. She organized groundbreaking meetings of voluntary health agency executives to expose them to the information programs and services of the library and to encourage greater use of these resources.

She was also a gifted liaison to members of Congress, informing them of the coming importance of biotechnology and encouraging the creation of the National Center for Biotechnology Information. That arm of NLM has grown from a staff of twelve in 1989 to 335 today, performing what I believe is likely the library’s most important endeavor: collecting, organizing, and disseminating knowledge about molecular biology, biochemistry, and genetics. She was also a prime mover in the creation of the Friends of the NLM.

Born on February 18, 1914, and raised in Huron, South Dakota, Frances displayed the Humphrey family gift for public speaking and a seemingly endless capacity to care for people. In more than six decades in Washington, her government service was intertwined with community service on behalf of many organizations. She is credited with helping the Museum of African Art become a component of the Smithsonian Institution and served as a trustee of the U.S. Capitol Historical Society, the National Capital Children’s Museum, and the Washington Opera, among many others.

In the early 1940s, she was First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt’s assistant for employee activities in the National Civil Defense Office. In the 1950s, Roosevelt tapped her to become a director with the then newly organized United Nations. In that capacity, Frances traveled the world, promoting cultural understanding, health care, and other causes. She later became a Foreign Service officer for the State Department.

Especially in the last years of her life, she created strong bonds with people she met and mentored through the Hubert Humphrey Fellows, an international exchange program created by President Jimmy Carter in 1979, which enabled professionals from developing countries to study in the United States.

Frances Humphrey Howard was unfailingly generous with her time and talents, and I can think of no one who was a more effective, forward-thinking, enthusiastic ambassador for NLM than she. We will miss her as a friend, a colleague, and a one-of-a-kind force of nature.

Donald A. B. Lindberg, M.D.
lindberg@nlm.nih.gov
Director
National Library of Medicine
Bethesda, Maryland

Winifred (Win) Emma Sewell, 1917–2002

Winifred (Win) Emma Sewell, a long-time member of MLA, died at her home in Cabin John, Maryland, on October 23, 2002. Though eighty-five years old and officially retired, Win continued to review daily the professional literature and to mentor the students and practicing librarians and information professionals who sought her counsel. Many of them can recount stories of her generosity and intelligence and of the creativity that permeated her life.

Early years

A native of Newport, Washington, Win received her library degree from Columbia University in 1940 and then served as librarian in its Modern Language Reading Room. She augmented her education with science courses, especially in chemistry and, in 1942, became the librarian for the Wellcome Research Laboratories. Win clearly saw the library as “part of the intensive cooperative effort to find large-scale manufacturing methods for [penicillin] because it was desperately needed for the war effort” [1]. This observation—that of the library’s

Donald A. B. Lindberg, M.D.
lindberg@nlm.nih.gov
Director
National Library of Medicine
Bethesda, Maryland
active partnership with the research staff to meet the institutional mission—remained at the core of her information service philosophy.

In 1946, Win moved to the Squibb Institute for Medical Research. There, she focused on indexing the literature, which honed her belief that librarians need to maintain close relationships with the scientific community to understand and obtain the publications they need. She joined NLM in 1961 as deputy chief and subject heading specialist in the Bibliographic Services Division. Her work was instrumental in the development of MEDLARS, and she was considered by many as an information pioneer. From 1965 to 1970, she headed NLM’s Drug Literature Program.

Consultant and teacher

In 1970, Win formally moved to the world of consulting and teaching. Appointed adjunct assistant professor of pharmacy at the University of Maryland, she taught information skills to pharmacy students, and she trained scores of health sciences librarians in its College of Library and Information Science. Win’s students universally agreed that she held strong beliefs and standards about accuracy, quality control, and the need to understand reference service from the end users’ point of view.

Association activities and professional contributions

Win served as president of the Special Libraries Association (SLA) in 1960/61 and as president of the Drug Information Association a decade later. She helped organize MLA’s Public Health/Health Administration Section, serving as its chair in 1979. She spearheaded a Core Public Health Journals List for MLA after successfully starting one on drugs for the American Pharmacy Association. Win was also a prolific writer, alone or with others, as author, editor, or compiler of a number of books and journal articles [2–5]. Her Guide to Drug Information [6] won her MLA’s Eliot Prize in 1977, and, in 1984, she agreed to be interviewed for MLA’s Oral History Project [7].

Honors and awards

In 1979, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science conferred on Win the honorary degree of doctor of science. She was made a Fellow of MLA in 1978, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science conferred a similar honor on her in 1995. In 1998, she was inducted into the SLA Hall of Fame and, a year later, served as honorary president of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy during its centennial; she was the first woman and first librarian so honored. That same year (1999), SLA created the Winifred Sewell Prize for Innovation in Information Technologies in Biomedical and Life Sciences Librarianship.

A master cultivator

Win was a “master cultivator.” She enjoyed gardening, a passion outside librarianship for which she was well known. Her attention to preparing and harvesting her land was mirrored in her attention to preparing, improving, and refining the skills of her library school students, many of whom became her research partners. According to Webster’s dictionary, “cultivate” also means “to seek to become familiar with” [8]. Win believed “librarians who work for biomedical scientists and practitioners must learn and understand the practices and needs of their clientele subjectively rather than just intellectually from reading or observing from the library perspective” [9]. Thus, Win decided her legacy would be a fund for librarians to attend national client meetings and to work for six to twelve months in the “environment of their clients, working to identify with and further the goals of the health information professionals host’ [10].

Win provided stipends for librarians to attend the annual meetings of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (1997 through 2002) and the American Public Health Association (2001 and 2002). She established the Grace and Har-old Sewell Memorial Trust Fund to administer these grants and, in typical fashion, personally selected its Board of Trustees to represent both the library and client communities.

A person’s degree or professional affiliation did not limit Win’s view of his or her role in health information delivery. She envisioned a future in which community health workers as well as librarians and other practitioners would be considered integral members of the health team. In 2001, Win funded two clinic workers to attend the American Public Health Association annual meeting to present a report on their HIV health-information outreach project.

Illness did not seem to faze her. Everything was secondary to her work. The only thing that seemed to upset her was having work interrupted. She fiercely prized her independence and her intellect. Win seemed satisfied with her accomplishments, though she had many more projects in mind. Through the trust fund and the librarians she cultivated, Win’s philosophy will endure:

Librarians should be advocates for end users to the traditional library staff, assisting the latter in identifying with the clients and gaining a “We” rather than a “They” perspective. [11]

Shelley A. Bader, Ed.D.
sabader@gwu.edu
Associate Vice-President, Educational Resources

Karyn L. Pomerantz, M.L.S., M.P.H.
kpomeran@gwu.edu
Prevention Research Center

The George Washington University
Medical Center
Washington, DC

References

1. sewell w. Client and librarian partnerships during sixty years. Paper presented at: MLA ’02, 102d Annual Meeting of the Medical Library Association, Dallas, TX; 22 May 2002.
2. Andrews T, Sewell W. World list of
Charlotte K. Lindner, 1922–2002

Charlotte Lindner, who died on April 30, 2002, may be remembered as a modern, professional librarian, who gave her best effort to the leadership of the D. Samuel Gottesman Library at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in New York City. Her entire professional career was devoted to this institution and its library. Judie Malamud, the library's current director, has documented its history, beginning with the acquisition of journals and books and then covering, chronologically, all the significant developments in medical librarianship. These included a more functional utilization and expansion of space, the use of computers in searching the medical literature and their application in nearly all library operations, and the adoption of visual aids in teaching and learning. Many of these were accomplished under Charlotte's leadership.

Charlotte Kaplan Lindner was born in Brooklyn, New York, on February 22, 1922. (Kaplan was the name of her first husband.) After completing her bachelor of arts degree at New York University in 1942, she raised a family—two girls and a boy. At the time of her death, she was grandmother to six children and great-grandmother to two. She continued her education at Columbia University's School of Library Service, where she received her master's degree in 1958.

That same year, Charlotte began her career as a cataloger at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine library. In quick succession, she was appointed acting chief cataloger in 1960, chief cataloger in 1961, and assistant librarian in 1974, all during the eighteen-year tenure of Sonia Gruen, director at the time. Upon the latter's death in 1975, Charlotte became acting chief librarian. In 1978, she became director, a position she held with distinction until her retirement in 1989.

The difference in management style that distinguished Charlotte's approach from Sonia's can hardly be overstated. While both were completely devoted to the advancement and improvement of the library and its role in learning and research, Sonia brought to the task restlessness and sharp, vocal determination; Charlotte, on the other hand, dealt with issues with calm and incisive reason. Sonia eagerly embraced change; Charlotte was more cautious. To borrow an often-used characterization, they represented the difference between the Dionysian and the Apollonian approach to life. Sonia was admired, but Charlotte was beloved. The staff uniformly commented on Charlotte's kindness and her sustained faith in them, exemplified by a remarkable stability in the composition of the staff. She was able to work out difficult situations calmly and justly.

Charlotte's style also prevailed in her relationship with the library of Montefiore Hospital, which served as a clinical training center for the college. The relationship was one of helpful collaboration in access policy and resource sharing.

Although Charlotte served on some committees of the New York-New Jersey Chapter of the Medical Library Association (MLA) and of the Medical Library Center of New York, she did not see these as the main focus of her external interests. All those who knew her mentioned her devotion to Scottish and English country dancing. At attending national meetings of MLA, she would locate the local country-dance group and spend an evening dancing. A year before her retirement, a severe heart attack required coronary bypass surgery. She continued to have heart problems, but these problems did not stop her dancing. Her daughter, Amy Kaplan Brauner, reports that, at one time, Charlotte had hoped to become a ballet dancer and that this might have been the origin of her interest in country dancing.

Charlotte's interests were wide ranging, and, after retirement, she followed them with intensity. They included regular attendance at the concerts at Washington Irving High School, the poor man's Carnegie Hall, and frequent play going. She was a reading mentor for elementary school children in a program sponsored by the Everybody Wins Foundation. From time to time, we would meet on the 66th Street bus, when she was on her way to Hunter College to attend a lecture or to audit courses, including one on the history of art. Her participation in the cultural life of the city in-
Beatrix (Bee) Robinow, 1915–2001

Beatrix (Bee) Robinow, a former MLA board member, died on April 30, 2001. Until her retirement in 1982, she was director of the health sciences library at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Beatrix Hendrika Minnaar was born on November 5, 1915, in Standerston, a small town in the Transvaal, 100 miles from Johannesburg, South Africa. Her parents were fluent in both English and Afrikaans, and Bee graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in English and Latin from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

She started working in libraries in 1935 and qualified as a Fellow of the South African Library Association in 1939. She worked in the library at Witwatersrand from 1936 to 1939 and at the Veterinary College in Onderstepoort, which was her first experience of medical librarianship. She was a lecturer at the Cape Town University Library School from 1943 to 1946.

Bee married Richard Robinow, a public relations writer and designer, in 1939 and took his name; they had three children: Susan, Franz, and Carl. They moved to Durban in 1949, where, in 1951, the nation’s first nonwhite medical school was established at the University of Natal. Bee was appointed its librarian and stayed there until 1962. During this period, she received an MLA Study and Travel Fellowship. In 1957, this fellowship enabled her to visit thirty-two medical libraries in the United States and no doubt had a great influence on her future career beyond South Africa [1].

The Robinows left their native land for North America in 1962, when their children were in their teens. They wanted them to have a broader background than South Africa and wanted to leave the political situation there. She worked briefly in Atlanta, Georgia, where she was chief of technical services at the medical school library of Emory University; she also reorganized the medical libraries at Crawford Long Memorial and Piedmont hospitals. The family then moved to Canada and, in 1964, Bee was recruited by the Toronto General Hospital to establish its Fudger Medical Library.

In 1966, Bee accepted a new challenge: to plan the library for a radically new medical school at McMaster University. This innovative medical education program was based on problem-based, self-directed, small-group learning. Although she began working that year, the new Health Sciences Center did not open until 1971. Her first principle was that the library should be absolutely central to the school.

Bee had the challenge of keeping up with her profession and her family. This entailed commuting between her home in Toronto and her job in Hamilton (over an hour’s drive) for the first twenty-six months at McMaster. After her sons left home, she rented an apartment, where she stayed during the week.

By November 1966, she had produced the plan for the physical facility, and it changed very little after that. She found this aspect of the planning very satisfying, because it combined her knowledge of library architecture with her experience planning the medical library in Durban. Her long-range objective was that the library have 1,200 periodical titles and house 100,000 volumes. Beyond that the collection should be weeded to keep the library up to date and alive. Another principle was that reading spaces and stack spaces should be interspersed [2]. The school’s focus on learning, and giving the students a choice of how to learn, meant close collaboration between audiovisual production and the library [3]. Very early on, Bee organized the local health libraries into the Hamilton and District Health Library Network.

Bee joined MLA in 1956 and was active in the association thereafter. She obtained MLA certification in 1967 and was elected to its Board of Directors in 1978. She was made a fellow in 1983. She was also active in the Upstate New York and...
Ontario Chapter, serving on its Executive Committee and as its chair. She retired in 1982 and was able to return full-time to her home in Toronto, to be with Richard, with whom she had a close and loving relationship for the fifty-nine years of their marriage. She also had more time to devote to gardening, reading, cooking, and volunteering.

In May 1999, a Recognition Tea was held at McMaster as an opportunity to pay special tribute to Bee. A Library Enrichment Fund was established in her honor with a generous gift of $100,000 from C. Barber Mueller, M.D., the first chairman of surgery in the Faculty of Health Sciences. That fund has since grown to over $250,000, with subsequent gifts from Dr. Mueller and others.

Bee will be remembered by her contemporaries in MLA not only for her leadership and professionalism but also for her sense of humor and the soft-spoken grace with which she met the world.

Dorothy Fitzgerald fitz@mcmaster.ca
Director McMaster University

Hamilton, Ontario Canada

References