Trustee Emeritus M. Moran Weston, Champion of Affordable Housing in Harlem, Dies

Professor Emeritus Eric McKitrack, 82, Best Known For His Work on Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction

Professor Emeritus Eric McKitrack, a Columbia historian who was best known for his “Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction: The Rise of America’s First Negro Senator” (Chicago 1960), died in Manhattan on April 24. He was 82.

The “New York Herald Tribune” called McKitrack’s work “brilliant and important” because it challenged the then-prevailing view that Johnson’s Reconstruction policies were sound but were foiled by Republican Radicals. McKitrack contended that, in fact, the failures of Johnson’s policies were his own doing.

The book received the American Historical Association’s John H. Dunning Prize in 1960 and was an early contribution to what became extensive literature revising traditional interpretations of Reconstruction.

McKitrack’s other works included “The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788-1800” (Oxford 1993), which won the 1994 Bancroft Prize. The book, co-authored with Smith College Professor Emeritus Stanley Elkins, MA ’51, PhD ’59, was the product of more than 25 years of research and writing. “Reading this magnificent work of scholarship is like taking a leisurely stroll through one of the most turbulent eras in the history of our nation,” wrote the “New York Times Book Review.”

Born July 5, 1919, in Battle Creek, Mich., McKitrack came to Columbia in 1947 as a student in the School of General Studies after serving in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1945. After obtaining his bachelor’s degree in 1949, McKitrack continued his education at Columbia, earning a master’s degree in 1951 and a doctorate in 1960, both in history.

After teaching stints at the University of Chicago and Rutgers, McKitrack returned to Columbia in 1960 as an associate professor of history. He became a full professor in 1965 and retired as professor emeritus in 1989.

McKitrack is survived by his wife, Edyth Stevenson McKitrack; their daughter, Keith McKitrack of New Smyrna Beach, Fla.; four children, and nine grandchildren.

Kenneth A. Lohf, Former Director of Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Dies at Age 77


Lohf was a published poet, bibliographer, literary scholar, collector, benefactor and friend. He gave generously of himself and his collections, contributing to his church, profession and passions until his death. In addition to Paul Palmer, his companion of 53 years, Mr. Lohf is survived by a son, Philip, and three nephews, Gerald K. Freitag, Ronald J. Freitag, and Donald J. Freitag and their families.

As director of the Columbia’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library (RBML) for 25 years, his service to the collections doubled their size to a half million volumes and 26 million manuscript items. Among those were thousands of letters from authors like William Faulkner, James Joyce, Sinclair Lewis and Eugene O’Neill, medieval manuscripts and a 4,000-year-old Babylonian cuneiform tablet. During his tenure, the RBML underwent a $12 million renovation; the money for which he nearly single-handedly raised. He served for 20 years as secretary-treasurer of the Council of the Friends of the Columbia Libraries.

Lohf was fond of explaining that the Library was not a museum but rather a place for scholarship and query. At his retirement, he was honored by Columbia with three separate exhibitions—one of items acquired during his tenure; one documenting his life at Columbia; and the third displaying books from his collection which he donated to the university. He also established the Kenneth A. Lohf Rare Book and Manuscript Library Materials Fund.

B.A. from Northwestern University. He earned his Master’s Degrees in English (1950) and Library Science (1956) from Columbia and was named to head the Rare Book and Manuscript Collection in 1967. His passion for collecting began when he was a graduate student in 1950. He amassed a comprehensive collection of British poetry of the 17th and 18th centuries, the 19th and early 20th century poets and writers; original letters; drawings of Pre-Raphaelites, and literary figures associated with them. Lohf was the author of numerous books of poetry and literary bibliographies.

Former Economics Chair, Donald Dewey, Dies at 79

Donald Dewey, a Columbia economics emeritus professor who was best known for his work in the field of industrial organization, died on March 5 in Hastings-on-the-Hudson, NY, at the age of 79.

Dewey came to Columbia in 1960 as an associate professor, remaining at the University until his retirement in 1992. From 1973 to 1976, he chaired the economics department before resuming his regular duties as full professor.