

In Memoriam

Virginia Robertson Craig

October 16, 1935 - March 16, 2008

Virginia Wallace Robertson was born and raised in Texas and became a strong woman at a relatively early age. Her father died when she was young and her mother suffered through years of alcoholism before overcoming this addiction. Virginia worked her own way through Pascal High School while she maintained honor roll status and supported her mother. She met Robert Craig at a church camp in East Texas in 1953; they were married December 28, 1954.

She studied at the University of Missouri, where she was the first woman to receive a Fulbright Grant for a year's study in Spain, and the first woman to receive an NDEA doctoral grant. She earned her Ph.D. in Spanish Golden Age literature, specializing in Spain's most prodigious playwright, Lope de Vega.

In the Fall of 1969, Virginia joined the faculty as an assistant professor of what was then the Department of Modern Foreign Languages at IPFW. She spent the rest of her professional life teaching Spanish language, literature and culture courses in that department. Virginia quickly became a cherished colleague, and the high quality of her teaching was recognized through the Indiana University system-wide Amoco Award for Teaching Excellence in 1975. Her administrative skills enriched the university campus as well; she became the first woman to serve such capacities as Chair of the Department of Modern Foreign Languages, Director of the IPFW Honors Program, and Director of Overseas Study Joint Program of Wisconsin, Indiana, and Purdue in Spain. Virginia enjoyed a sabbatical year studying the original works of Lope de Vega in the rare book section of the National Library of Spain in Madrid. Bob and she traveled extensively in Spain during many summers.

IPFW had special significance for other members of Virginia's family as well. Her husband Bob taught in the Division of Education for several years, and their daughter Cyd earned a bachelor's degree in the Department of Biology.

After her retirement from IPFW in 1999, Virginia and Bob moved to Chicago to live closer to their daughter Cyd and granddaughter Ginny. She remained active, corresponding and visiting with friends, including former students who had become personal friends for life. Bob and she kept up their interest in Spain including travel there, but one of her greatest delights seemed to be using her considerable sewing skills to make outfits for her granddaughter.

Virginia's physical presence will be greatly missed. Her work continues in the lives of her students and their students. Her family, friends, and colleagues were forever changed and will always cherish her good spirits, hope, faith, and love.