

Memorial Resolution
Clifford A Nault, Jr.

Clifford A Nault, Jr. was born in Marquette, Michigan, in 1926. He grew up in Kansas City. As an academic, Cliff was a late bloomer, but once he had begun it was difficult to stop him. After military service, he completed an undergraduate major in English and History and a master of arts in American Literature and American History at the University of Kansas City, and then went on to receive a PhD in English from Wayne State University. After teaching at Ohio University, Cliff joined the IPFW faculty in the fall of 1962, as Assistant Professor of English.

Three years later, Cliff was promoted to Associate Professor and found himself Chair of the Purdue University Fort Wayne English Department, a position he held for more than a decade. As Department Chair, Cliff played a major role in establishing the English curriculum and in hiring new faculty. He was particularly concerned with the English courses that introduced students to the university. Among other innovations, he developed a new course, English 100, that was adopted throughout the Purdue University system and, as ENG W135, continues to play an important role in IPFW's freshman composition program. He also developed a new course in technical report writing. It was Cliff who brought Purdue's Master of Arts in English degree to IPFW, a degree that was transferred to Indiana University in 1976, when the Purdue University and Indiana University English programs at this campus were merged. Thanks to Cliff, IPFW remains the only Indiana University campus outside Bloomington to offer graduate degrees in English.

Cliff's academic specialization was American literature. He wrote his Ph.D. thesis on Herman Melville, an author he always enjoyed teaching. A scholar who consulted Cliff's dissertation took the time to write him a brief note praising his work not only for its content but its style. "I enjoyed reading it," he wrote. "It not only exemplifies scholarship; it also exemplifies style, not the least aspect of which . . . is wit and a sense of humor. . . . I doubt if anyone else has ever written a doctoral dissertation and managed to include, with such perfect aptness, a delightful quotation from Mickey Spillane. You prove throughout that dissertations *can* be good reading." Cliff's ability to make literary scholars up lively and interesting was one of his great strengths. As an IPFW faculty member, he went on to co-edit *Portraits of an Artist: A Casebook on James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1962) and co-author a major reference work, *Annals of American Literature 1602-1983*, published by the Oxford University Press in 1986.

As a Department Chair, he cared a lot for people and very little for rules. The faculty Cliff hired and nurtured speak of him with deep affection. As a teacher, Cliff had a contagious love for books that his students will always remember. He had a knack for conveying the sheer pleasure of reading. For Cliff, the study of literature was first and foremost a form of enjoyment. He had little patience for bureaucratic niceties and academic stuffed shirts. He loved literature, and he was able to convey that love to his students. In his own words, he expected his classes to be "joyous intellectual events"; at their best, they were exactly that.

Cliff enjoyed life. He liked books, he liked jazz, he liked good food, he liked travel. His retirement in 1988, when he was granted Emeritus status, gave him the opportunity to pursue all of these interests. He remained, until the end of his life, a vital member of the IPFW community.