

This resolution was adopted by the ALA Council on Tuesday, June 28, 2016

A MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING CHARLES WELD ROBINSON

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA), the Maryland Library Association (MLA), and the public library community lost a valued member and colleague with the death of Charles W. Robinson;

Whereas Charles, known to many as Charlie, was a public librarian, a visionary, a curmudgeon, a leader, and a mentor;

Whereas Charlie earned his Master of Library Science from Simmons College in 1951 and then served with the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea;

Whereas Charlie began his professional library career at the Free Library of Philadelphia as the administrative assistant to Emerson Greenaway;

Whereas he joined the staff at Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) as assistant county librarian in 1959;

Whereas he was named director by the Board of Library Trustees in 1963;

Whereas Charlie led BCPL for 33 years in an innovative, progressive, and inspired style that moved BCPL to the forefront of public library service in the nation;

Whereas Charlie forever changed the library world with his revolutionary theory of “Give ‘Em What They Want” focusing on the popular materials that customers want and customer-centered library service;

Whereas Charlie shared his way of thinking with his staff, growing a generation of library leaders, he was then encouraging as they left to share his vision as library administrators all over the country;

Whereas Charlie served as president of the Public Library Association (PLA), served on the Council of ALA, received the MLA Outstanding Member Award and was awarded honorary membership in MLA;

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Whereas Charlie had a major role in the development of several publications considered vital to the management of public libraries: *Output Measures for Public Libraries*, *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries*, and *The Public Library Data Service Statistical Report*;

Whereas upon his retirement PLA, with funding from the Baker & Taylor Company, Inc., established the Charles W. Robinson Award given annually to an outstanding practitioner in the library field who has demonstrated innovative and responsive leadership resulting in the improvement of public library service;

Whereas after Charlie's retirement in 1996, he edited the *Library Administrator's Digest* until November, 2015 when his health forced him to step down; and

Whereas Charlie is remembered as one of the most influential librarians of the 20th century, now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

- Recognizes the significant contributions of Charles W. Robinson over the course of his career and mourns his death; and
- Extends its sincerest condolences to his friends and family, especially his wife Martha and his children Kate Howe and Hugh Robinson.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Tuesday, June 28, 2016, in Orlando, Florida



Keith Michael Fiels

Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council