

VOICES OF ALSC

The ALSC Oral History Project

DR. BARBARA IMMROTH interviews **MIMI KAYDEN**

This interview for the ALSC Oral History Project was conducted on April 4th, 1995, at the Dallas Public Library, in the office of Jan Moltzan, former Executive Director of the Texas Center for the Book.

BARBARA IMMROTH Mimi, thank you for coming today. First, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your relationship to ALSC, and then we'll get into other interesting things that you'd like to talk about.

MIMI KAYDEN I will apologize to the people who are reading here. Barbara prepared all the questions. I have not prepared any answers.

BI Well, I'm sure you have them at the top of your head. When did you join ALA, and how long have you been a member of ALSC, or the Children's Services Division (CSD), ALSC's previous name?

MK I joined ALA in the beginning of 1963. I think I was at the Midwinter Conference at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Naples, Florida. We didn't have exhibits in those days. Of course, when I joined ALA, I joined CSD. I've been a member ever since, although from time to time, I've gotten angry enough to say, "I think I'm going to quit." But I never do.

For over 50 years, **MIMI KAYDEN** has helped to transform the field of school and library marketing of children's books. While holding positions at Harper & Brothers, Penguin USA, North-South Books, HarperCollins, and many other publishers, Kayden was a highly active, influential member of ALSC, serving on the Board of Directors, as well as on numerous committees. She was also a long-standing member of the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY) Board of Directors, the Children's Book Council (CBC) Board of Directors, and the ALSC-CBC Joint Committee. When Kayden received the 2006 ALSC Distinguished Service Award, she was honored as the "consummate liaison between writers, illustrators, librarians, teachers, and the world of children's literature."

A professor in the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin, **DR. BARBARA IMMROTH** has contributed decades of service to ALA, as well as many other professional associations. Immroth was President of ALSC from 1989-1990, and she has also been a member of numerous ALSC committees, including the 1999 Caldecott Committee and the editorial advisory board of ALSC's journal *Children & Libraries*. Immroth has also served as a member of ALA's Council, and she is the coauthor and editor of several professional books. In 2009, she was the first recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Texas Library Association (TLA).

BI Well, thank goodness for that. What made you join ALA in the first place, and how did it impact you professionally and personally?

MK At that time, I was called a "library promotion" person, so I felt that I should get involved with your organization and with librarians. ALSC has kept me busy since then. Professionally, I think it's helped a lot. Because of ALSC, I don't feel that I'm just a vendor. I felt that we were

all working for the same common goals. I can be friends with my other publishers, too, because it's not like I'm selling refrigerators. If you buy my refrigerator, you're not going to buy somebody else's, or if you buy my refrigerator, I'm taking your whole budget. One book, though, is a very insignificant part of your budget, and you can buy everybody else's books, too. So, it works out. Together, our mutual concerns make us all want to do the same thing in the same way.