



---

Volume 56  
Issue 1 *Volume 55:2 and Volume 56:1 Combined Issue*

Article 4

---

5-2013

## Remembering Ruth G. Butler

Doug Butler  
*Asbury College*

*The Christian Librarian* is the official publication of the Association of Christian Librarians (ACL). To learn more about ACL and its products and services please visit <http://www.acl.org/>

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl>

---

### Recommended Citation

Butler, Doug (2013) "Remembering Ruth G. Butler," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 56 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.  
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol56/iss1/4>

This Column is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Christian Librarian by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact [arolfe@georgefox.edu](mailto:arolfe@georgefox.edu).

# Remembering Ruth G. Butler

Ruth Harriet Gretzinger Butler, one of the earliest members of the Christian Librarians' Fellowship (now the Association of Christian Librarians), died peacefully of natural causes in her sleep on Saturday morning, January 12, 2013. She was 91 years of age.

She was the widow of David Butler and is survived by her son Douglas (Janet), also a member of ACL, by four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Ruth was a life member of ACL, president in 1984-85, host of the 1957 meeting, co-host of the 1984 Houghton conference, winner of the Emily Russel award; a member of the Church and Synagogue Library Association, national program chair in 1995; founder of the Western New York chapter of CSLA in 1984; listed in *Who's Who of American Women*, 1974; a member of Arethusa Society at Geneseo.

Ruth was a native of Buffalo, New York. She graduated from Geneseo State Teacher's College in 1943. She spent a year as school librarian in Franklinville, New York. She then moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, to work for the Campfire Girls organization. While there she volunteered at a local U.S.O. It was there that she met a young airman from Colorado, who was stationed at Lunken field. They were married in Buffalo on February 2, 1946. They moved to Agate, Colorado, where David's family had homesteaded and were farmers/ranchers. Ruth was hired as a teacher/librarian at Agate School. In 1948, the death of Ruth's father and difficulties on the farm compelled the couple to move back to Buffalo. Their only son, Douglas, was born there in 1952. A couple of years after Doug's birth, Ruth went to work in the library at Buffalo Bible Institute, then on Delaware Avenue near downtown Buffalo. She was unable to attend the first CLF meeting, but hosted the second meeting at B.B.I. Around 1960 B.B.I. bought out a former camp-meeting site in West Seneca, New York, one of the south suburbs. In 1964 Ruth earned the MLS degree from Geneseo. The B.B.I. West Seneca campus was purchased in the late sixties by Houghton College, and Ruth continued as librarian. After retirement, Ruth continued to work part-

time at Houghton Buffalo until 1996. She also worked part-time at the West Seneca Public Library. For many years she maintained a library at Bethlehem Presbyterian Church in Buffalo.

Of course, one of the major accomplishments of her library career was the founding and editing of the *Christian Periodical Index*. When the founders of CLF came up with the idea of indexing some of the periodicals in their libraries, Ruth was up to the task. The Index began with indexing for 1956 of twenty (20) titles. The first editorial committee was Ruth Butler (B.B.I.), chair, Dorothy Spidell (Nyack), Ora Ann Sprague (Roberts Wesleyan), and Miriam Waggoner (Baptist Bible). The first five-year cumulation of CPI was 127 pages. Today one-year volumes are several hundred pages. Ruth remained editor of CPI until 1977, when Barbara Nelson took over, but she continued on as Circulation manager for several more years.

Ruth and David celebrated fifty (50) years of marriage in February, 1996. We had a special dinner party at a restaurant with a number of college and church friends in April, 1996. David died suddenly in June of that year. Ruth had major neck/back surgery in 1997, and then moved to a patio home in a new life care center, Wesley Village, in Wilmore, Kentucky, to be near her son and his family. When they found out that Ruth was a librarian, she was given charge of the library at the Village, and for a time the church library at Wilmore United Methodist Church. She remained active in the Village library until a couple of years ago, when it became necessary for her to move into a memory-care small home within Wesley Village.

Ruth enjoyed knitting – some of you may remember her sitting through ACL meetings with a knitting project, reading and reviewing books, teaching Sunday school, and entertaining.

Donations in her memory have been suggested to the Foundation for the Advancement of Christian Librarians. †

*Doug Bulter  
Head of Technical Services  
Asbury College*

