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## Honored: Emily Russell Award 2000

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# H O N O R E D

It is my honor and privilege this evening to present the Emily Russel Award to one of the finest Christian Librarians it has been our collective privilege to know. For me, it is even more; it is *sheer joy* to give tribute to a woman who has during our longstanding professional relationship been a source of inspiration, a model of integrity, and a continuing influence. Probably all of us in this room can list only a few people besides family members who have made a major impact on us. I would list this lady's name.

We met in 1974 when I joined the library staff at John Wesley College in Owosso, Michigan. She had been appointed Technical Service Librarian and part-time faculty member there in 1973. At John Wesley she led in the first utilization of OCLC to generate cataloging records for the library. She holds both an MA in History from Michigan State University and an MLS from the University of Michigan. She has the distinction of being a member of both Beta Phi Mu (Library Science Honorary) and Phi Delta Kappa (Education Honorary). She began her current tenure at Auburn University in 1979. She began as the Gifts & Exchange Librarian in 1979, received tenure in 1984 as the Order Librarian, and in 1998 became the Chair of the Acquisitions

Department. Job titles really don't tell the real story about this woman's

contributions. At the Auburn University library she helped establish the first comprehensive name authority process, played a key role as the catalog moved into the NOTIS on-line system, and was recently involved in the implementation of Endeavor's Voyager system, especially the Acquisitions module.

She has written book reviews and articles for *The Christian Librarian*

over a long span of years. In addition she has published in several peer-reviewed journals including *the Southeastern Librarian* (Winter 1987), *Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory* (1989) and *The Acquisitions Librarian* (1996).

Undoubtedly we all recognize her long and important contribution as Editor of *the Christian Periodical Index* (1976-1987). It was while she served as chair of the CPI Editorial Committee that CPI began its progress toward automation and began the annual in-service workshops done for current and new indexes. She is currently the Director of Marketing for the *Christian Periodical Index*.

Her service in professional associations have included serving as Newsletter Editor for the Association of College And Research Libraries Alabama chapter and for the Fellowship of Christian Librarians and Information Specialists. She served on the Board of both organizations. She has also been chair of the Publications Committee of the Alabama Library Association. For ACL she was the Conference Planning Committee Chair for 1994-95, has held the office of Vice President since 1995 and served on the

Board of Directors in both an *Ex-officio* capacity from 1976-1986.

On Martin Luther King Day 1999, I had the pleasure of spending a few hours visiting the beautiful Calloway Gardens in Georgia with this friend. We walked the beautifully landscaped outdoor paths and wandered through a huge indoor terrarium. We visited a lovely chapel with stained glass windows representing each of the four seasons. I think each of us meditated there on

the beauty of our world and praised the Creator of this incredible planet we call home. I was also offering up a prayer of thanks that I could spend these few days during my Sabbatical with this very special friend. During that time I was able to visit her home church in Opelika Alabama, observe her teaching a Sunday School lesson on the Book of Ruth, and learn about her work as the chair of the church's Missions Committee. It brought back memories of our times worshipping together at the newly formed Community Church in Owosso, Michigan so many years earlier. She had been a founding member of the Owosso congregation.

An excellent librarian?—yes. A leader in work and life?—yes. A Christian who deserves to join the company of those who have already received the Emily Russel award?—yes.

There is a Scandinavian song called "The Boon of Life" that T.H. White includes in his "The Once and Future King" Arthurian tale. One verse goes...

"Honour is our all  
Path-finder, People-feeder,  
Plan-provider, Sage-commander  
These hear the call."

Barb, please come forward.

This plaque reads:

"The Emily Russel Award  
Presented to Barbara K. Nelson  
In recognition of her outstanding  
contribution to Christian Librarianship  
June 15, 2000.  
Association of Christian Librarians." †

*The Emily Russell Award 2000  
was presented by Bonnie L. Travers,  
Special Collections Librarian,  
University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.*

Emily Russel Award