

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

**ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS WILLIAM LANDRAM WILLIAMSON**

William Landram (Bill) Williamson died on Saturday, November 19, 2011 at Agrace HospiceCare Center at the age of 91. Professor Williamson was born in Lexington, Kentucky, and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. He received degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Emory University, Columbia University and the University of Chicago.

After service in the U.S. Army as troopship transport commander in World War II, Bill worked as a librarian at Baylor University, Montclair (NJ) State College and at Columbia University, where he served as Nicholas Murray Butler Librarian from 1954-1964. He joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin Library School (now the School of Library and Information Studies) in 1966 and taught until his retirement in 1987.

During his career, Bill traveled extensively, conducting research and meeting with librarians in New Zealand, Australia, England and Nigeria. In addition, he was a library consultant in Indonesia on three occasions, from 1960-1962, in 1970 and in 1986. He was in correspondence with many of these international colleagues for decades afterwards.

Author of the highly regarded biography of William Frederick Poole, Bill was a scholar of American library history and wrote also about international library relations and comparative studies. He was frequently asked to comment critically on publications in these fields, and his reviews were themselves useful contributions to the literature. He served for four years as editor of *International Leads*, a publication of the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association.

Bill taught and advised in the fields of library resources and collection development, library history, research methods, and the role of the library in society. His former students remember especially his challenging them to appreciate the importance of the librarian's role in fostering intellectual freedom. Students, especially advanced graduate students, benefited from his use of historical and comparative perspectives to investigate and understand the development of libraries and librarianship. He maintained a close and active interest in the school and its graduates until shortly before his death.

Bill was a warm and supportive colleague. Faculty actions, whether in committee or in the faculty as a whole, benefited from his careful reflection, articulate argument, and facility for good writing.

A man of words as a scholar, Bill Williamson was also a man of action; he was an early civil rights activist, marching in Selma, Alabama in the 1960s. He participated in meetings and demonstrations in support of a wide variety of causes, and identified himself as a proud liberal. Music was another passion, and at a late stage of life, he studied violin. He was an ardent supporter of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra and the Madison Symphony Orchestra, as well as a long-time subscriber to the Memorial Union Concert series; and he would travel anywhere to hear a performance of Hector Berlioz's music.

Bill was married for 40 years to Daisy Levy, who preceded him in death. He is survived by his devoted wife of five years, Gertrude Wright, and an extended circle of family and friends.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE  
Charles Bunge  
James Krikelas  
Louise Robbins, chair