

Janet Russell

Last October, the Oriental Institute was saddened by the loss of Janet Russell, a longtime friend and dedicated Oriental Institute volunteer. Janet was a resident of Concord, California. As a child, she was happiest when she was exploring the library. Her passion for learning brought her first to Reed College and then to the University of Chicago, where she earned a master's degree in library sciences. According to her obituary, Janet "became a librarian so that she could help others find answers to their questions, bring order out of chaos." Her career path led her to focus on indexing books and reference works, and her work on indexing the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, known as the "bible" of the library world, earned her recognition worldwide. In 2004, she was presented with the H. W. Wilson Award, one of her profession's highest honors.



Her volunteer work with the Oriental Institute was especially meaningful to Janet as it offered her the opportunity to explore and deepen her knowledge of Near Eastern history and culture, which was a lifelong interest. Participation with the volunteer program also brought intellectual stimulation and the company of like-minded friends and colleagues. Janet served as a docent, which allowed her to share her knowledge with countless Oriental Institute visitors of all ages. Janet's passion for the Oriental Institute and its volunteer program was beautifully demonstrated in her creation of a significant endowment fund through her estate, which will benefit the Oriental Institute's volunteer program and outreach efforts. Janet's gift to the Oriental Institute has created a living legacy of her dedication to the pursuit of knowledge as well as her commitment to serving others. We extend our deep sympathies to her family as well as our gratitude for her many contributions to the Oriental Institute.