MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

Professor Ruth D. Stoveken

Assistant Professor Emerita Ruth D. Stoveken, long time member of the Department of Geography, passed away on March 31, 1990, in Milwaukee. She is survived by a brother, Charles E. Stoveken of Butte, Montana, nieces and nephews.

Ruth joined the faculty of the Milwaukee State Teachers College in the fall of 1947, retiring June 1, 1978, after 31 years of devoted service to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and its predecessor institutions.

Prior to joining the Teachers College faculty she taught a total of eight years in Wisconsin public schools, beginning in 1931 with four years at a rural school near her birth place, Pembine, in the northeastern part of the state. She then spent two years teaching in the Pembine Elementary School, subsequently completing her undergraduate degree (B.S. in Ed.) at the then Oshkosh State Teachers College in 1940. At that time no such degree was required for the positions she had already held in education. After receiving her degree she taught (1940-42) in New London, Wisconsin, and the 1942-43 academic year in Kingsford, Michigan.

In 1943 Professor Stoveken was commissioned in the U. S. Navy (WAVES) and held wartime assignments in New York and
Washington, D.C. At the time of her deactivation in 1946 she held the naval rank of lieutenant.

Ruth promptly entered the graduate program in Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and upon receipt of her Master of Science degree immediately joined the faculty of the Milwaukee State Teachers College, thus completing the four member geography staff of the early postwar years. In 1950-51 Ruth took a sabbatical during which she completed all course and residence requirements for a Ph. D. in Geography at UW-Madison. With the establishment of UWM in 1956 Ruth became a charter member of the new Department of Geography which consisted of seven persons drawn from both Wisconsin State College-Milwaukee (successor to the Teachers College) and the two year University of Wisconsin Extension Center located in downtown Milwaukee. Ruth served as the first faculty secretary of the merged department and thereafter generally performed that function over the first twenty-two years of the department's existence.

Ruth's course offerings throughout her collegiate tenure were primarily in Geography of Wisconsin and Survey of Physical Geography, which consistently drew heavy enrollments. She was especially noted for her insistence on field trips as integral components of her courses, experiences that were legendary in both their comprehensiveness and popularity among undergraduates.

Professor Stoveken's memberships included the Wisconsin and National Councils for Geographic Education (in which she
held state offices and national committee memberships, The Association of American Geographers, The American Geographical Society, The American Association for the Advancement of Science, The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Wisconsin Historical Society, Milwaukee County Historical Society, Gamma Thata Upsilon (geography), Kappa Delta Pi (education), American Association of University Professors and The American Federation of Teachers. She was also active in the Unitarian Church. Ruth did, in spite of her very busy teaching program, publish several scholarly articles on the geography of Wisconsin, along with encyclopedia and atlas contributions. Her "Information Sources on Wisconsin" proved to be a widely utilized reference work for many years.

Professor Stoveken served several years on the College of Letters and Science Council on Academic Advising and as departmental advisor to Geography-Education majors throughout her career.

With over forty years of distinguished teaching she was truly a master of her craft. Literally hundreds of teachers in the Milwaukee area and elsewhere at all levels, elementary through collegiate, are deeply indebted to Professor Ruth Stoveken as a person, often the only person, who taught them the geography they now pass on to their students. Her influence and inspiration is still very much with us.

Barbara Borowiecki
Donn Haglund
Harold Rose