

Christy Wright 1947-2001

Christy Wright, colleague and friend to many of us, passed away unexpectedly on 8 June 2001. That fact, difficult as it was to process when we heard the news, isn't the end. Christy, who joined CBE in 1978, spent her career as a scientific editor helping others, and that legacy will continue. In the Jul-Aug issue of *Science Editor*, CSE President Tom Lang noted that 24% of our members have been members for more than 5 years. It's important for long-term and new members to know about those who have contributed so much to the Council and to our profession of scientific editing.

In the early 1970s, Christy began her editing career at the American Psychiatric Association. In the late 1970s, she and her husband, Geoff Kitchingman, moved to Memphis, Tennessee, where Christy became an author's editor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Tennessee Health Science Center. With a continuing interest in issues psychiatric, she became managing editor at Physicians Postgraduate Press, which publishes a clinical psychiatry journal. In the middle 1980s, Christy became head of scientific editing at St Jude Children's Research Hospital, where she headed a group of several editors and other publications professionals editing basic and clinical research articles, annual research reports, and other publications. She and her husband moved to Appalachian North Carolina in 1999.

Throughout her editing career, Christy was an active member and ardent supporter of the Council. She was at the lunchtime caucus led by Frances Porcher at the annual meeting in Boston (1980) when the author's editors' group agreed to lobby for full participation in the Council. She worked with John Gilbert and others to poll author's editors about their professional activities, role in and dreams for the Council, and ideas for bridging the oft-too-deep chasm between authors and journal editors.

When the Council began its tremendously effective, focused workshops at Airlie House, VA, Christy was active in planning and producing several of them.

While she also worked for medical journals throughout

her career, Christy was at heart an author's editor. When the author's editors' group within CBE took up the cause of certification, Christy was again in the vanguard with Bobbie Reitt, Norman Grossblatt, Walter Pagel, John Gilbert, and others.

By her own admission, Christy was not a teacher, at least in the classroom sense. But she was indeed a mentor and teacher to many with whom she worked and for whom she edited, including me. She regularly ripped apart my articles and presentations. After heated discussion, but never an early admission that she was right, I'd incorporate most of her changes and recognize how significantly she had improved my argument.

As the consummate author's editor she was, she gladly assisted all authors who had the good sense to ask her for help, but she never overpowered their voices. She campaigned tirelessly within the Council for benefits that author's editors could offer both authors and journal editors, but she never sought recognition for her own work. She expressed her passion about things editorial, but always with an eye toward improving the entire profession.

When the e-mail about Christy's death appeared in early June, Geoffrey wrote: "One measure of a person is the company she kept, and Christy had so many kind, intelligent, caring friends. I thank you all for your kindness towards her." Almost immediately, another e-mail circulated: "One only has friends by being a friend—we all loved her."

I truly believe both those comments and wish I had made them.

Christy is survived by her husband, Geoffrey Kitchingman, and her parents, Eldon and Norma Wright.

Donations may be made to the Christy Wright Fellowship for Glass Art at Penland School of Crafts, PO Box 37, Penland, NC 28765-0037.

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