

FRANK PALUKA

Editor
Books at Iowa
1966-1986



Frank Paluka: A Tribute

This issue of *Books at Iowa* is dedicated to Frank Paluka to acknowledge his retirement, to honor him for his service and dedication to The University of Iowa for more than 30 years, and to recognize his able editorship of this respected library periodical for the past 20 years.

When Frank Paluka requested early retirement more than a year ago, many tried to dissuade him. How could we get along without him? Coping with the details of our daily work without his wise counsel and literary acumen seemed almost unthinkable. Fortunately, Robert A. McCown, our manuscripts librarian, was willing to assume Frank's administrative responsibilities as head of Special Collections. Also, Bob, who had served as assistant editor of *Books at Iowa* for 12 years, was proposed to our Friends Council as editor of that publication. Following approval of the council, we agreed that the first issue under the new editor be dedicated to Frank.

A native of Council Bluffs, Iowa, Frank Paluka received his bachelor's degree in English magna cum laude from Creighton University in nearby Omaha in 1950. He went east to pursue his graduate education at the University of Connecticut, Storrs; there he was granted the master's degree in 1952. Following further graduate work at Florida State University, Mr. Paluka returned to his native Iowa in 1953 to continue his studies. He was an instructor in English and/or communication skills at each of these institutions. During this latter period at Iowa, the library administration persuaded three talented graduate students to work one-third time in the reference department to assist in a bibliographical instruction program for new students. These three students were Cleo Martin, now on the English faculty at Iowa; Richard Clark, former U.S. senator; and Frank Paluka. At this point in his career, Paluka was "hooked," and in 1960 he entered library school at the University of Illinois, receiving his master's degree in library science in June 1961. He returned to Iowa to begin his professional library career in the Special Collections Department that same year and became head of the department in July 1962. From this position he retired on March 31, 1986.

To say that Frank Paluka has left a void among his colleagues is an understatement for he possesses an exemplary record of academic achievement and scholarship. During his period of service he was most

successful in building up a collection of rare books that made the Iowa resources noteworthy throughout the world. One of his special interests has been the development of an extensive collection of Iowa authors and resulting from that interest came the publication of his book, *Iowa Authors; a Bio-Bibliography of Sixty Native Writers*, which is now out of print. Further, he was invited by the international Library Science Honorary Society, Beta Phi Mu, to submit for publication a work to be considered for its Chapbook series. This society, founded in 1949 at the University of Illinois, has as one of its primary aims to publish "a series of books which would be authoritative and worthwhile contributions to the literature of books and librarianship and would have the virtue of presenting the best in book design." Frank's book entitled *The Three Voyages of Captain Cook* was selected as number ten in this series. Only sixteen volumes have received this honor in the last 35 years.

Shortly after the rejuvenation of the Friends of The University of Iowa Libraries, the Friends Council asked Frank to assume the editorship of *Books at Iowa*, and for 20 years he was primarily responsible for the contents of this scholarly biannual publication. This periodical is cited frequently in national and international bibliographies.

Frank Paluka was a dedicated member of the University Libraries' staff for three decades and it was my privilege to be associated with him during all those years. I have the greatest respect for his intelligence and dedication and can fully appreciate the progress that was made during his long tenure. His keen insight and advice enabled this institution to develop one of the finest special collections in the research library environment.

We thank you, Frank, for these years of service and we wish you well in all your future endeavors. It is gratifying to know that you plan to continue your research and writing in Iowa City. We hope to see you often and perhaps avail ourselves of your wise counsel.

Your many friends and colleagues join me in saluting you for a remarkable career. You leave a legacy that many generations of scholars will appreciate. Thank you and good luck always.

Dale M. Bentz
University Librarian

June 30, 1986