Foutz, Chloe Vennie (1938–2007)

SABRINA RILEY

Sabrina Riley was born in Auburn, New York and raised in Dowagiac, Michigan. She received a B.A. in history from Andrews University and an M.A. in information and libraries studies from the University of Michigan. Riley was a member of Andrews University’s library staff from 1998 to 2003, library director and college archivist at Union College from 2003 to 2016, and is presently a freelance researcher, author, and information professional.

Chloe Vennie Foutz was a prominent Adventist librarian and founding member of the Association of Seventh-day
Adventist Librarians (ASDAL).

Chloe was born on March 31, 1938 in Seminole County, Oklahoma, the youngest of four children born to Loren Herbert and Venus Mattie Foutz (1892-1945; 1897-1976). Loren’s family migrated to Oklahoma from eastern United States via Indiana during the nineteenth century. How the Foutzes came to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church is unknown, but evidence suggests that Venus and her daughter joined the church after Loren’s death.

Foutz began her college career at Southwestern Junior College and completed her bachelors in 1961 at Union College, majoring in home economics, with a minor in religion. She worked in libraries throughout high school and college. Earning a master’s degree in library science at the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign immediately following her undergraduate work was a natural choice.

In 1962 Foutz returned to Lincoln, Nebraska where she began a forty-one-year library career at Union College. As public services librarian, she made significant contributions in the automation of the library, as well as the design of the new Ella Johnson Crandall Memorial Library, a facility that was occupied in 1984. She was promoted to library director in 1986.

As much as Foutz loved libraries, her real passion was preserving the history of Union College, a goal accomplished in collaboration with Everett Dick. Together they established the Lora McMahon King Heritage Room, a repository for books, journals, manuscripts, photographs, artifacts, and other resources documenting the history of Union College, the College View (Nebraska) community, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Foutz also assisted Dick in the preparation of From Horses to Horsepower: Life in Kansas, 1900-1925 for publication in 1986.

Foutz was a founding member of the Association of Seventh-day Adventist Librarians (ASDAL), established in 1981 during meetings at Pacific Union College. She attended every meeting of the association until her retirement. Foutz was elected ASDAL’s first executive treasurer in 1984, a position she held until 1994, and then served as president for the 1996-97 term. During Foutz’s tenure as executive treasurer she was responsible for the transformation of ASDAL from an affiliated group of professionals to a legally incorporated non-profit organization able to hold assets. At various times Foutz also chaired numerous committees including the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Board and the Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

In 1971, Foutz became the first woman in thirty years to serve as president of Union College’s alumni association, a position she held two different times. During her first term she spearheaded fundraising for the college’s new clock tower. Her second term coincided with the college’s centennial and Foutz led out in planning commemorative events.

Foutz was also involved in non-Adventist professional and community organizations, including the Nebraska Library Association and the Lincoln Lancaster County Genealogical Society (LLCGS). Holding true to her love for history, Foutz became heavily involved in the leadership of LLCGS and was responsible for the society’s genealogical library being moved from a member’s basement to the Union College Library in 1992. While the LLCGS library retains a separate identity, its holdings are integrated into the college’s online public access catalog.

When Foutz retired in 2003 she intended to travel, but her plans were cut short when she was diagnosed with cancer in the fall of 2006. She died May 27, 2007.

Foutz’s most enduring legacy was her leadership of ASDAL, placing it on an organizational footing that enabled it to support collaborative projects such as the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index, the Adventist Library Information Cooperative (ALICE)—a consortium negotiating discounted pricing for subscription databases, and the D. Glenn Hilts Scholarship supporting graduate study in library science.

SOURCES


“Minutes: Association of Seventh-Day Adventist Librarians, Columbia Union College, July 7-9, 1982.” ASDAL Action
“Minutes of the 1986 ASDAL Conference.” *ASDAL Action* 6, no. 1 (Fall 1986): 5–11.


http://www.ucollege.edu/academic-services/library/about-us/chloe-foutz


“Union College Library Staff / Chloe Foutz--Current Responsibilities,” n.d. Library Institutional Archives. Union College Heritage Room.

“Union College News Items: Faculty Receive Higher Degrees.” *Central Union Reaper*, October 9, 1962.


Note

1. Chloe Foutz is the only member of her family whose obituary is included in Adventist publications. Her mother is the only other member of the family for whom a passing reference was located in the *Southwestern Union Record* published in 1957.?”