

NONA K. WATT

Nona (Nonie) Watt retired from the Jerome Hall Law Library on May 31, 2020. With more than 30 years at the law library, Nonie has been an instrumental leader in heralding the library's collections and cataloging into the digital age. She took the lead on several major projects in the law library, and her influence will be felt for years to come.

The youngest of five (and the only daughter), Nonie was born in Kankakee, Illinois, and grew up in nearby Grant Park. Perhaps foreshadowing her future career, Nonie began working in libraries in the fifth grade, in her school's library. She continued to work in school libraries every year through high school.

Nonie was a first-generation college student, earning her B.A. in English Education, with a minor in Library Science, from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1977. She continued on to graduate school at the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science, earning her M.S. in Library Science in 1979.

Her first professional library position was as circulation/interlibrary loan librarian in the library of Lutheran General Hospital, a large teaching hospital outside of Chicago. A few years later, soon after they were married, her husband received his first tenure-track position at the University of Tennessee and Nonie took a new position with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in Knoxville, serving as information systems specialist. While in this position, she was transferred to a nuclear power plant in Soddy Daisy, Tennessee, to inventory contracts and building specs. For this work environment, her uniform changed slightly to include a hard hat and steel-toed shoes.

Nonie's career in law libraries began in October 1984, when she left the TVA to take a position at the law firm of Hogan, Guyton, London, and Montgomery in Knoxville. As librarian/legal assistant for a firm that specialized in medical malpractice cases, Nonie spent the majority of her time pouring over medical records, searching for indications of malpractice. Sadly, her previous brief stint in a medical library did not endow her with the medical knowledge sufficient to make this an easy task.

In 1985, Nonie and her husband, Steve, relocated to Bloomington, where



Steve took a faculty position in IU's English department and Nonie began as serials supervisor in the law library. Two years later, she moved into the position of assistant librarian for acquisitions and serials control. In a few short years, she was promoted to head of technical services; she was named assistant director for technical services in 2012.

Nonie has seen the law library through several substantial technological advancements. In 1990, Nonie led her department through implementation of the law library's first online library system, NOTIS. This was a massive endeavor for the entire university library system, and Nonie served as representative of the law library in several working groups during this transition to ensure our specific needs were met. She worked with Linda Fariss to organize and supervise a team of student workers as they barcoded the entire law library collection. With this experience under her belt, Nonie went through this entire process again, when the libraries switched from NOTIS to SIRSI in 2000.

Those who work closely with Nonie admire her amazing ability to tackle large projects. In addition to the two online library system migrations, when the IU libraries' auxiliary library facility opened, Nonie became the law library's project manager and liaison to this facility. Over the years, she oversaw the transfer of over 100,000 volumes to remote storage.

Nonie has had a significant hand in preserving the history of the law school. During her tenure, she organized the law

library's archival collection and developed it into a regular responsibility for her department. She oversaw the processing of several large archival projects, including the personal papers of a number of distinguished faculty, alumni, and judges, as well as six decades' worth of law school deans' files. When Linda, as director, had the idea to establish a digital repository in the law library in 2011, Nonie served as project manager for the implementation, and since then has personally loaded more than 3,500 faculty publications that have been downloaded over 1.3 million times to date. She also spearheaded the reorganization of our faculty bibliography, where she maintains lists of all types of publications for each member of the law school faculty, from books and book chapters to articles and op-eds to amicus briefs and advisory reports.

Outside of her job responsibilities, Nonie steadfastly dedicated herself in service to the university and the profession, with a particular focus on faculty governance. She was elected to the Bloomington Library Faculty Council five times, serving as president from 2004 to 2005. She served three terms on the libraries' promotion and tenure committee, serving as chair from 2016 to 2017. She was appointed to an ad hoc task force charged with rewriting the libraries' promotion and tenure processes and procedures in 2011, and served as the principal author of the committee's revised manual in 2017. Outside of the libraries, she has conducted significant work with Bloomington Faculty Council committees and was elected to serve on the Bloomington Faculty Council from 2013 to 2015.

In retirement, Nonie plans to renew her personal genealogy research. She looks forward to spending more quality time with family and friends and the freedom to plan spur-of-the-moment trips. The law library will miss her, but we wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement.

Ashley Ahlbrand