



SIMMONS GSLIS

\$1M Gift Honors Longtime Simmons GSLIS Professor

By Leah R. Eggers

“In order to be really good as a librarian, everything counts towards your work, every play you see, every concert you hear, every trip you take, everything you read, everything you know. I don’t know of another occupation like that. The more you know, the better you’re going to be.”

– Dr. Allen Smith, former GSLIS professor

The family of former Graduate School of Library and Information Science Professor Allen Smith has made a \$1 million gift from his estate to pay tribute to Dr. Smith’s 30-year Simmons career. This generous gift has endowed two funds: one to establish a visiting scholars program, and a second to enhance a scholarship created at GSLIS in the late professor’s honor after he passed away on August 2, 2008.

The **Allen Smith Visiting Scholars Fund** was established with a \$600,000 gift. In recognition of Dr. Smith’s international teaching, scholarship, and outreach, GSLIS will invite to campus scholars from the United States and abroad who have expertise in oral history, reference, or humanities. During his career, Dr. Smith spent time in England and Wales. His expansive approach to teaching and scholarship benefited GSLIS students for three decades.

The **Allen Smith Scholarship for GSLIS** was initiated by the late professor’s family, friends, and colleagues. The \$400,000 gift from Dr. Smith’s estate made it possible to endow the scholarship, which will provide annual support for selected GSLIS students in good academic standing who have demonstrated financial need and an interest in oral history, reference, or humanities.

At Simmons, Dr. Smith was legendary for his expertise in oral history and humanities. His peers also considered him a master teacher in reference. GSLIS students and alumnae/i say they will remember his warm devotion to his work and his insistence on high standards of librarianship. GSLIS Professor Candy Schwartz describes Dr. Smith as “a mentor to new faculty, a trusted colleague, and a good and true friend.”

From all accounts, Dr. Smith led a fulfilling life. He was universally known in the dulcimer world as a pioneer field researcher in the history of the Appalachian dulcimer. He was a blacksmith and served as president of the American Farrier’s Association. Dr. Smith also had an affinity for new technologies, and pursued numerous other interests as a folklorist, gardener, and avid sailor.

“The loss of Allen will be felt by GSLIS for a long time,” said Dean Cloonan. “He was a superlative teacher, a valued colleague, and a fascinating conversationalist. In his mastery of so many things – sailing, horseshoeing, wood turning, the dulcimer – he was a Renaissance man. We are pleased that his legacy at GSLIS will be recognized in perpetuity.”

Dean Cloonan says this leadership gift is significant for GSLIS, and the College as a whole, enriching the exceptional education available at Simmons.