

Ann Jennalie Cook (1934-2017)



As Executive Secretary of the Shakespeare Association of America from 1975 to 1987, Ann Jennalie Cook created the program of seminars that has distinguished SAA conferences ever since. She was also one of the founders of the International Shakespeare Association, serving on and for some years chairing its Executive Committee. She organized the second World Shakespeare Congress in Washington, D.C. in 1976. Ann imprinted both organizations with her vivid personality, strong will, and high senses of style and drama. Her own personal memoir is posted on the SAA website at [the attached link](#).

At the University of Oklahoma, Ann was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as an undergraduate and also earned an M.A. degree. She was awarded a Danforth Graduate Fellowship to continue study at Vanderbilt University. She received the Ph.D. in 1972, joined the Vanderbilt faculty

in 1977, and was the first woman to earn tenure through the ranks there, in 1982. She was promoted to full professor in 1990 and served for some time as director of undergraduate studies and the English honors program. She continued to teach in retirement in Vanderbilt's Lifelong Learning Institute and at the Sewanee School of Letters.

Ann's first, highly influential book was *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642*, published by Princeton University Press in 1981. Princeton also published *Making a Match: Courtship in Shakespeare and his Society* in 1991. She served for some years as Associate Editor of the annual journal *Shakespeare Studies*.

In 1996 Ann was made a Life Trustee of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon and, in 2013, an honorary fellow. She was a founding member of Shakespeare's Birthplace America. She established the Ann Jennalie Cook Library Acquisition Fund for Shakespeare Studies at the Jean and Alexander Heard Library at Vanderbilt University. She was a founding board member of the Nashville Shakespeare Festival and for many years served as education officer of English-Speaking Union in Nashville.

With her third marriage, Ann was reunited with her childhood sweetheart, Gerry Calhoun, who was known to many SAA members as her frequent fellow traveler. After attending the Atlanta SAA meeting, Gerry went into hospice care for advanced Lewy body dementia. Ann joined him after suffering complications from surgery. They rested in adjoining beds, holding hands, and both died on the afternoon of 13 August 2017.