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Oral History Project
Medical Library Association
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I hereby give and grant to the ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM of the MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION as a donation for such scholarly and educational purposes as the Association shall determine the tape recordings, their contents and any transcripts made from these recordings of the interview(s) held on Nov. 9, 1998

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Nov. 9, 1998
Date of agreement

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BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT: FRED W. ROPER

Fred W. Roper received a Masters of Science in Library Science from the University of North Carolina in 1962 after receiving a A.B. in English from the same institution. He then completed a Biomedical Library Internship in Medical Librarianship at the University of California at Los Angeles under Louise Darling. The internship led to his employment as the Biomedical Machine Methods Librarian at the UCLA Biomedical Library from 1963-1965 and as a Research Associate at the UCLA Institute for Library Research in 1966. He subsequently was a visiting lecturer at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Library Sciences from 1962-1969 and Head of the Public Services Division at the Chicago State College Library in 1967-68. Fred received a Ph.D. in Library Science from Indiana University in 1971. By this time he had decided to become a library educator specializing in medical libraries. His dissertation shows this interest: A Comparative Analysis Of Programs In Medical Library Education In The United States, 1957-1971.

After receiving his Ph.D. in 1971, Fred returned to the faculty of the library school at the University of North Carolina, first as an assistant professor and later as Associate Professor and Associate Dean. In 1986 he was honored as the School’s Distinguished Alumnus. He became Dean and Professor of the College of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina in Columbia in 1986. He has initiated programs in distance education and comprehensive continuing education, successfully integrated computer technology into the curriculum, and worked with the community and university to establish the Internet-based Community Information Network.

Fred has been active in a variety of library organizations. In the Medical Library Association he has been involved in many committees in the area of professional development, chairing the Knowledge and Skills Task Force 1989-1992, responsible for issuing the Platform for Change, and the Ad Hoc Committee on Professional
Development 1982-84. He also chaired the Governance Task Force, 1995-1997, the Committee for the *MLA News*, 1974-76 and the Ad Hoc Committee exploring the relationship between the *Bulletin* and *MLA News*. He has been a member of many other committees. He served on the Board of Directors from 1987-1990 and was MLA President in 1994-1995. He was elected an MLA Fellow in 1997 and received the Association’s highest honor, The Marcia C. Noyes Award, in 1998. Fred is also active in ALA, serving on ALA Council and the Committee on Accreditation, the Committee to Revise ALA Standards, and acting as a liaison between ALA and MLA. He has been a member of SLA for many years and served on many committees and as Chair of the Biological Sciences Division, the SLA Research Committee and the 75th Anniversary Conference Program Committee. In addition he has been active in state and local library associations.

His most well-known publication, co-authored with Jo Anne Boorkman, may be his *Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences*, which is currently in its 3rd edition. He has authored many other articles and chapters especially in library education, learning, and leadership.

March 2000
Medical Library Association Interview with Fred W. Roper

McKenzie: This is a Medical Library Association Oral History interview with Dean Fred W. Roper on November 9, 1998. The Interviewer is Diane McKenzie. The interview is being held at Dean Roper's office at the College of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina.

M: Let start by talking about what influenced you to go into librarianship?

Fred Roper: I started early using the library. I went to the library a good bit, and I read quite a lot. Miss Ann Sample would let me read in areas of the library that normally the children didn’t go into. Then in high school, I worked in the library. The librarian there was Mrs. Cecil Kessler, better known to everyone as “Aunt Cecil.” She became a very close personal friend. Aunt Cecil was like a second mother to me; she was another important influence in my decision to go into librarianship. When I went to the University of North Carolina (UNC) as a student in 1956, I started working in the library during my second year as a page at circulation. The circulation staff and the reference librarians at Wilson Library at UNC had quite a lot to do with my ultimate decision to go into the Master’s of Science in Library Science program rather than a Master’s in Business Administration program. I had been wavering between the two programs.

M: So then you went to library school after your...

R: Immediately after my undergraduate days. I graduated in June, and the next week I started summer school.

R: Immediately. Right. At that point it was a forty-eight hour program, which it is today, but in between it was reduced to thirty six hours. So, I was in the old
program. It was basically a two year program, but it took me a little bit longer than that because I was working in the library. I held one of the original library assistantships which were created by the library system for students in the School of Library Science. We worked twenty hours a week. I spent most of my time in the Business Administration and Social Sciences Division, particularly in government documents. I worked very closely with Louise Hawkins who was the head of government documents at that point.

M: Who was the dean of the library school then?

R: I entered library school just as Lucile Henderson was retiring, so for the first summer session I was there, she was the dean. Carlyle Frarey was the acting dean for the remainder of that period. He was acting dean until 1964 when he left to go to Columbia University. Margaret Kalp was acting dean after that, followed by a computer scientist, Walter Sedelow. Sedelow was dean for about three years. The curriculum at that point would have to be characterized as pretty traditional. It was probably similar to the curricula at most of the library schools at that period; this was before the technology explosion. The word computer, so far as I remember, was not mentioned the entire time that I was in library school from 1960 to 1962. One of the highlights that I remember from library school was space flight. We all gathered in a room up on the fourth floor of the library to listen to a report of a very early space flight on the radio. There wasn’t a television set up there, so we couldn’t watch the lift off and all of that.

M: Were there certain courses or certain professors that particularly you remember or who influenced your career?
R: Yes. Bob Miller was my advisor. He taught basic reference and bibliography and history of the book. Bob really was responsible for my getting into teaching. After I completed the program in May of 1962 and had successfully defended my thesis and taken the oral exam, I was asked if I would teach that summer. Someone was needed to teach a section of reference and Bob recommended me for the job. That was my first teaching experience. I worked very closely with Bob on that. After that first experience I knew teaching was what I wanted to do, even though I was already committed to going to UCLA and participating in their internship program.

M: Earlier before the interview you mentioned Myrl Ebert's course.

R: Yes. Myrl was another important influence in my library school career. I had a couple of courses with her--the science lit course and the medical librarianship course. Myrl was a very, very enthusiastic individual who generated a lot of excitement and energy. That was when I really became interested in medical librarianship. She invited some of the leading lights in MLA to visit our class and gave us a chance to meet them. It was an exciting class, and one I enjoyed very much. Bob Miller and Myrl Ebert were probably the two most important influences on future directions I would take.

M: You then went to UCLA as an early member of the internship program?

R: That's right. I made that decision while I was in the Master's program at UNC. Myrl Ebert made it possible for us to meet Louise Darling, who was on a recruiting trip for interns. Mildred Jordan, who was a Past President of MLA and a librarian at Emory University, was there also recruiting for the internship program at Emory. At that point there were basically three internship programs: the National Library of
Medicine program that began in 1957, the UCLA Biomedical Library internship that began in 1961, and the Emory program that also began in 1961. I went down to Emory to visit and to take a look at the program there. It was a good program, but I really wanted to go to California to see what the west coast was all about. Louise was a very inspiring person, and I just felt that I wanted to work with her. That was the best, or one of the best, moves I ever made!

M: We've heard Louise Darling describe the internship program, but I'm very interested in hearing it described from your point of view--from the point of view of the intern himself.

R: Right. I took part in the internship in its second year. There were three of us in the program: Gloria Werner, Laura Osborn, and me. Gloria was from Washington, Laura was from Florida, and I was from North Carolina. Gloria Werner succeeded Louise as director of the Biomedical Library, and is now head of all of the libraries in the UCLA system. The three of us bonded very, very quickly; we sort of became the three musketeers. We did almost everything together during that year of the internship. The internship was basically divided up into four quarters. It covered reference, cataloging, and acquisitions and then, during the fourth quarter, you were given a choice. You could go back to an area that you felt most comfortable with or wanted more experience in. We were basically treated as staff members. Pat Walter was coordinator of the program. She was sort of like a den mother to the three of us. Pat was responsible for seeing that we made a smooth transition through each of the divisions within the library. She provided us with our orientation and took care of any difficulties that we had. The whole staff was very warm and nurturing, and they
were very committed to the internship program. I’m sure the internship took an
inordinately large amount of staff time. They had to show us what to do and then see
if we had done it right. They provided ongoing training within the different divisions
of the library. We had special projects that we were assigned to do. The one that I
found least pleasant was the exhibit. Louise was very big on exhibits; that was just
something that every set of interns had to do. Our exhibit was on the history of
pediatrics. It turned out to be a wonderful experience. After the internship was
over, people in medical libraries knew about the program and knew about the people
who had participated in the program. I think we were given some opportunities that
we would have not been given had we not been a part of the internship program. I
know I was certainly invited to apply for a number of positions based on the fact that
I had been a part of the UCLA internship program.

M: Did you go back and do your fourth quarter in the area of reference? Was there any
administration?

R: I went into reference, back into reference. My least favorite area was cataloging; the
cataloging staff and I agreed I was not cut out to be a cataloger. (laughs) We decided
that reference was my strong point. I became involved in the very beginning stage of
library automation during that year. Louise was, I think, kind of a visionary when it
came to seeing possibilities for and creating opportunities for setting up projects. My
experience with automation really started when I took a course with Bob Hayes in
library school at UCLA. This was prior to the time that Bob became dean of the
library school at UCLA. Bob had a joint appointment with the business school and
the library school; the automation class was offered through the business school. It
was an introduction to automation and very different from what we would find in a beginning course now. We looked at the different kinds of equipment that were available, the use of punched cards, and how systems were developed using punched cards. It was, of course, all very cumbersome, but at that time it was all that was available. It was a great advance over what had happened before.

M: Now that apparently led to your employment with the wonderful job title, "Biomedical Machine Methods Librarian"?

R: Biomedical Machine Methods Librarian. That's right. The Biomedical Library began computerization of the serials records. We wanted to have an automated kardex, as it were, and be able to check in and claim and do all of those different serials functions automatically. I worked with David Bishop and some other people in the library to design a serials control system. It was the basis for what ultimately became the serials system within the library, although it was so far removed from what they're doing now that you wouldn't know it.

M: After that I think you held a position at the Institute for Research, but then went back to school?

R: That's right. I was in the Biomedical Library for the first year as an intern and then worked about two and a half years as a staff member in the Biomedical Library. The last six months that I was there I worked with Bob Hayes in the Institute for Library Research. He was working on his first book on library automation and I did some work with him on that. By then I had already decided that I really did want to teach and I knew I needed to have a doctorate to do this. There had been some discussion about my getting the doctorate at UC Berkeley. UCLA did not have a doctorate at
that time, but I would have had the opportunity to do some of the course work at UCLA and complete the degree through Berkeley. I decided that really wasn’t what I wanted to do. Then, I had an opportunity to go back to Chapel Hill for about eighteen months while Ray Carpenter was on leave. I figured that would be a good opportunity to see if I really did want to be a full time faculty member, so I went back for eighteen months.

M: And, you were already very impressed with UNC at that point.

R: Oh well, you know, I’ve had this ongoing love affair with Chapel Hill ever since I was a little toddler. I was a UNC basketball fan growing up and I went there as an undergraduate. I also got the Master’s there. So, having the opportunity to go back and be a faculty member, even though it was a temporary assignment, was my idea of heaven. I’ve spent most of the last forty two years coming and going from Chapel Hill.

M: But you got your Ph.D. from Indiana.

R: Right.

M: Let’s talk a little bit about your Ph.D. program and dissertation.

R: Sure. I went to Chicago in 1967 and I entered the doctoral program at the University of Chicago. At the same time I was working full time as the Head of Public Services at the Chicago State College, now Chicago State University, Library on the south side of Chicago. I took three or four courses at the University of Chicago, but their primary emphasis was on library administration. I was interested in library education and I knew that Indiana University placed a lot of emphasis on that. At that time there were a number of Department of Health, Education and Welfare fellowships for
doctoral study for people wanting to go into library education, so I decided to make
the switch and I went to Indiana. It was a wonderful change; I had three wonderful
years at Indiana University! I worked with some really good people in the library
school, including Peter Hiatt, who has just recently retired from the University of
Washington; Ann Painter, who has done quite a lot in technical services; Haynes
McMullen, who subsequently was at University of North Carolina; and Mildred
Lowell, in library administration. The one person who had the biggest influence on
me was probably Margaret Rufsvold. She was the former director of the library
school and she taught the course for doctoral students on library education. Margaret
was also my dissertation advisor. She gave me some good advice that I've passed on
to other doctoral students that I've worked with. She said, "Find a topic that is
doable within a nine month period, complete your work, and go on." She pointed
out that the dissertation is not the crowning point of your career, but just the
beginning of it and advised don't get so tied up with the dissertation that you can't
get on with other things.

M: Good advice.

R: It was wonderful advice.

M: And your dissertation indicates you were already interested in Medical Library
Education: "A Comparative Analysis of Programs and Medical Library Education in
the United States, 1957-1971."

M: From Indiana you went from back to North Carolina?

R: I did. I did not expect to go back to Chapel Hill. In fact, I was talking with Irving
Lieberman at the University of Washington about going to teach there. They wanted
someone to organize a program in medical librarianship there. I’d also talked with Sister Loretta McCusker, at Rosary College in Chicago, about the possibility of going there. But, about the time that I was making these decisions, Bob Miller decided to stop teaching at UNC Chapel Hill. In his resignation letter he recommended that I be approached about his position. I went for an interview and was successful in getting the job. Ray Carpenter was the acting dean at the time; he appointed me just prior to the time that Ed Holley came.

M: Well, if you had gone to University of Washington you would have been my professor.

R: That’s right; you were there in the early 70’s.

M: Yes. Now, was there any difference in library education when you came back in the 70’s?

R: Yes.

M: Talk a little about that and some of the changes that were going on while you were teaching as well.

R: By the time I came back to Chapel Hill in 1971 the program had been changed from a forty-eight semester hour program to a thirty-six hour program. The master’s thesis was no longer required; it was a master’s paper— a subtle difference, but a difference none the less. Also, there had been a fairly sweeping overhaul of the curriculum. In the old program we had to complete a number of prerequisites prior to taking the official graduate courses. That was all changed quite a lot; the curriculum was more streamlined. It was at that point, I think, that Chapel Hill was beginning to do a good bit with technology. In 1966-67, when I was a visiting faculty member while Ray
Carpenter was on leave, I offered the first course in automation in the library school. It was an introduction to punched cards and how to use the sorter and key punch equipment to manipulate the punched cards. It was really sophisticated at the time (laughs), but not anything compared to this point in time. Then, of course, computerized databases began to become available in the early 70’s, including MEDLINE. It was the beginning of a period of great change, with great emphasis on technology. Six months after I arrived at Chapel Hill, Ed Holley became Dean. He was responsible for many, many changes and for bringing the library school into the preeminent position that it holds now.

M: Did you feel that you had some special influence while you were at UNC either with regard to students, the types of courses that you taught, or where you wanted the library school to go? I know that you probably remember the names of all of your students.

R: Well, I had some really some very good opportunities while I was there. Fairly early in my career there I was involved in the development of the core course, the block. This was a twelve hour required course that everyone took in their first semester. It provided an integrated approach to reference, technical services, administration, history, and so on. Interestingly enough, the idea for this course had come from a fledgling library school at the University of South Carolina. When the University of South Carolina library school was organized in 1970, they had two years to put together the curriculum and to begin to offer courses. The approach that they took was to develop this integrated core course, and it was noticed by many other schools, including Drexel and UNC. I was on the committee that developed the University of
North Carolina’s core course; that was a great experience! I was also on the coordinating committee that administered the course and kept it going. It took a lot of manipulation to successfully offer a twelve-semester-hour course that everyone was required to take. Another important role for me, from my standpoint, was serving on the committee that developed the doctoral program at the University of North Carolina. Lester Asheim had been brought to the library school to develop that program, and he chaired the committee. Once the program was developed, I became Assistant Dean and was responsible for its administration. So, I worked very closely with all of the doctoral students.

(tape off)

M: This is tape 2 of the Medical Library Association Oral History interview with Dean Fred W. Roper, November 9, 1998, at the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

M: We were just talking about your experiences teaching at the University of North Carolina and you mentioned that you were one of the committee members working with the doctoral program.

R: Right. As the Assistant Dean of the school, I was responsible for the administration of the program and I did a lot of the student advising. One of the first students in the program was a medical librarian named Jo Ann Bell. She was, at that point, Director [of the Medical Library] at East Carolina. Jo Ann was the first person to finish the doctoral program at UNC, and I was chair of her dissertation committee. Her dissertation was in the area of continuing education. I enjoyed very much working with Jo Ann. I had known her for a number of years before that, within MLA. She and I worked on a number of committees together.
M: And you continue to work on committees together.

R: That's right.

M: We'll come back to that discussion since that's a very important part of your career, but let's finish up with your academic career. In 1986 you were elected Distinguished Alumnus at North Carolina, and you also accepted a position at the University of South Carolina.

R: That's right. I had become Assistant Dean at North Carolina in 1977. When Ed Holley approached me about being Assistant Dean, I told him I would do it if it would provide an opportunity for me to learn about "deaning." I was not interested in just working on special projects. He told me I would learn about "deaning," and he was right. I had a really wonderful working relationship with Ed. We were very comfortable working together, and he gave me a lot of responsibility. I basically was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the School, and Ed was responsible for the interpretation of the School to the world at large--working with University administration and so on. We kept each other very closely informed of what we were doing, and it was a grand partnership. It was a wonderful learning experience for me! I've had a number of wonderful mentors in my time, but Louise Darling and Ed Holley would have to be the major ones. When Ed stepped down as Dean at UNC Chapel Hill, I was one of the candidates for his position. I was not a successful candidate but, as it turned out, the deanship at South Carolina opened up. We'd had a lot of interaction with the people at the University of South Carolina since the library school was formed, so I knew a lot of people and a good bit about the school. I'd always said that this [South Carolina] was one place that I would be interested in
going, so I decided to apply for the deanship. I was successful in getting the job and,
I have to say, it has been one of the best moves that I have ever made. The philosophy and orientation of this school and the opportunities that we’ve had have been just great; it’s been a wonderful (almost) thirteen years!

M: Can you talk a little bit about some of the things that have happened since you’ve been here in South Carolina?

R: Sure.

M: I know you’ve got many programs. I particularly want to hear about distance learning, which goes way back in time.

R: Yes. Distance learning has been a big part of what I’ve worked on since I’ve been here. This is a College that has had a long tradition of distance learning from the period when a faculty member went to an off-campus location, offered a course, and then drove back to Columbia. Then, in 1982, the decision was made to begin televising classes within the state of South Carolina. The University of South Carolina had been heavily involved in televised delivery of classes since the late 60’s. At that time they approached South Carolina Educational TV about using the time after the public schools were closed, basically from four o’clock on which was “dead time,” for their own educational program. And so, since the 60’s, that [televised distance learning] has been done within the state. Courses have been televised to other campuses of the University, to technical schools, and to other locations as well. When I came for my interview in the fall of 1985, I was interviewed by Susan Bridwell, Director of Distance Education and Instructional Support. I wasn’t really very clear at that point about what the College’s role was
with televised delivery of classes. I didn’t know very much about it, and wasn’t quite sure why Susan was interviewing me. (laughs) After we’d talked for about a half an hour, as she is very fond of reminding me, she asked, “How do you feel about teaching on TV?” She says my answer was, “I don’t really think that I want to do that.” (laughs) Well, what did I know? It became very clear that this was an important part of our program, part of our service mission to the state of South Carolina, and something that needed to be expanded. Very soon after I came here the ALA Committee on Accreditation reviewed our program and we got excellent reviews. One recommendation they made was that we develop a distance education policy. So, we put that into place and basically all of the faculty agreed to participate in distance education. I was then able to convince the administration that our teaching load needed to be changed from three and two classes to two and two classes because faculty would be teaching larger numbers of students some semesters because of the TV classes. As we began to offer more and more of our courses on TV, we were approached by members of the professional community in Georgia and West Virginia about bringing our master’s program to those two states. We debated for a long time before we finally agreed that we were ready to do this. We decided that we had gained enough experience in South Carolina to be able to offer classes out of state. So in the fall of 1992, having gone through all the necessary approvals both in South Carolina and also in West Virginia and Georgia, we began to offer courses to a cohort of approximately forty-six students in Georgia and about eighty-five students in West Virginia. The plan was that students from a particular state would be admitted as a cohort at the beginning of the program, they would go
through the program as a cohort, and they would complete the studies in three to
three-and-a-half years. During that period officials from Maine expressed an interest
in having a program there. They heard about what we were doing in West Virginia
and Georgia, came down and spent some time with us, and invited us to make a
proposal for offering the [distance learning] program in Maine. The proposal was
ultimately accepted and, in the fall of 1994, we expanded the program to include the
state of Maine. We had 138 students in Maine. The West Virginia and Georgia
cohorts completed the program in 1995, and the Maine cohort finished in 1997. In
the spring of 1998 we began West Virginia 2, a new cohort comprised of 64
students. In the fall of 1999 we will offer our six year degree or our specialist degree
to the state of Georgia. We’re just beginning to recruit and admit students to that
program.

M: You mentioned that you are on-site in an 80-20 ratio?

R: Basically, about three-quarters of our class delivery is done through television. In the
case of out-of-state groups, this is done through satellite delivery. The rest is done
through intensive on-site weekends. In the case of out-of-state programs, a faculty
member will go to a central location in the state and the students will come to that
location for a couple of days. This provides a lot of interaction with the faculty
member and gives us an opportunity to send student services people to work with
individual students as needed. We usually send a faculty member who’s going to
teach the next semester’s course so that that person can begin to bond with the
students. We try to do whatever it takes to meet the needs of a given cohort; it varies
from state to state. That’s basically the plan that we use for most of our courses.
This semester we’ve experienced some technical problems with the reception of one of the courses. Because of this, the course is being web-cast so that students can go to the Internet and review class material or see it for the first time if they had poor reception. We’ve been very pleased with that, and the students have received it quite well.

M: Will you probably continue with that?

R: Yes. I feel sure we will.

M: Other areas of importance while you’ve been Dean here have to do with continuing education and, again, introducing computer technology into your curriculum.

R: Yes. The previous dean had begun the process of introducing technology when I came here. He had gotten a computer for every faculty member. We also had a few computers in the lab. Since I’ve been here we’ve developed a computer classroom and we’ve revised and revamped the labs, including the functions of the labs. Computers are replaced for the faculty as new developments and new technology evolve. I put into place a computer resources coordinator; we didn’t have one prior to this time. In fact, we’ve got two full time people now who coordinate computer resources for the College. We’ve added some faculty whose major expertise is in the area of technology. So, we’ve done quite a lot with technology. We made the decision quite a while ago that we were not going to have two different degrees--information science and library science--but we were going to have a combined library and information science degree. With this degree students, after completing the required courses, can put together classes needed to meet their own particular needs.
M: When did the name of the College change?

R: College of Library and Information Science is the third name that the College has had. In 1982-83 the faculty went through the process of changing the name of the College to that, and that was the name of the College when I came. Prior to that time it was the College of Librarianship.

M: First you might mention some things you have done with continuing education at South Carolina.

R: Well, we had done a little in the way of continuing education, but we didn’t have any coordinated plan. Now we have a continuing education catalog called *Panning for Gold*. I have a half-time CE coordinator who develops the courses, finds the instructors, and schedules courses to be taught. We do them here, and we do them away from here - our workshops-to-go program. We’re looking now at how we can utilize TV with our CE courses.

M: Talking about continuing education floats us into your MLA activities, so let’s move on and talk about your MLA career.

R: Right.

M: Ray Palmer describes you as “Mr. Professional Development.” (laughs) Although amusing, it’s probably a fitting title.

(end of side 1)

M: I know you’ve been very involved in professional development over the years. Can we look at some changes?

R: Can we go back to the 60’s?

M: We can sure go back to the 60’s. (laughs)
R: Well, the MLA CE program as we know it today was really developed in the late 50's. Hal Bloomquist, Irwin Pizer, Betty Ann Withrow, and some other people were responsible for getting that program underway. The roster of courses that included technology, in particular, began in the early 60's. I became a member of MLA in 1962-63. In 1964, at the San Francisco annual meeting, I taught a CE course in punched card methods. That was the first course I ever taught, and it was one of the first of the technology CE courses to be offered. We had three technology courses—one was an introduction to the punched card methods, one was on systems development and the use of technology, such as it was, and one was on the administrative aspects of automation in libraries. The administrative course originally was taught by Estelle Brodman and Vern Pings, who was at Wayne State, and Brad Rogers. After they had taught the course for a while, I was approached about teaching it. They said that I would be less intimidating than any one of them (laughs) in offering the course. So I taught that course a couple of times as well. That was really how I got involved in the MLA CE program. I started as an instructor in 1964, and I taught at every annual meeting after that until about 1971 when I became a member of the CE Committee. Bernice Hetzner was the President of MLA at that point; she appointed me to the CE Committee. That was the first committee appointment that I had within MLA. You were asking about the 70's. The 70's were a really critical time for the MLA CE program because up until the time that Julie Virgo was hired as Director of Education for the Medical Library Association, the CE Committee was responsible for everything related to the CE program. MLA members had to house their syllabi at their own locations. The central
office was brand new, and it was not possible to provide the kinds of services that we get today. We [the CE Committee] had to plan what the courses would be, find people to prepare the syllabi and get them printed, and arrange for them to be sent to wherever the course was going to be offered. We were responsible for all of the nitty-gritty details like putting the syllabi in the rooms, making sure the blackboards were there, and arranging for any kind of resource that was needed to teach the course. In the mid-70's, Julie Virgo was hired as the Director of Education. I was Chair of the CE Committee at that time. That was a period of great transition. The CE Committee began to give up a number of the activities it had always done as these activities were taken over by a bigger and stronger central office.

M: In following through with your interest in continuing education and professional development, maybe you can talk a bit about how things evolved; for example, the task force that came out the Platform for Change.

R: We didn't really have a professional development program within MLA. We had a certification program which had been in place since 1948, and we had a continuing education program that was put into place after the certification program. While there were some points at which the two programs converged, it was not a coordinated effort. In the early 80's, Nancy Lorenzi was President of MLA. She appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Professional Development, and I chaired that committee. The committee included Jo Ann Bell, Judy Messerle, Gary Byrd, and couple of other people as well. At that point, Kent Mayfield was Director of Education for the Medical Library Association. The Ad Hoc Committee on Professional Development reviewed what we were doing within MLA, and what we weren't doing. We came
up with a series of recommendations which, in effect, created a framework for professional development within the Association and which attempted to coordinate some of the various activities. We recommended that there be a more comprehensive recognition program and that the certification program be expanded beyond the entry level that presently was emphasized. We also recommended that there be a code of ethics for the Medical Library Association. There were eight or ten different recommendations that went to the Board of Directors. While the recommendations were well received, it has taken a period of twelve or thirteen years for different pieces recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee to be put into place. It’s taken patience; we’ve taken steps backward and then moved ahead. We have the strategic plan now, and that has had a great bearing on the whole area of professional development activity.

M: You mentioned certification.. I know that you’ve been very involved with this.

R: Right.

M: Certification is a big and ongoing controversy within the profession, so I’d like to talk about that a little bit.

R: Good.

M: In your article you mentioned it went back as far as 1948, and even then it was controversial.

R: Yes. Certification passed, I think, by one vote in 1948. I think that that illustrates the way people have viewed it over the past fifty years. We’ve gone through several different approaches to certification. We started out by having courses in health sciences librarianship reviewed by the Medical Library Association. They were either
approved or not approved. Then, if you got a Master’s in Library and Information Sciences and had taken one of the approved courses, you could get certified at level one. The next step was to certify the individual, rather than accrediting the course.

In the 70’s the program was changed again. An exam was developed and people who wished to be certified had successfully to pass the three parts of the exam covering library administration, technical services, and reference. In the mid-80’s, as a result of the Ad Hoc Committee on Professional Development’s recommendation to develop a more comprehensive recognition program, a task force was appointed to look at the whole question of certification and recognition. This task force was chaired by Jo Anne Boorkman. Out of that, basically, came a recommendation that led to the development of the Academy of Health Information Professionals. I’ve been involved in all aspects of certification since 1980 when I was appointed to the Certification Examination Review Committee. I was continuously involved in various certification activities for roughly twelve to fourteen years. I got to see first hand changes that took place in the program, and I was involved in the actual development of the Academy of Health Information Professionals.

M: Do you think this will continue, or will there be more changes?

R: Oh, I think there will be more changes. I think the Academy will continue, but I think it will be refined. I think it’ll continue to be a subject of discussion and debate, and I believe that’s healthy.

(End of side 2)

M: This is tape 3 of the Medical Library Association Oral History interview with Dean Fred W. Roper on November 9, 1998, at the University of South Carolina. We were
right in the middle of talking about your experiences with certification, and I know you have more to say on that.

R: Yes. I really do. As I said, I began working with the MLA certification program in 1980 when I was appointed to serve on the Certification Examination Review Committee. That was the committee that actually put together the examination and was responsible for updating it. As I recall, it was about a four year assignment. I served on the committee for three years, and then I chaired the committee. Then came my work with the task force that recommended the formation of a program that led to the establishment of the Academy of Health Information Professionals (AHIP). Following that, a panel with an official editor was formed [to oversee the certification exam]. At that time, I was named editor. I continued with that until I was elected to the Board of Directors. At that time Rick Forsman took over as editor of the examination. In the meantime, work was proceeding in establishing the Academy of Health Information Professionals. That was pretty much achieved under the leadership of Kathy Hoffman who chaired the Credentialing Committee. That committee put together a plan for a comprehensive program that would recognize the whole career of an individual. It provided for recognition at the beginning of the career, provided opportunities for career development, and allowed ongoing recognition. Prior to that time certification emphasized only the entry level librarian who was required to pass an exam to get certified. There was very little emphasis on career development. The plan that was put forth was discussed at the annual meeting of the Medical Library Association in New Orleans in 1988. In retrospect, I would say that we didn’t do our homework in preparing the membership for this. I learned
some valuable lessons about distributing things well in advance and giving people a lot of opportunity for discussion and input. The upshot was that after some, let’s say, spirited discussion at the annual meeting, the decision was made to gather more input and then mail a ballot to the membership in the fall. We made some changes based on the input we got at the meeting, and the mailed ballot was successful. But I think this was an example of trying—enthusiastically trying—to get the certification program approved before people were really ready for it. They hadn’t had an opportunity to buy into it. So, that was a valuable lesson to me. When it came time to work on *Platform for Change*, I planned things a little differently. At any rate, the Academy of Health Information Professionals was approved and implemented, and it has now been in place for about ten years. There has already been a five year review of the program, and it has been refined. My hope is that it [the Academy] will continue and that requirements for the different levels of the program will be tightened up. We wanted a more rigorous point system in the beginning, but it was quite clear the membership at that time did not support that. At the same time we were developing the certification program, the American Library Association and the Committee on Accreditation began review of the American Library Association standards for accreditation of master’s programs. For the first time, they involved other associations in the review and planning process. I was asked to represent MLA when the standards were being reviewed, and again when they were revised. The previous standards had been implemented in 1972, before there was much in the way of technology and before information science was an important part of library education. It was basically a document that dealt with the “L-word” [library]. In
Putting together the 1992 standards, we tried to integrate the "I-word" [information]. We also tried to make the standards less proscriptive and based more on individual school’s mission, goals, and objectives. We also wanted to review whether or not the school was doing what it stated it was going to do. Recently there has been some concern within ALA that some schools have now dropped "library" from their title, e.g. the School of Information Studies. There is an element within ALA questioning the appropriateness of the American Library Association accrediting a program that doesn’t have the word “library” in the name of the school. To me, it seems like a step backwards; the content of the program is accredited, not the name of the program.

At any rate, there is going to be a national summit on professional education next April [1999], and a steering committee has been formed. Once again, ALA has asked other associations to participate and, again, I have been asked by MLA to represent them. I’m pleased to be involved again in a national accreditation activity because it affects what we’re doing here at South Carolina and what the library school at North Carolina is doing. So, professional certification and program accreditation have been a parallel theme in my work within MLA. As a member of the American Library Association I served a four-year term on their Committee on Accreditation following implementation of the 1992 standards. This was also a very useful and very interesting activity. I did not represent MLA at that point, but I certainly had MLA’s interest at heart.

M: It’s interesting that our library associations have not changed their titles as yet.

R: Exactly. Exactly.

M: Any more comments on accreditation?
R: I don’t think so. It’s something that has been a very important activity for me as it was intertwined with MLA, with library education, and also with the Special Libraries Association, the Association of Library and Information Science, and other organizations that I’m involved in. It has been another recurring theme throughout my career.

M: Did you want to talk more about the Knowledge and Skills Task Force?

R: Yes. That was really the next step in my professional development activities. I was elected to the Board of Directors of MLA in the late 1980s and served a three year term. While I was on the board Eloise Foster was President. She appointed a task force to put together an educational policy statement for the Medical Library Association. This was in response to a request from the American Library Association that all associations provide input into the accreditation process. They wanted each association to have an educational policy statement that library and information science programs could refer to [when counseling] people who wished to specialize in health sciences librarianship or special librarianship. Eloise asked me if I would chair the Knowledge and Skills Task Force, and I said yes. We talked about the makeup of the committee, and I suggested she appoint some of the movers and shakers within the Association. She put together an outstanding committee which included Rachel Anderson, Phyllis Mirsky, Judith Messerle, Rick Forsman, Carolyn Lipscomb, Ellen Westling, and Kent Mayfield, who was the Director of Education at MLA at the time. Our charge was more narrow than we chose to interpret it. We made a conscious decision that we would do what they told us to do, but we were going to do more. We wanted to come up with a document that would
serve not only as a guide for library schools for people entering the profession but
would, in keeping with the Academy and its recognition of the entire career
development of an individual, look at all aspects of professional development within
the Association. We decided to start with an inventory of knowledge and skills. We
put together a questionnaire and sent it to a sample of the membership. You may
have gotten one of them.

M: It was a big questionnaire.

R: Yes, it was a big questionnaire. It was a cumbersome questionnaire and it was not
always the easiest of documents to deal with, but we got a pretty good rate of return.
We utilized the University of Illinois Library Research Lab to analyze the data. The
questionnaire looked at knowledge and skills in a number of different ways. We
wanted to know: What did people feel were the most important knowledge and skills
for today? For the future? What did people feel were their strongest skills? Their
weakest? Where did they think that knowledge and skills should be gained? After
analyzing the data we held a series of "validating" sessions around the country. We
had one in Chicago, one in Washington, a couple in California, and one in Arizona.
We brought people together to take a look at our results and to advise us on our
interpretation of these results. We were really disturbed that the results didn’t show a
lot of change or see the need for change. They did not reflect a whole lot of vision or
give any thought to the future. So, in that context, we put together Platform for
Change. We held hearings at MLA and at chapter meetings to discuss this document.
This was done a year in advance of presenting the document to the Board of
Directors. The Platform for Change was accepted by the Board in 1991, and it
became the official educational policy statement of the Medical Library Association. Following up on that, we recommended that the National Library of Medicine hold an education summit for health sciences librarianship. This took place in the mid-90's. A number of grants were made available, and there were seven successful applications. The University of North Carolina was one. There was a joint application from the Medical Library Association and the University of South Carolina; Missouri, Illinois, Pittsburgh, Tennessee, and Vanderbilt also received grants. As part of that [the education summit], we re-surveyed knowledge and skills. The final analysis of that will be available soon and we'll see what kinds of changes have taken place since the original survey went out. We will see what people think is important five years later. I expect that we'll see some changes.

M: Should we move on to your other area of emphasis in MLA, working with publications?

R: Sure.

M: Okay. I know that you were involved in some early publication activity. ...

R: Yes, it seems as if I devoted hunks of time to particular activities. In the 60's and 70's, early 70's, it was continuing education. Then, for about five or six years, it was publications. Following that it was certification, and then I went into more of the governance activities. I was on the first publication panel that was appointed in 1976. It was intended this panel would pull together and plan both monographic and serial publications within the Association, but the emphasis was on monographic publications. The intention was to develop a monograph program. People who were on the panel were expected to try to recognize areas that needed work and to solicit
proposals from individuals. Once a proposal came in, they were expected to serve as a volunteer editor for the proposal. This was, of course, prior to the time that we had book editors. We had had a small publication program up to this point; a few monographs had been published, but nothing real extensive. The publication panel served for a number of years before it was eventually replaced by a managing editor of books. At that point, the publications panel did less of the actual editorial work, and became more involved in planning and policy. I was also involved with the editorial committee for the *MLA News*. I chaired that committee for a couple of years. This was during the period that the *MLA News* had just begun publication. Eventually, it was recognized that there was a need for some kind of coordination and clarification between the role of the *MLA News* and that of the *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*. Sometime in the 70's I chaired an ad hoc committee that reviewed and clarified the roles of both.

**M:** You were on the Board of MLA for three years? Is that right?

**R:** Yes.

**M:** When you were on the Board, what were some of the issues that you dealt with?

**R:** I think the biggest issue at that time was the implementation of the strategic plan. The strategic plan had been approved just prior to the time that I went on the Board. Putting processes in place and making sure that the organizational structure that had been established was working occupied much of the Board’s time during that three year period. During the time that I was on the Board of Directors I also served as Board liaison to both the Continuing Education and the Credentialing Committees, so my work with those two committees continued as well.
M: And then, shortly after that, you were elected MLA President?

R: Yes. I had a period of about three years between being a member of the Board and running for president. I had always said that I had no further aspirations in MLA. I had no interest in running for president whatsoever; I was most emphatic about this. The thing that changed my mind was the Platform for Change, which was approved by the Board in 1991. At the 1992 annual meeting Jo Anne Boorkman, who was a member of the Nominating Committee, took me to lunch one day. She said, “I know you’ve always said that you wouldn’t run for President, but will you think about it?” I surprised her and myself by saying, “Yes, I will think about it.” I saw this as an opportunity for institutionalizing the Platform for Change, and I felt so very strongly about that that I was willing to be a candidate.

M: So, that was your main goal when you became President?

R: Yes, it was. But, the first thing that I did was something related to hospital libraries. That was during the period of so much downsizing in hospital libraries, so I appointed a task force, chaired by Jacque Doyle, to put together a survivor’s kit for hospital librarians. This was intended to try to help hospital librarians to do the things they needed to do in order to integrate themselves into their organization and make their services invaluable. The task force put this together in a relatively short period of time. That was a high priority of mine. I think in the list of priorities for that year, that was actually the first item that I listed followed by the Platform for Change. Technology and governance issues were also on my priority list. But, the Platform for Change certainly was the reason that I decided that I would run for President.
M: I had asked you before, when we weren’t on camera, about what role the President of MLA can really play in pushing forward his/her agenda, and how he/she relates with the Board. That leads into your work on the Governance Committee.

R: Yes, it does. June Fulton was President the year before I was. June and I made a perfect team; we worked together very, very well. We had similar goals and aspirations for the Association and she had kept me, as President-Elect, very heavily involved in what she was doing. Part of my agenda was to try to follow through on things that June had put in place but, the truth of the matter is, a person is President for only one year. During the year that you’re President-Elect you are observing very carefully to see what the President is doing, and you’re thinking about things that you want to do. But that’s the President’s year. You have to be ready at the beginning of the year with whatever it is that you want to do, or you’re not going to get a whole lot done. The year that you’re President goes by pretty quickly. You begin to put things into place while, at the same time, you’re continuing or bringing to closure activities that have been put in place by previous presidents. Then, as Past President, your major responsibility is chairing the Nominating Committee and serving as the Board liaison to the various honors and awards committees.

(end of side 3)

M: This is tape 4 of the Medical Library Association oral history interview with Dean Fred W. Roper on November 9, 1998, at the University of South Carolina.

M: We were just getting to talk about your role in studying governance at MLA.

R: Right. A Governance Task Force, made up of Board members, was appointed somewhere around 1992 or 93. I’m a little off on the time, but it was an ongoing
Board activity. As Past President, it was another one of my duties to serve as chair of the Governance Task Force. When I completed the term as Past President, I was asked to continue for another year as chair of the Governance Task Force because we were fairly close to making some recommendations and having a report ready for the Association. I agreed to do that and, in 1997 I think it was, we presented a report to the Board. We looked at board organization, board structure, elections, the councils and a variety of other aspects of governance within the Association. We determined that the size of the Board was adequate and recommended that that not be changed. We recommended that the Treasurer become a member of the Executive Committee, which makes a lot of sense. There were some recommendations that came from the councils themselves; we were sort of a coordinating group for that. So, those are being dealt with as well. Probably the most controversial recommendation was to adopt a single slate election for President. A number of us, particularly those of us who had served on the Nominating Committee, felt very strongly about that. We felt we were too small of an organization to use up good talent and to discourage people who had been defeated for President from running again. We’ve had some wonderful talent that didn’t make it as President who probably won’t run again. We felt a single slate was workable because the Nominating Committee is elected by the membership and they are provided with good guidelines from the Board of Directors. It was not a matter of an “old boys” or “old girls” network, but a group elected by the membership who would be recommending the slate. We also recommended that we continue to elect the Board of Directors.

M: This has come full circle.
R: It has come full circle; when I joined MLA there was a single slate that was put forth for President.

M: Well, you've been active in other groups beside MLA, and we talked about ALA.

But I know that you have also been active in SLA, the Special Libraries Association, as well and in Information Science...

R: ALISE, The Association for Library and Information Science Education.

M: Can you talk a little bit about your experiences in other organizations, especially with SLA?

R: Yes. I've been a member of SLA since the early 70's. I started out as a committee member in the North Carolina Chapter and, eventually, I became President of that chapter. I was president of the North Carolina Chapter when SLA celebrated its tenth anniversary. Following that, I was asked to run for the SLA Board. I served a term in the late 70's, and I also served as Chair of the Chapter Cabinet. I was an unsuccessful candidate for President of SLA in 1980, and I chaired the Seventy-fifth Anniversary Conference Committee in 1984. My honorable opponent and I were sitting together at the mid-winter meeting of SLA when someone commented that the Chair of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary Conference Committee would be appointed by whoever won that election. They asked us if we had given any thought about it (laughs), so we looked at each other and said whoever wins will appoint the other one. Well, I think that I got the short end of the stick on that one. (laughs) No, actually it was a wonderful experience and I enjoyed it very much. I've chaired and been on other committees within SLA. I've been active in what was formerly the Biological Sciences Division and is now the Biomedical and Life Sciences Division.
I served as chair of that [division] after I was President of MLA. This was during the time that SLA was actively looking towards establishing a health sciences division within SLA. A number of us in the Biomedical and Life Sciences Division opposed that, and we successfully fought the establishment of that division. It was defeated by one vote in the division cabinet. So, that was an interesting experience as well.

M: How can we encourage more of this cross fertilization? I think too often we belong to only one organization.

R: Yes. I think sometimes people are reluctant to pay the membership fees [for more than one organization] because they are pretty steep. Time is another factor. We have a core group of people who are members of both MLA and SLA, but a large percentage of the membership of the Biomedical and Life Sciences division is comprised of people who are not working in medical libraries per se, but are involved in other biological sciences activity. Certainly it would be good to have more of that. SLA and MLA have maintained close liaison relationships. Jo Anne Boorkman is SLA’s Biomedical and Life Sciences Division representative to MLA, and she’s MLA’s representative to the Biomedical and Life Sciences division; she wears two hats.

M: You are also active on the NLM’s Regional Advisory Council?

R: Yes. Right. I’m serving now on the Regional Advisory Council for this region.

M: For your third time, is that right?

R: Third time. Right. The first few times I sat in the library educator’s seat; this time it is as a member-at-large. Barbara Moran has also been [on the Council] in a library educator role.
M: Okay. Let's talk a little bit about your publications. We certainly have to mention the most famous one - *Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences* - that you wrote with Jo Anne Boorkman. I think it is in the third edition now?

R: Right. That came about in the late 70's. I was new on the faculty at UNC and teaching health sciences librarianship, and I was very frustrated that there was not a text that would do what I wanted to do. So I said, Bill Katz has done *Introduction to Reference Work*, why can't we have something like that for the health sciences? Jo Anne and I had gotten to know each other after she had come to the Health Sciences Library at UNC, and I was able to convince her that this was a good project for us to become involved in. We convinced the [MLA] publication panel that this was a good project, and we went from there. The first edition was published in 1980, the second one in 1984, and the third edition in 1994. We're talking now about a fourth edition. That, of course, presents a greater challenge because of new technology and computerized versions of different reference sources.

M: I'd like to talk a little bit now about both the past and the future. What do you think has been your most important contribution to MLA and to the profession? It can be different. And, how do you want to be remembered in the medical library world?

R: Well, I'm certainly very proud of the publication that Jo Anne and I did, *Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences*. *Platform for Change* was something that I think has had and can continue to have an effect within the Association. That was due to the efforts of the wonderful group of people that I was working with. I think, though, the thing that is the most important to me has been watching my students progress and do good things. I was particularly pleased at the last [MLA]
awards when two of my former students - Mary Horres and Sandra Wood - were named Fellows of the Association. It's their accomplishments and their contributions to the field that are most important.

M: You also have received several awards. You mentioned that you were pleased when Mary Horres and Sandra Wood became Fellows. You were also elected as a Fellow, in 1990?

R: No. It was in 1997.

M: Yes, '97. And, you also received the Marcia C. Noyes Award.

R: Yes. I received the Noyes Award in 1998, which was truly a wonderful thing. I couldn't believe it when I got the letter from the President and the Executive Director; it was such a wonderful experience!

M: I remember your past students came to your Presidential reception and students also came, even some who were not members of MLA, to see you receive the Noyes award.

M: Could you now go back and think of some of the major issues that librarians have solved in this last thirty years? And, what are the issues we'll have to solve in the future? This can be couched in the way of advice to those of us coming along.

R: Well, in terms of the issues, I'm not sure they've all been solved. I think a lot of progress has been made in terms of adapting technology to information needs. I think medical librarians, in particular, have been in the forefront of doing that. That certainly has been true since the early 70's when we were doing those cumbersome serials projects. We've come a long, long way, and it is going to be interesting to see what develops in the next few years. The biggest challenge that we're going to face,
I think, is the Internet and adapting the Internet to our needs. Developing quality control for the material that goes on the Internet [is going to be important], because there is really none at this point.

M: You’re credited with having a wonderful memory for people and events. Could you just share a few of your favorite memories of MLA meetings?

R: Yes. My first MLA meeting was a very memorable one. It was also the second International Congress on Medical Librarianship, and it was held in Washington, D.C. in 1963. In 1995, the year I was President, the meeting was held in Washington, D.C. and it was, again, an International Congress - the seventh International Congress on Medical Librarianship. So both of those meeting were very meaningful to me. I think in the early years, because the Association was so much smaller, it was much easier to get to know people, particularly the leadership within the Association. I was very lucky that a number of established people in the Association sort of took me under their wings and introduced me to people who were in leadership positions within MLA. It was a smaller, more informal organization then, but I like the fact that we’ve grown and we’re doing so much more now in the way of programming. We can do that because we are a bigger association. The most memorable meeting though was my Presidency in 1995. Since 1963 I’ve attended all except two of the annual meetings. I missed 1967 and 1968; those meetings were held in Denver and Miami. I’ve made it to all the rest.

M: Do you have any plans for the future that you want to talk about? They don’t have to involve libraries or librarianship.

R: Well, for the next little while, my plans will involve libraries and librarianship
because I plan to continue working here at the University of South Carolina for the
next few years. I'm sixty this year and so, while I begin to think about retirement, as
long as the president and the provost want me to continue, and as long as the faculty
wants me to continue, and as long as I still like coming to the office most days, I will
continue to work. Among other things, I plan to be looking for new venues for our
distance education program and new ways of delivering CE courses. On a personal
level, I enjoy traveling. I've really been fortunate over the years that I've gotten to do
a lot of travel, including international travel, both in my job here and in my
association work. I've been to a couple of IFLA (International Federation of Library
Associations) meetings, one in Stockholm and one in Barcelona; I enjoyed that a lot!

Those who know me well know that I'm a big mystery fan. I like to read mysteries
and I think the ideal retirement would be to run a mystery bookstore. I'm also a big
basketball and football fan, both of the University of South Carolina and the
University of North Carolina I still get back to a lot of the North Carolina basketball
and football games. So, I keep busy.

M: Do you have any other comments you'd like to make in summing up?

R: Just that my work with the Medical Library Association has really been a great joy
and very fulfilling over the years. I feel that MLA has given me a lot more than I
have ever been able to give back to it.

M: Thank you very much.

R: Thank you.

(tape off)
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University of North Carolina, M.S. in L.S. 1962
University of California, Los Angeles, Biomedical Library Internship in Medical Librarianship (US
PHS), 1962/63
Indiana University, Ph.D. 1971

Dissertation Title:
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Awards and Honors:
John Cotton Dana Award, Special Libraries Association, 1999
Marcia C. Noyes Award, Medical Library Association, 1998
Fellow, Medical Library Association, 1997
Fellow, Special Libraries Association, 1989
US Office of Education Doctoral Fellowship, Indiana University, 1969-71
Indiana University Graduate Fellowship, 1968/69
Beta Phi Mu, University of North Carolina, 1962

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Dean and Professor, University of South Carolina, College of Library and Information Science, 1986-
Associate Dean and Associate Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of
Library Science, 1982-1986
Associate Dean and Associate Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of
Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Library Science, 1971-1976
Teaching Fellow, Indiana University, Graduate Library School, 1969/70
Head, Public Services Division, Chicago State College Library, 1967/68
Visiting Lecturer, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Library Science, 1966/67.
and Summers, 1962, 1965-1969
Research Associate, UCLA, Institute for Library Research, 1966
Biomedical Machine Methods Librarian, UCLA Biomedical Library, 1963-65

Major Library Association Assignments:
American Library Association
Panel chair for accreditation visits, 1997-
Member, Committee on Accreditation, 1992-1996
Member, Subcommittee to Revise the ALA Standards, 1988-1992
Member, Council, 1986
Association for Library and Information Science Education
Member, Board of Directors,
Member, Statistics Committee, 1983-present

Medical Library Association
Chair, Governance Task Force, 1995-1997
Immediate Past President, 1996-1997
President, MLA, 1994/95
President-Elect, MLA, 1993/94
Chair, Knowledge and Skills Task Force, 1989-1992
Member, Board of Directors, 1987-1990
Editor, Certification and Registration Examination, and Chair of the Editorial Panel, 1985-
Member, Task Force on Certification and Registration, 1984/85
Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Professional Development, 1982-1984
Member, Certification Examination Review Committee, 1980-1984; Chair, 1983/84
Nominating Committee (Elected in Association-wide vote), 1974 and 1984
Member, Publication Panel, 1976-1979
Member, Health Sciences Library Technicians Committee, 1976-1979
Chair, Editorial Committee for the MLA News, 1974-1976
Chair, Ad Hoc Committee to Determine the Relations between the Bulletin and the News, 1976
Member, Continuing Education Committee, 1971-1974; Chair, 1973/74

North Carolina Library Association
ALA Councilor, 1985-1986
Member, Finance Committee, 1978-1980
Chair, Education Committee, 1974-1978

Special Libraries Association
Member, SLA Committee on Committees, 1998-
Past Chair, Biological Sciences Division, 1997/98
Chair, Biological Sciences Division, 1996/97
Member, SLA Research Committee, 1995-1998
Chair, SLA 75th Anniversary Conference Program Committee, 1981-1984
Member, SLA Nominating Committee, 1984/85
Nominee for President, 1981 (Defeated, 2120 to 1852)
SLA Board of Directors, 1978-1980
SLA Chapter Cabinet Chair, 1979-1980
Chair, SLA Research Committee, 1980/81

North Carolina Chapter of Special Libraries Association
President, 1976-77
Board of Directors, 1975-1978
Chair, Operations Procedures Committee, 1978-1980
Chair, Education Committee, 1974
Publications:

Monographs and Reports


Periodical Articles and Chapters


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Fred W. Roper has been Dean and Professor at the University of South Carolina College of Library and Information Science since 1986. He is an active member of the Special Libraries Association, the Medical Library Association, the American Library Association, and the Association for Library and Information Science Education.

A native of Hendersonville, North Carolina, he attended the University of North Carolina where he earned the A.B. degree in English in 1960 and the MS in LS degree in 1962. He then participated in a federally funded internship at the Biomedical Library at the University of California, Los Angeles. He remained on the Biomedical Library staff for three years following the 1962/63 internship.

In 1971 he completed his Ph.D. degree at Indiana University and returned to his home state and alma mater. He taught for fifteen years at UNC and ultimately became associate professor and associate dean at UNC before being appointed to the deanship at the University of South Carolina in 1986.

He has served in many ways in the Special Libraries Association. As a member of the Board of Directors (1978-80), he was Chair of the Chapter Cabinet. He held the post of chair of SLA's 75th Anniversary Conference Committee (1981-84), and has been a member of the Research Committee and the Committee on Committees. He was made a Fellow of the Special Libraries Association in 1989. In 1999, the Association presented him with the John Cotton Dana Award, SLA's highest award, for excellence in special librarianship.

In 1996, he became Chair-Elect of the Biological Sciences Division. Due to the resignation of the Chair, he succeeded to the Chair in the fall of 1996 and served as Chair during the formation of the new Medical Section. While he was Chair, the Division's name change to Biomedical and Life Sciences Division occurred. He has served on and chaired the Division's Bylaws Committee.

He was President of the Medical Library Association during 1994-95 and served on the Board of Directors from 1987-1990 and 1993-1996. His most recent assignments in MLA include chair of the Governance Task Force (1995-97) and chair of the Knowledge and Skills Task Force (1989-92) which produced MLA's educational policy statement, *Platform for Change*. He was made a Fellow of the Medical Library Association in 1997, and in 1998 he was recipient of the Noyes Award, the organization's highest professional distinction for recognized contributions to health sciences librarianship.
As a member of the Standards Revision Subcommittee (1989-92), he helped to revise the American Library Association's standards for accreditation of master's programs. He served a four year term on ALA's Committee on Accreditation (1992-96) and was a member of ALA Council in 1986. He has chaired external review panels for the Committee on Accreditation.

In the Association for Library and Information Science Education, he has served on the Board of Directors (1991-94) and has authored the chapter on Finances and Expenditures in ALISE's annual Library and Information Science Education Statistical Report since 1982.

He has contributed many scholarly publications to the profession. He is co-author of the standard text on medical library information resources, Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences, now in its third edition.