

Frey, John

d. 28 Aug 1997

R62/63

Frey. John "Jack" Andrew Frey, 67, died Friday, August 22, 1997, at D.C. General Hospital from injuries sustained in a fall at his home in Washington, D.C., according to his companion of 43 years, Peter L. Morris of D.C.

Frey was born Aug. 29, 1929, in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he graduated from Purcell High School in 1947. He went on to study Romance languages at the University of Cincinnati, for which he received a bachelor of arts degree with honors in 1951, as well as a master's degree in 1952. He then completed a doctorate (studying under Helmut Hatzfield) at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., in 1956.

That same year, he began his teaching career at Wheaton High School in Maryland, and then taught French and Spanish at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia from 1958 to 1960.

Frey returned to D.C. in 1960 to join the George Washington University faculty, where he held the following positions: assistant professor of Romance Languages (1960 to 1963); associate professor of Romance Languages (1963 to 1971); chair of the department of Romance Languages and Literatures (1966 to 1969, 1983 to 1989, and 1992 to 1994); professor of Romance Languages (1971 to 1995); and professor emeritus of Romance Languages (1995 until his death).

Morris said Frey received a Fulbright grant for study and research in France in 1958, and traveled professionally to France almost every year after that. He spoke French with native fluency and had reading knowledge of Italian.

In 1991 at GW, Frey was the first recipient of the Oscar and Shoshanna Trachtenberg Prize for Excellence in Teaching. According to Morris, Frey's peers said he "possessed extraordinary talent and commitment to the classroom and was an imaginative and resourceful faculty member."

In 1992 he received an order of the Palmes Academiques award, at the level of chevalier, from the French government in a ceremony at the French Embassy in Washington, in recognition of his work on 19th century French thought.

A "prolific author," Morris said Frey had numerous articles published in professional journals. He had written books on the French authors Stéphane Mallarmé and Emile Zola, and on the poetry of Victor Hugo, which Morris said will be published in the spring of 1998 by Greenwood Press of Connecticut.

Frey served six years as a trustee of the Sacred Heart Nursing Home in Hyattsville, Md. In 1986, he cofounded the Washington Institute for Creative Activity.

In addition to Morris, Frey is survived by a host of colleagues, students, and friends.

A rite of Christian burial was held by Dignity Washington at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in D.C. on Aug. 27. His remains were buried at Congressional Cemetery in D.C.

Memorial contributions may be made in his name to the Department of Romance Languages, George Washington University, 8013 22nd St., NW, Room 513, Washington, DC 20052.

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