

In Memoriam - James Ronald Lawler

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In Memoriam - James Ronald Lawler

It is with a sense of great loss that we have recently learned of the passing, in Paris, on July 28, of James Ronald Lawler, who was chair of the Department of French of Dalhousie University in the mid-1970's at a critical period of the department's development, leaving later to take up an appointment at the University of Chicago. Pre-deceased by his wife, Christiane, he leaves behind his daughter, Ariane, and his son, Jerome.

After studying in his native Australia and, after completing a doctorate at the Sorbonne, Jim took a teaching position at the University of Queensland and subsequently held positions in Brisbane and Melbourne before becoming chair of French at the University of Western Australia where he founded the journal *Essays in French Literature*. In 1971 he went as chair to UCLA and subsequently to Dalhousie University, as McCulloch Professor, where he founded the now long-standing journal, *Dalhousie French Studies*. At Chicago he was ultimately named Edward Carlson Waller Distinguished Service Professor of French, receiving after his retirement in 1997 the *Prix du rayonnement de la langue française de l'Académie française*. In 1986 he was guest professor at the Collège de France, presiding over several special days of study devoted to Hugo, Baudelaire and Mallarmé. Jim was also elected president of the Association Internationale des Etudes Françaises from 1999 to 2002, and until shortly before his death served as president of La Société des amis de Rimbaud. Author of many articles and books such as *Lecture de Valéry. Une Etude de Charmes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), *The Language of French Symbolism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), *Edgar Poe et les poètes français* (Paris: Julliard, 1989) and *Rimbaud's Theatre of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), Jim was an inspiring teacher, who enriched the lives of generations of graduate and undergraduate students, and he was unstinting and gracious in his friendships and his support of younger colleagues and scholars. He will be remembered with great fondness and gratitude by those of us in the Department of French who knew him well and were nurtured in their own pursuits by his stay at Dalhousie University.