



## ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

*Presented to*  
Margaret Smillie Child '51



MARGARET SMILLIE CHILD, class of 1951, we honor you today with the Alumnae Achievement Award. This award is presented to alumnae whose achievements and service to society exemplify the values and virtues set forth by the college.

You came to Mount Holyoke from just down the road in Springfield. A history major, you spent your junior year abroad at University of Paris. After graduation, you headed to Cornell University where you earned a master's degree in English history. Two decades later, in 1972, you earned a Ph.D. in English history from the University of Maryland and continued to teach there.

At that time, the problem of preserving research resources at the nation's humanities institutions had long been regarded as intractable due to its overwhelming scope. In 1974, the history department at the University of Maryland "loaned" you to the Division of Research at the National Endowment for the Humanities. That act not only changed history, but literally preserved it. Or rather, you preserved it.

You were named director when the NEH created its new Division of Research Program in 1975. During your seven years in that position, you played a crucial role in making academic and research libraries aware of the growing brittleness of their collections caused by acidity in the paper and deterioration through mishandling and poor environmental conditions.

You wisely focused on developing the infrastructure of the field—graduate training for preservation administrators, research, support of model institutional programs, and creation of regional field service programs to channel expert knowledge to smaller institutions. You opened new categories of NEH grant support to foster the development of preservation education and training, the creation of preservation field services, and the reformatting of embrittled books through preservation microfilming. You also authored several seminal articles on how to select volumes for preservation that were widely used by libraries.

In 1982, you carried your interests and expertise to the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, where, as assistant director, you managed the research services division. This involved overseeing central reference and some thirty-six branches located throughout the Smithsonian.

After retiring in 1989, you consulted for the Commission on Preservation and Access. In that role, you studied a problem little understood at the time: how to preserve sound recordings, video, and film. In addition, you received a Fulbright Fellowship to Malaysia in 1996. There, you developed a long-range preservation plan for the National Library in Kuala Lumpur.

Your dedication to the needs of libraries and scholars cannot be overstated. Because of you, Congress and the American people became aware of the critical importance of preserving library collections. By guiding academic and research libraries in the preservation of historical and cultural resources in the humanities, you have ensured that scholars and citizens alike can access them for generations to come.

In recognition for your pioneering work that has served both the United States and the international community, the Alumnae Association is honored to present you on your sixtieth reunion with the Achievement Award.

Cynthia L. Reed '80  
President  
Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College

Jane E. Zachary  
Executive Director  
Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College