



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

Memorial Tribute to

Elaine Granatstein (nee Hitchcock)

Librarian Emeritus and former Head of the Engineering Library
Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, 1983 – 2003

November 29, 2012

Elaine Granatstein completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Toronto in mid-life. After obtaining her Bachelor of Arts degree, she attended the Faculty of Information and received her Masters of Library Science (MLS) in 1979.

Shortly after, Elaine began her tenure at the University of Toronto Libraries as the Engineering Reference Librarian, where she flourished, developing a deep knowledge of the library's collection and a thorough understanding of the information needs of the faculty, staff and students in Applied Science and Engineering. As she became more familiar with the discipline and its specialties, Elaine also learned about the research projects of Engineering faculty and graduate students and was able to assist them with all manner of complex reference questions, ferreting out difficult to find facts and information and obscure publications.

When her predecessor retired, Elaine became the Head of the Engineering Library. In this role, she was responsible for all aspects of the library's operations including planning and developing space and services, selecting and hiring staff, and liaising with faculty, students and other library departments on campus. She also planned and implemented orientation and library instruction programs for faculty, staff and students, and participated in the selection of journal and book purchases.

Elaine was the quintessential science librarian. Joan Leishman, recently retired UofT Deputy Chief Librarian and Director of Science Libraries, said "Elaine was quiet and unassuming but so dedicated to her work and to serving the engineering students and faculty. She defined the Engineering and Computer Science Library. It always amazed me how she knew the collection inside out right down to specific volumes and titles in each of the various specialty areas."

Elaine had great compassion for the suffering of others, which she applied in a very practical way by helping them as she could. Toan Nghiem, who worked in the Engineering Library for several years after arriving in Canada as a refugee, sent an email upon hearing of Elaine's passing in which he said "I will always remember her as a beautiful human being. I owe so much to Elaine that I will never be able to pay back. She made all the arrangements so that I could attend engineering school while working at the Engineering Library. It is from the Engineering Library under Elaine's guidance that I have grown up and integrated into Canadian culture. I am in Vietnam right now [working as an engineer] ... Elaine will always have a special place in my heart."

In addition to her significant administrative and reference roles in the Engineering Library, Elaine sat on Faculty Council and on many library committees during the course of her career, always addressing her responsibilities with diligence. Beyond the library, she was the mother of two children, Michael and Carole, and wife for 51 years to the eminent Canadian historian Professor J. Granatstein. Although she rarely talked about herself, Elaine was frequently paid tribute in her husband's works.

Elaine will be well remembered and sadly missed by her colleagues and friends at the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, and at the University of Toronto Libraries.

*Prepared by Sandra Langlands
Acting Director, Science Libraries & Director
Gerstein Science Information Centre, University of Toronto Libraries*

November 28, 2012