

Charlotte S. Huck, 82; Author of Children's Books Promoted Reading

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Charlotte S. Huck, an expert on children's literature who wrote a textbook and children's books and organized festivals to encourage youngsters to read, has died. She was 82.

Huck died of melanoma Thursday at her home in Redlands, according to her nieces, Charlotte Burgess and Jean Gaylord.

The educator's 33-year effort to develop and enhance an academic program in children's literature at Ohio State University established her as a national authority on the subject.

Huck's reputation grew with the 1961 publication of her textbook, "Children's Literature in the Classroom," now in its seventh edition, and with her 1976 creation of the quarterly review *Wonderfully Exciting Books*, covering classroom use of children's books.

"Reading was part of my life, and I wanted children to have the same opportunity," Huck said in a 1981 appearance on television's "Good Morning America."

A native of Evanston, Ill., Huck studied at Wellesley College and earned her bachelor's degree from Northwestern University. After teaching briefly in Midwestern elementary schools, she completed her master's and doctorate at Ohio State University and joined its faculty in 1955.

While she was teaching teachers how to boost children's reading, Huck earned Ohio State's Distinguished Teaching Award in 1972 and the Landau Award for Distinguished Service in teaching children's literature in 1979.

Huck also served on the American Library Assn. committees for the Newbery and Caldecott medals, awarded to outstanding writers of children's literature.

Huck retired from Ohio State in 1988. But she wasn't finished.

Relocating to Redlands, she wrote five children's books herself: "Princess Furball," "Secret Places," "Toads and Diamonds," "The Black Bull of Norway" and "A Creepy Countdown."

Huck helped create an annual children's literature festival at the University of Redlands, similar to one she had developed at Ohio State. The Redlands festival was named for her in 2000.

"We must keep reading aloud to children," she advised teachers at the 1998 festival. "If you're not reading aloud to them, you're not teaching reading. The story is what motivates children to want to read."

And she practiced what she preached. She not only read aloud to teachers at conferences to show them how it

should be done, she also read her own books and others to children at various gatherings.

She also established an evening reading program for children and parents at the historic A.K. Smiley Public Library in Redlands.

Huck received the University of Redlands Town & Gown "A Woman's Place is Everywhere" award in 1996.

She is survived by two sisters, Mary Colmar and Lucy Huck, both of Redlands.

Services are scheduled for 3 p.m. Wednesday at Trinity Episcopal Church in Redlands.

Memorial contributions can be made to a charity of the donor's choice, or to the Charlotte S. Huck Annual Children's Literature Conference Endowment, with checks made out to the University of Redlands, P.O. Box 3080, Redlands, CA 92373-0999.

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