

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Vancouver Senate Tributes Committee
c/o
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3 February 2012

To: Vancouver Senate

From: Tributes Committee

Re: Memorial Minute – Dr. Ruth Ethel McConnell

The Tributes Committee has prepared a memorial minute for Dr. Ruth Ethel McConnell.

Motion: *That Senate approve the Memorial Minute for Dr. Ruth Ethel McConnell, that it be entered into the Minutes of Senate and that a copy be sent to the family of the deceased.*

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Sally Thorne, Chair
Senate Tributes Committee

Dr. Ruth Ethel McConnell

Born in Vancouver, Dr. McConnell received Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from UBC and went on to complete doctoral studies in English Language and Literature from UC Berkeley (1967), with a research focus on the fiction of Joseph Conrad. Following completion of a PhD, Dr. McConnell taught in BC And Ontario public schools for 19 years before joining the UBC Department of Language and Education in 1958, where she remained until her retirement in 1980.

At the University, her many service activities included membership on the Senate (1972-1975) and the Senior Appointments Committee, in addition to leadership roles within the Faculty of Education and on various professional and learned societies.

Along with the then Acting Dean of Education, Dr. Roy Bentley, Dr. McConnell founded the UBC Composition Workshops, which were instrumental in improving the teaching of composition in the province.

In 1989, Dr. McConnell was awarded the Merron Chorny Award for outstanding contribution to the teaching of English in Canada by the Canadian Council of Teachers of English. The citation read, in part: “Dr. McConnell’s textbooks have had a significant impact on Canadian English education. Her text with Phillip Penner, *Learning English*, first published in 1963, is still being used in many English classes because of its clear and straightforward presentation of linguistic concepts. Her pioneering text in the study of Canadian dialects, *Our Own Voice: Canadian English and How It Is Studied*, brought a new dimension to language study in the classroom.”