

# Isabel Jane Peard

*September 13, 1910 — April 11, 2004*

Isabel Jane Peard, Professor Emeritus of Education, was born on September 13, 1910, in Batavia, New York, the only child of George and Jennie (Dennison) Peard. She attended public school in Batavia, and graduated from Batavia High School. Entering the New York State College at Albany, New York, she majored in English and History graduating with an A.B. degree in 1932.

Her first teaching experience was one year in the Montgomery public school, followed by a ten-year term in the Millbrook, New York, Memorial School. She had a strong conviction about service to others, and in 1943 joined the USO Club. Her first service was with the American Troops as Program Director in San Luis, Brazil. Later she served as Club Director in Skagway, Alaska. Following this service, she began employment and graduate study at Cornell, earning the Master of Arts degree in 1943. Following its completion, she entered a doctoral program in personnel administration and philosophy, earning her Ph.D. degree in 1951. After earning advanced degrees, she stayed on as Professor of Education. Dr. Peard also studied at Columbia University and did postdoctoral study in philosophy at Oxford University. During her time at Cornell, she served as Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Women and Director of the Graduate Residence Program in Student Personnel Administration. Dr. Peard's responsibilities in the Department of Education were in the area of philosophy of education and the education of prospective teachers of English. Meticulous in her own oral and written English, it was not surprising that she was much interested in producing outstanding teachers of English. In time, however, she moved almost entirely into the field of philosophy of education.

Dr. Peard was a member of the Philosophy of Education Society, the National Association of Deans of Women, the American Association of University Professors, and of Phi Kappa Phi, Pi Lambda Theta, and Sigma Xi. She also served on a number of university committees, including University Faculty Council, and the Board of Control at Cornell United Religious Work. In 1989, a Cornell Tradition Fellowship endowed by former students, friends, and colleagues was named in her honor. The Cornell Tradition Program embodied her philosophy of giving back, in some measure, what had been given to her in the Cornell experience.

Dr. Peard was a gentle person, strongly committed to her educational and ethical principles. She was not given to outbursts of indignation, but when something went awry in either program or practice, she used her keen sense of humor and well-developed empathy and insight to "explain the matter." She could, in her quiet way, skewer an

opponent and still retain a twinkle in her eye. Seemingly incapable of social or professional hostility, she had more subtle, gentle ways of making others see and appreciate her point of view. Her home for many years was in Forest Home, at the edge of the Cornell campus. It was simple, spotless, and always open to visitors. She and her pet dog and cat were gracious hosts, but her pets were not always reluctant to express an opinion about when guests should leave. Her walls were lined with books, and she loved nothing better than to share with visitors some of the wisdom in their pages. A friend of Anna B. Comstock's, she was, indeed, one of "the old school" at Cornell. Retired as Professor Emeritus in 1971, she lived quietly but maintained her open door policy and loved professional as well as social intercourse with friends and colleagues. Dr. Peard especially enjoyed an occasional dinner out, and was anything but a recluse. A good day was one filled with stimulating conversation, capped by a dinner at The Antlers. Long after formal retirement, she continued her interest in, and involvement with, Cornell events and programs, welcoming many new professors to the Cornell community and its traditions.

Her final days were spent at Oak Hill Manor where she was forced to move when she could no longer care for herself. Dr. Peard passed away there on April 11, 2004, and a memorial service was held in Forest Home Chapel on May 1. To her friends and colleagues, she will be remembered as a rare combination of grace, warmth, and sparkling intellect.

*Richard E. Ripple, Deborah J. Trumbull, Verne N. Rockcastle*