



Jean Ruth Robinson

December 9, 1945 – January 5, 2019

Jean Ruth Robinson was born in Rockford, Illinois, on December 9, 1925, the daughter of Albert Eric Anderson and Eleanor Cora Peterson Anderson. She grew up in Rockford, graduating from high school in 1943. That fall she entered Beloit College, where she majored in Economics. She received the Bushnell prize in mathematics in 1945 and served as editor of the yearbook in her senior year. She was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1946 and graduated *summa cum laude* in 1947. During summers she worked at a bank in Rockford.

In the fall of 1947, she entered the graduate program in economics at Radcliffe College. She interrupted her graduate program to become an apprentice in banking at Stockholm's Enskilda Bank in Stockholm, Sweden. In the fall of 1949, she was hired as a secretary by National City Bank of New York in London, England, returning to the US in the spring of 1950. She traveled extensively by bicycle in Europe during this period.

In the fall of 1950, she returned to Cambridge to continue her graduate study receiving her M.A. in Economics in 1951 and her Ph.D. in Economics in 1953. Her dissertation research was on marketing of nonfood products in a study undertaken at the Social Science Research Center in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. Her Ph.D. committee chair was John Kenneth Galbraith. It was published as part of: J. K. Galbraith, R. H. Horton, J. R. Robinson and C. S. Bell *Marketing Efficiency in Puerto Rico*, Harvard University Press, 1955. In 1953, Jean received a Ford Foundation award to be a teaching intern at Vassar College. The following year she was hired as a lecturer in economics at Wells College, Aurora, New York.

Jean and Kenneth Robinson were married in 1954. At the time, Ken was an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Cornell University. They had met as graduate students at Harvard. They lived in Aurora for two years and then moved to Ithaca in 1956.

In 1965, Jean became Lecturer and subsequently Senior Lecturer in Family Management in what was to become the Department of Consumer Economics and Housing, College of Home Economics and ultimately the Department of Policy Analysis and Management, College of Human Ecology. In 1981, she became professor and chair of Consumer Economics and Housing. She was chair until 1988. She was associate dean of the College of Human Ecology from 1988 to 1990, and retired as professor emerita in 1990.

Throughout her career Jean focused her efforts on teaching, becoming a master teacher, a mentor to them, and beloved by generations of students. The courses she taught were: Principles of Economics and Personal Finance. She received The Gamma Sigma Delta Innovative Teaching Award in 1988. As department chair, Jean's object was to clear away administrative and bureaucratic hurdles so that the faculty could do their respective jobs. As associate dean she was committed to fairness for students and faculty as she dealt with serious student-faculty issues. She had a strong ability to "cut to the chase" concerning topics under discussion. It was a pleasure to work with her.

Jean accompanied her husband on his foreign assignments in Australia and Nigeria and found opportunities for volunteer work. While in Nigeria, she assisted in a school for the deaf with children in the third grade. In Berkeley, she helped in a kindergarten class.

Jean served on the Board of Trustees of Cayuga Heights and on the boards of the Citizens Savings Bank and the Friends of the Library. She served on several University committees: The Commencement Committee, Status of Women, Memorials and the Health Career Evaluation Committee. She was Mace Bearer for the University from 1991 to 1995. She was a member of the St. Luke Lutheran Church. Her volunteer work included serving as a tax counselor for senior citizens and low-income households, book sorting for the Friends of the Library Book Sale, and United Way Allocations Committee. She became a life member of the Friends in 2008.

Jean had a passion for knitting, an activity she carried with her into innumerable committee meetings; she was noted for producing wise decisions and beautiful sweaters simultaneously. She continued knitting for family, friends, and charity at Kendal.

She is survived by two sons, James and Alan, two grandsons, and nieces and nephews.

Written by Professor Emeritus Keith Bryant