

James L. Harner (1946-2016)



James L. Harner, Samuel Rhea Gammon Professor of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University, died on 26 May 2016. A noted bibliographer, he was the author or editor of more than thirty books, including *English Renaissance Prose Fiction, 1500-1660: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism* (1992), *On Compiling an Annotated Bibliography* (2000), and the *MLA Literary Research Guide* (2008). In 2009, the *Guide* received the American Publishers Association award for the best humanities electronic publication. It was named one of the *Times Literary Supplements* books of the year that same year and went through six editions.

All scholars of Shakespeare owe the integrity of their research to Jim Harner. The *MLA Bibliography* does not subject-catalogue books, but, under his guidance, the *World Shakespeare Bibliography Online* captured chapters as well as essays and articles. He attended each year's Shakespeare Association conference, demonstrating the online version of the *Bibliography* he developed and meeting his team of bibliographers for Saturday lunches. He was the only scholar to have received both the Besterman Medal and the Besterman/McColvin medals for his editing of the *World Shakespeare Bibliography Online*.

He was born James Lowell Harner to Thomas Lloyd Harner and Ruth Ellen (Clark) Harner in Washington. After graduating from Washington High School in 1964, he received his B.S. (magna cum laude) from Indiana State University in 1967 and his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 1972. He taught at Bowling Green State University before moving to Texas A&M University. For many years, he was a member of the Marshall Scholarship Selection Committee and served at the chair of the Southwestern Region committee from 2009-2011.

A lifelong book collector, he amassed the world's most complete collection of miniature editions of Shakespeare. He was a dedicated foodie, loved good wines, and enjoyed sailing on tall ships. He married his high-school sweetheart. He is survived by his wife of forty-eight years, Dorinda Harner, his daughter Lenee (Robbie) Pennington, two granddaughters, two brothers-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.