

Below is the text of reflections made of the memorial service for John Bugge on December 8, 2018:

Dr. Gray Crouse, Director of Emory's Emeritus College and Professor, Emory's Dept. of Biology:

I was a colleague of John's from the time I began at Emory as a faculty member in 1984. However, it was only after becoming Director of the Emeritus College in the summer of 2014 that I got to know John well. Most of you are probably aware that John Bugge and Gene Bianchi, who is here today, were co-founders of the Emeritus College.

What is amazing is that John began working on the idea of an emeritus college in 1998, 13 years before he retired in 2011! I think in general as faculty we tend to avoid thinking about retirement, perhaps in the belief that if we ignore it, it won't happen. Even in 1998 John knew that when he did retire, he wanted to retire to something, rather than leave the University. As John said, "there should be no retirement from the life of the mind!" After three years of work, in 2001 the Emory University Emeritus College was formally established. It was Gene Bianchi who nurtured the Emeritus College through its early growth and got it firmly established. John chaired the Emeritus College Executive Committee beginning in 2009 even before he retired and continued in that position until his death. In the years we overlapped, John was involved in almost every one of our activities. He was always present at our Lunch Colloquiums, making sure to greet new members and helping to make everyone feel welcome. He was one of our first retirement mentors. He developed and led all of our Interdisciplinary Seminars, demonstrating the true scholarly interdisciplinarity of the Emeritus College. He conducted many Mock Interviews for premed undergraduate students. But John's work and influence in this area went far beyond Emory.

Our Emeritus College was the second such institution to be formed in the U.S. And John preached the Emeritus College gospel far and wide. In the fall of 2015, John and I were invited by the emeriti organization at the University of Cincinnati to visit and meet with them and the UC administration to promote the formation of an emeritus college there. John, as you know, was a medievalist, and in preparation for our visit, he wrote about his vision of an emeritus college:

This new unit should be a "**collegium**" in the first and best sense of that term.

We resurrect the medieval Latin term for an academic grouping of teachers, researchers, and scholars.

The intellectual life is not solitary, or even individual, but ineluctably communal.

It belongs administratively under the purview of the university's chief academic officer, its provost or academic vice-president.

The Platonic ideal of such a collegium might be **All Souls College**, Oxford, which consists of a group of both permanent and invited fellows, but no regular admitted undergraduate students.

By the very terms of its foundation **All Souls** is interdisciplinary.

It is a collegium of the arts and the sciences mixed together.

When informed of John's death, Carl Huether, who had invited us to Cincinnati, wrote that "the following spring our provost announced that an Emeritus Center had been approved. John's visit was instrumental in helping us develop the proposal and achieve this significant approval."

John was also instrumental in promoting academic retirement organizations more generally. John was a co-founder, along with Dave Ewert of GSU, in developing a statewide consortium of retiree organizations that became GA-HERO, the Georgia Association of Higher Education Retiree Organizations that includes Emory and various state institutions including our near neighbors Georgia State, Georgia Tech, Clayton State, and Kennesaw State. Dave Ewert has said that without John, there would be no GA-HERO, and John was slated to be its next President.

The Emory Emeritus College was involved in forming the national Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education, or AROHE, and Gene Bianchi presided as President of AROHE at its second national conference in 2004. John served on the AROHE Board and various committees beginning in 2013. In March of 2016 John suggested that we at Emory might want to host the 2018 AROHE National Conference. John could be very persuasive and we did, in fact, end up hosting the national conference on October 7-9 of this year. John was Chair of the Planning Group and worked in so many ways to ensure the success that the conference was. It was also his idea to have GA-HERO serve as co-host of the conference, illustrating the working of this private/public partnership towards a common goal. In all, there were 138 conference registrants from 64 colleges and universities representing 24 states and two provinces of Canada. The day before his bicycle accident, John had stopped by the Luce Center to return a hand truck borrowed from Dianne Becht that he had used to haul cases of wine for the conference reception and banquet—illustrating his style of do-it-all leadership.

John was also a great teacher, twice winning the highest teaching award at Emory, the Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award. He continued teaching after his retirement, contributing frequent courses to Emory's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Both I and the entire membership of the Emeritus College miss John very much. However, he will not be forgotten and his legacy will live on in so many ways. As was said of Chaucer's pilgrim the Clerk, so one could say also of John:

And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche

Dr. Mel Konner, Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor, Emory's Dept. of Anthropology:

I first met John and felt his great warmth shortly after arriving here in 1983. He hardly knew me, but to welcome us to his community, he invited us to one of his legendary New Year's Eve parties. There I began a decades-long friendship with John and with Jim Flannery, who was also new and getting the classic Bugge welcome the same evening.

I felt his dedication to community not only on campus, but in the British Studies Summer Program, where my wife Ann and I got to know Liza too; in the Emeritus College, which I have not yet graduated to but where John welcomed me several times; and during the last couple of years in the Robert Burns Club, where I was an odd duck but felt less odd sitting next to John at dinner—which I always tried to do.

I asked John's fellow leaders at the Club if they wanted to send some words. They wrote,

"Dear John,

"Your time amongst us was all too brief. You enlivened us with remarkable gifts of warmth, honest friendship, erudition, humor and gentle nature. We mourn your passing, but cherish the time shared with us. As Burns wrote at the passing of his father in 1784,

O ye whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious rev'rence, and attend!

Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father, and the gen'rous friend;

The pitying heart that felt for human woe,
The dauntless heart that fear'd no human pride;

The friend of man—to vice alone a foe;
For ev'n his failings lean'd to virtue's side

“Rest well Dear John, we will all meet again.”

John was a big man who never threw his weight around. You felt somehow protected when you were with him. He radiated concern, and he led without ego and with unfailing humor. John was not a religious man, but the phrase “servant leader” comes to mind; it’s how he was in all his communities.

He taught and served without expecting gratitude or reward, and he never induced the slightest guilt in those of us who gave much less. None of the communities he gently fostered and led would have been, or will be, remotely the same without him.

John was deeply yet modestly intellectual, and whether it was new literature, Chaucer, medieval chivalry, *Ivanhoe* and the Gothic Revival, or the history of Scottish English, I could count on him for a wise opinion free of self-absorption and one-upmanship. He shared his knowledge the way he led: generously, without ever trying to impress.

The summer of 2007 that John invited us to spend at University College, Oxford, was just marvelous. John was respectful of the ancient, august surroundings—dinner at High Table surrounded by looming oak walls was pretty intimidating—while at the same time laughing at himself for respecting them perhaps a tad too much.

I often wonder if, as a joke, he deliberately put Ann and me in the rooms Bill Clinton used during his Rhodes Scholarship. Remembering the sound of tour guides speaking varied languages amid the clicks of cameras under our window makes me laugh even today.

One student with us that summer was Maria Town, who wrote yesterday:

“The British Studies program was one of the richest intellectual experiences of my life, and Dr. Bugge was a significant part of that. He had a gift for making seemingly obscure and unrelated things relevant and related. You came away with a greater appreciation for the world around you after an interaction with him—whether in a classroom or over a Pimms Cup. John Bugge taught me about literature, architecture, and pre-Raphaelite painters, and his ability to connect content was only outmatched by his ability to connect earnestly with people—especially students. I will miss him.”

John loved teaching, but in recent years he never failed to tell me why I should retire, *right now*. He was having a great time. He told of his hiking tours with Liza around the British Isles, and of plans for where they would walk next. When John did not recover, the cruelest blow was his and Liza’s loss of each other.

On one visit to his hospital room, I saw a volume of Chaucer on the window ledge. We all tried to talk to him at times, in the hope that he might understand, so I thought, why not read? I was hoping that John would be so appalled by my mangling of Middle English that he would wake up and correct me. Alas, he did not.

But I tried to read a few pages of *The Canterbury Tales*. When I came to the words introducing the knight, “he was a verray parfit gentil knight”—he was a true, perfect, noble knight—it clearly was about John too. So when I laid the book aside to leave, I said, “John, you are a verray parfit gentil knight.” And if he were standing here now, I would say the same again.

Dr. James Flannery, Professor Emeritus, Emory’s Irish Studies Program

John Bugge was a man of many parts: distinguished scholar, inspired teacher, community builder, responsible citizen, loving husband, father and grandfather as well as a loyal friend. John also played many other parts as a talented actor, including a memorable performance in the production that launched the theater program at Emory in the fall of 1982. That production by Theater Emory (for that’s what we christened the company that served as the public face of the nascent program) was the 15th century morality play, *Everyman*, and it was staged in seven different locales around the campus, starting here in Cannon Chapel and concluding in the university theater, which then as now was located in the Dobbs Center for Campus Life.

Dana Westberg, the brilliant young director of *Everyman*, and I as the founder of the Department of Theater Studies and Theater Emory, conceived the production as a way of consecrating the campus to a mission in which significant ideas would be expressed and disseminated through the arts. We could not have found anyone who more fully embraced that mission than John Bugge. As a medievalist, John understood as a core belief that a genuinely great community – most especially a great university community – is ultimately shaped and defined by the intellectual, cultural and spiritual values that it treasures and celebrates. That belief of John is one that he honored as a guiding principle of all he contributed to our community.

Over the following years John was to perform no less than seventeen roles with Theater Emory. But the role indelibly imprinted in my memory is the one he played in that production of *Everyman* some thirty five years ago. You know the play, of course. It begins with God (performed in that production by another beloved faculty member, John Howett) ordering his servant Death to confront Everyman with the news that he must at once commence a long journey that will be completed only when he dies. In our production, that announcement was made to Everyman in the midst of a raucous party in the courtyard just outside Cannon Chapel, a party which members of the audience were invited to join – as many of them happily did. Everyman, stunned, begs for the company of his boon companions on that fateful journey. And so the pilgrimage begins. In our production the audience joined the hero on two bus trips to and from well-known parts of the campus. At each junction, he was abandoned by one after another of his erstwhile friends: Beauty, Five Wits, Strength and Discretion.

At length, the final destination was reached: the university theater, which had been transformed into a sacred space by means of a few hanging plastic sheets shimmering with a radiant light like that of illuminated stained glass windows. In the center of the stage a black box assumed the ominous presence of a coffin. Beside it was Everyman, trembling with terror. And there to guide and comfort him, stood John Bugge in the guise of a learned Doctor: tall, dignified and full of a grace born of wisdom. I will never forget the conviction and compassion with which John imbued the moral of the play: that of all one’s earthly companions, only Good Deeds remain at the end of life. No one could have voiced that theme with a greater sense of integrity and lived reality than John. And that is because, from an early age, his own life had been devoted to exercising his god-driven talents by performing a succession of Good Deeds in many different forms, but always in the service of others. That commitment of John continued right to his own end, as all of us who knew him can attest.

At Liza’s request, I am going to perform a song dedicated to John and his extraordinary life. I have chosen a song by the Irish poet Thomas Moore that speaks to the sense of loss felt by the members of a community when someone truly exceptional passes from their midst. We all share that sense of loss today, along with Liza

and John's family. But we also draw comfort from the fact that the Good Deeds of John will always continue to affect the lives of those to whom he gave of himself so freely and abundantly.

Prof. Brenda Bynum, Resident Artist and Lecturer, Emerita, Emory's Dept. of Theater Studies

How do you follow "Everyman"? Well, John Bugge did it by making a most fulsome, fully-wigged, formal stage debut with Theatre Emory in its 1985 production of the bawdy restoration comedy "The Provok'd Wife." John did not play the Provoking Husband but was cast as one of his dissolute cronies who was aptly named, Lord Rake. This performance was auspicious, as he was noticed by the Atlanta critics, one of whom declared in the newspaper that he was both funny and quite comfortable in the role. This turned out to be the first in a notable string of at least seventeen productions on the Emory stage in which he seemed to lose himself in the lives of his characters and easily made us believe every word and every moment. As one of his directors described this quality, "in terms of theater, John was a kind of natural." This was never more evident than in his performance in his colleague Frank Manley's play "The Trap" in 1993. Those of us who were lucky enough to see him in it understood that we were watching something extraordinary. As one observer said, "he nailed it - and it didn't even seem like acting." Trust me, for any actor, that is high praise indeed and what we always hope to achieve. His range was remarkable, from low comedy to high tragedy, from the Greeks all the way through modern psychological drama, and he brought his deep intelligence, awareness, and sensitivity fully to bear on the material at hand - every single time- and every performance was unique. As one of his compatriots put it, "there was always this layer of 'something else going on', perhaps a little mischief or hidden ploy. His portrayals were not predictable. They snuck up on you in a most delightful way!"

I was lucky enough to be onstage with John in four of these productions, starting with "The Provok'd Wife", and on through Shakespeare and Webster, but the one we loved doing together the most was an evening of Medieval Voices, Miracles, and Mysteries in 1992. He was most assuredly on home ground in these works and we roamed that territory with delight. Afterwards, we became of one mind that we should do them again someday and kept ourselves available for the inevitable call from a savvy producer.

When I came to Emory in 1983, John was one of the first members of the faculty to welcome me to the fold and he became a mentor, a supporter, an encourager, and a staunch friend from that time on. I retired in 2000, and though he had not yet done so himself, he was already engaged with others in the establishment of the Emory Emeritus College. I was recruited to join early on and our collegial association and friendship shifted into a new gear. I had at first thought that the Emeritus College was the university's way of keeping retirees from having too much fun, but John's passion and commitment to the possibilities helped make it just the opposite - fertile ground for new ideas, new associations, and constantly expanding opportunities for learning new things.

It also brought the two of us what we had been waiting to get again for a long time – an audience! From classrooms at Olli to Colloquia at the Luce we developed our own two-handed style of presenting dramatic readings of work from the likes of Samuel Beckett and Dylan Thomas and privately dubbed ourselves "The Stichomythia Players." This was a nod to the Greeks who inspired us, of course, but, even more so, to ratify our diligent attention to divvying up our lines – the true coin of the realm for actors - in strictly equal measure ! Earlier this fall, we were already working on a new script with which to capture the hearts of our captive audience at this year's Emeritus College Holiday Party, and, best of all, considering our own two-fisted revival of Medieval Mysteries and Miracles.

To be in John's company was to look through a clear window with wonder at a larger, brighter world and, as he always was, be ready to jump through and see what was out there. It was my great good fortune to enjoy that view many times over the past 35 years.

And I wholeheartedly agree with a colleague who loved how John would spontaneously enter a conversation with a thought-provoking question or insight, appearing to have been contemplating things far more interesting and intriguing than what was in our heads at the time and gallantly assuming that our typical ruminations were as complex and arcane as his. I would scramble to be worthy of that assumption and the deep, rich talk that ensued made me feel smarter and better every time.

But finally now, as Beckett said, “When words fail, what is left is, simply, love.”

Prof. Patricia Miller, Managing Director and Senior Lecturer, Emerita, Theater Emory

John’s subtle performance in “The Trap” knocked my socks off. He played the villain, but with the slightest pause or flicker of an eyelash, John let the audience see the character evaluate the consequences of his actions and then take the action anyway, resulting in a character more human and more dangerous at the same time. But, then, John was never one to see another person in one-dimension or to make superficial judgements about them.

Like many of us, I am grateful for having known John as a friend. It has been an honor and a pleasure that I do not take lightly. And what a friend he was--a respecter of all sorts and conditions of men and women, he was generous and caring. He kept his eye and ours on the big picture, and his integrity could always be counted upon. He was witty, fun, and a positive force in every situation.

My husband, Sean Kilpatrick, and I treasure our time with Liza and John. It was Shelia Cavanagh’s invitation to join the Emory at Oxford program, that gave us the time and space for our “four-some” friendship to develop. During long bus rides, breakfasts in the Great Hall, and many a pint at our favorite pub, we discovered our shared passions-especially travel.

Our first trip together happened by accident. I spoke with someone about her recent travel. Five hours later, sitting across the aisle from John at a Theater Emory reading, I shared the story. By the next morning, we had decided to make the same arrangements and by evening we had booked our first trip. Two weeks in Florence.

John was always open to an adventure, and his nimble mind could usually come up with an alternative when plans broke down. A couple of months ago, we worked on a river trip that ultimately we tabled. Ten minutes after we reached that decision, John popped up from the sofa: “Let’s spend a week in Dublin and then a week in Belfast.” The cleverness of his juxtaposition of those two cities was immediately more engaging than our original idea.

There is nothing like sharing a cramped AirB&B apartment for two to three weeks to test a friendship, but John and Liza were delightful, engaging, and easy fellow travelers. There was never a strain, only the comfort of our co-existence: silently reading emails, studying maps, or slowly waking over our first cup of caffeine, we would plan our days. Later, while we divided the dinner chores, we shared the days’ discoveries with high spirits and laughter.

I am not much of a photographer when I travel – but, I do have strong memories - images of John from our times together.

*In an Irish pub in Florence, John leading the cheers for the US team playing a World Cup game against the UK.

*Sean and John---looking for all the world like Mutt and Jeff---heading off to cheer Atlanta United.

*John, loping ahead in streets crowded with young people, looking over heads for a grocery store, so we can stock our kitchen.

*And in Granada where the four of us are walking in the narrowest street I have ever experienced, flattening ourselves against the walls of the houses when a car passed. John centers himself in the road, his face quizzical. He stretches his arms out on either side. His fingers are within inches of each wall.

His face breaks into a crooked grin, arms wide for a moment, embracing his discovery and the joy of sharing it with us.

This is the John I will remember.

Dr. Ronald Schuchard, Goodrich C. White Professor of English Literature

John came to Emory from Harvard in the fall of 1968, and when I arrived from Texas the following year he was the first to welcome me, and for a while we shared an office in what was then the Physics Building (now Candler). There I was privileged to discover his beautiful voice for poetry, especially in middle-English, and particularly his recitations from the “Prologue” of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, which he of course knew by heart: “Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote, / The droghte of March hath perced to the roote / And bathed every veyne in swich lecour / Of which vertu engendred is the flour”—it was marvelous and transporting every time.

One of his favorite modern poems, the love of which he and Liza shared, was Richard Wilbur’s “Love Calls Us to the Things of This World,” the title of which comes down to us from St. Augustine’s *Confessions*. Wilbur has said of the poem that “Plato, St. Teresa, and the rest of us in our degree, have known the pain of returning from the spiritual to the quotidian world. Augustine says that it is love that brings us back, and keeps them in balance.” The poem begins with the soul’s awakening from its dream in the morning, in a city tenement. I read it in honor of the loving marriage of John and Liza, and in memory of many years hearing John giving his voice to poetry.

“Love Calls Us to the Things of This World”

The eyes open to a cry of pulleys,
And spirited from sleep, the astounded soul
Hangs for a moment bodiless and simple
As false dawn.

Outside the open window
The morning air is all awash with angels.

Some are in bed-sheets, some are in blouses,
Some are in smocks: but truly there they are.
Now they are rising together in calm swells
Of halcyon feeling, filling whatever they wear
With the deep joy of their impersonal breathing;

Now they are flying in place, conveying
The terrible speed of their omnipresence, moving
And staying like white water; and now of a sudden
They swoon down into so rapt a quiet
That nobody seems to be there.

The soul shrinks

From all that it is about to remember,
From the punctual rape of every blessed day,
And cries,

“Oh, let there be nothing on earth but laundry,
Nothing but rosy hands in the rising steam
And clear dances done in the sight of heaven.”

Yet, as the sun acknowledges
With a warm look the world's hunks and colors,
The soul descends once more in bitter love

To accept the waking body, saying now

In a changed voice as the man yawns and rises,

“Bring them down from their ruddy gallows;

Let there be clean linen for the backs of thieves;

Let lovers go fresh and sweet to be undone,

And the heaviest nuns walk in a pure floating

Of dark habits,

keeping their difficult balance.”