

Maria Carlson, University of Kansas

The death of James Bailey came as a shock; I was beginning to believe he was immortal. How I loved that man, although he probably never knew. Prof. Bailey's folklore course (and his language courses, which often included folk texts) were paradigm shifters in my life. I studied with him as an undergraduate Slavic Languages and Literatures major at UW-Madison many years ago (BA, 1971). To him I was just another undergrad, but he gave me the gifts of his time and genuine interest. He also did me the tremendous favor of talking me out of going to grad school in German and into going to Indiana University to work with his colleague, the Estonian folklorist Felix Oinas, on Slavic folklore and to complete my PhD in Slavic there. Slavic folklore—and Prof. Bailey's mentorship model—have been an important part of my research, teaching, advising, and service during my entire professional life. His fingerprints may be found all over my CV (and my character). What a scholar and mentor! And what a kind, generous, gentle man.