



# FIVE FACULTY BID FAREWELL

by Richard Holden

A quintet of extraordinary educators retired from Earlham this year. When Len Clark, Dick Davis, Caroline Higgins, Dortha Meredith and Howard Richards officially departed the College this spring, they took with them 138 years worth of experience with the institution. In the next few pages, we will recount and celebrate the impressive accomplishments and exemplary service of these five outstanding faculty members.

## LEN CLARK

Len Clark, academic dean, professor of philosophy and, until 2006, also Earlham's provost, joined the faculty in 1967 after earning his doctorate at Yale University. He taught a wide variety of philosophy courses and served in many faculty leadership roles before his appointment as the College's chief academic officer in 1981.

As provost and academic dean he helped guide the development of programs in Peace and Global Studies, Human Development and Social Relations, African and African-American Studies, and Japanese Studies, among others. During Clark's tenure, the faculty adopted a new academic calendar and extensively revised the general education program.

Clark oversaw a dramatic increase in the ethnic and international diversity of the Earlham faculty. Support for faculty scholarship, especially collaborative projects with students, grew through the establishment and growth of the Ford Earlham Fund. Support for summer scientific research involving students, and scientific equipment was greatly increased.

Clark's public work has centered on the meaning and importance of liberal education, on the contributions of philosophy to the understanding of contemporary problems, and the power of consensus-seeking methods of decision-making, as he has experienced it at Earlham.

Clark has served as board member and chair of the American Conference of Academic Deans, and has served as consultant at many colleges. He chaired the Deans' Council of the Great Lakes Colleges Association and the Indiana Philosophical Association.

Among Clark's publications is the book *Explanation: an Introduction to the Philosophy of Science*, co-authored with retired Professor of Chemistry Jerry Bakker.

In retirement Len Clark plans to pursue several writing projects while maintaining close ties with the College. He and his wife, Mary Jo, are the parents of two sons and a daughter.

## DICK DAVIS

Dick Davis, professor of religion, became a member of the Earlham College faculty in 1968 while finishing his doctoral studies at Yale University. He has taught a wide scope of religion courses, most notably New Testament, Human Existence and the Christian Faith, and Journeys of the Self. He also taught regularly at the Earlham School of Religion.



A native of Indianapolis, Dick experienced liberal arts education at Depauw University in nearby Greencastle, where he majored in history and English. His irrepressible energy and ever-ready smile made him a natural fit with the Earlham College community.

Davis helped support Sunday morning's College Meeting for Worship, an ecumenical, student-run activity that remains a popular feature of religious life at Earlham.

He also helped establish Senior Year Studies and, more notably, the Program for Integral Education, one of the College's early efforts at interdisciplinary education. In the early 1970s he served on the committee that, with Howard Richards' leadership, established the Peace Studies program at Earlham. Active in the expansion of off-campus studies, he twice led students on the London Program.

With the support of a Lilly Endowment Inc. grant, Davis has also done research and writing on the religious, social and existential dimensions of the human experience of shame.

Over the past six years Dick Davis has continued his scholarship and research while teaching on a half-time basis at Earlham. He has been convalescing at Quaker Heights Care Community in Waynesville, Ohio, from severe injuries suffered in a July 2006 accident at his farm near that community. His address is 4265 Lytle Ferry Road, Waynesville, OH 45068. He and his wife, Marian, are the parents of six adopted daughters.



## CAROLINE HIGGINS

---

Caroline Higgins was appointed professor of Peace and Global Studies and History in 1987 after years of teaching occasional courses in Latin American history and Humanities. She has directed Earlham's peace studies program since 2001 and oversaw the creation of a supportive network of PAGS alumni.

She has served on the executive committee of the Peace Studies Association and is currently on the advisory board of the seventh edition of the *Peace and World Security Studies Curriculum Guide*.

She has led numerous student study programs in Mexico, Argentina, Costa Rica and Chile and has traveled widely in Latin America on research missions. Also a recognized poet and novelist, she is the author of the 1981 award-winning *Sweet Country* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich), whose characters are caught up in the 1973 military overthrow of Chile's elected government led by Salvador Allende. The novel was later made into a major film.

Higgins earned her doctoral degree from Stanford University. She and her husband, retiring Earlham faculty member Howard Richards, plan to divide their retirement years between their homes in Santa Barbara, Calif., and Limache, Chile. They are the parents of two daughters and a granddaughter.

## HOWARD RICHARDS

---

Howard Richards has held the title of research professor since leaving his teaching post three years ago as professor of Peace and Global Studies, Education and Philosophy. Shortly after joining the Earlham faculty in 1974 he developed the College's PAGS program and, later initiated its program in Management Studies.

He and biology professor Gertrude "Lucky" Ward started the Miller Farm off-campus house, an outgrowth of the 1970s academic program in Agriculture Studies. During leaves of absence from the faculty he has led evaluation studies for the Organization of American States of cultural change programs in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia and Chile.

Over the past several years he has taught seminars at the University of Buenos Aires in Argentina, the Catholic University of Valparaiso in Chile, and the University of Dundee in Scotland.

Howard Richards earned his doctorate in philosophy at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He also holds a J.D. from Stanford, a Ph.D. in educational planning from the University of Toronto, and an Advanced Certificate in Education from Oxford. He describes himself as "the only Catholic who has ever been clerk of a Quaker meeting," an incident that happened when Friends offices in Philadelphia regarded him as the clerk of the Santiago (Chile) Friends Meeting, where he was a regular attender.

A prolific writer, his latest book is *The Dilemmas of Social Democracies*, co-authored with Joanna Swanger '90. His earlier works include *The Evaluation of Cultural Action*, *Letters from Quebec*, and *Understanding the Global Economy*, as well as a half dozen books written in Spanish. Those who read Spanish may wish to look at his latest Spanish manuscript, *Solidaridad, Participacion, Transparencia*, which is written as a series of dialogues with activists in Rosario, Argentina. It is available on his personal website [www.howardrichards.org](http://www.howardrichards.org) under the heading Dialogo Rosario.

Readers of the *Earlhamite* may also want to join one of his discussion lists by writing him at [howardri@earlham.edu](mailto:howardri@earlham.edu). One such list is in English on "cultural economics," while another is in Spanish and is named after the Virgin of Guadalupe, one of history's great peacemakers, credited with ending warfare between Spaniards and pre-colombian peoples in colonial Mexico.

## DORTHA MEREDITH

---

Dortha Meredith, director of the Newlin Center for Quaker Thought and Practice and director of the College's Project on Faith, Vocation and Leadership, has fulfilled a variety of administrative roles at Earlham since 1991, including many years as administrative assistant to the Peace and Global Studies program and executive secretary to the Peace Studies Association.

She is a graduate of Earlham College and the Earlham School of Religion. Through a host of programs in hospitality and speaker sponsorships, she has guided the Newlin Center to fulfill its mission as "a visible expression of the College's and the School of Religion's Quaker character to students and the wider Quaker community."

The comfortable Center, once known as Virginia Cottage, has also become a hub for a variety of retreats and conferences, a teaching venue for many professors, and residence for many visiting scholars.

Tony Bing, emeritus professor of English and former PAGS director, calls the Newlin Center "the final phase of (Dortha's) ministry to the College."

The secret to her success at Earlham, he remarked at Dortha's retirement tea, "is the secret of any great teacher here — she loved and respected the students. . . . Wise in her judgments and perceptive in her insights, she reminds all of us that great teaching and learning does not confine itself to the walls of the classroom."

She plans to stay connected with Earlham in retirement with volunteer work. She and her husband, Richard, are the parents of two sons.



Would you like to share favorite memories of these or other retired faculty members? Send them to us at [earlhamite@earlham.edu](mailto:earlhamite@earlham.edu) and we will post them on the Extended Engagements blog on *Earlhamite Extras*.