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Library Profile: Barb Ritty

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Library Profile: Barb Ritty

Barb Ritty, born in Cleveland, Ohio came to the Kresge Law Library in 1985 after working three years at the Hesburgh Library. Roger Jacobs was named Director in June of 1985 and hired Barb that November. As Barb reminisces, the Technical Services' staff was very small and there was a great deal of camaraderie. Among them were Jim Gates (former Head of Tech Services, now Director of the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York), Nan Moegerle (Head of Cataloging), Barb Ritty (Cataloging Assistant), Esther Batten (in charge of loose-leafing), and Phyllis Strom (Bookkeeper). When Barb started, the original law building was undergoing its third renovation, which involved the addition of the East Reading Room and the demolition of the outer wall. As Barb described it, "My desk was located across from Jim Gates. Only thick plastic sheeting separated us from the opening and the elements. Those were the days when the collection was arranged by broad subject categories and we had only one OCLC terminal, which was chained to a column. I worked at that terminal for hours wearing my coat, hat, and gloves." Today with the new renovations, Barb is experiencing a whole new set of adjustments to temporary quarters. Her desk is now located near the entrance to the library under a stairwell. A humorous sign identifies her area: "*Barb (Harriet Potter) Ritty --the lady who works under the stairs.*" When asked how she feels about her new space, she said with a smile, "It's almost as bad as it was coming in [to Kresge], because I fear they'll have me out the door, yet." This will be Barb's 24th year working in Tech Services at Kresge. She was hired as a Cataloging assistant and has been involved in several major library innovations including reorganizing the collection by call number order, closing out the card catalog for an online system, inven-

tory of the library's entire collection, and more. Today, Barb is the Cataloging Coordinator and Unit Supervisor and her main responsibilities include original and copy cataloging (microform, monographic serials, audio, and video) and various database maintenance projects. Since she is detail-oriented, problem solving is one of her main assets. On the personal level, when Barb was asked how she would describe herself, she answered with one word: "Complicated." You may find her to be

Teaching Certificate. While pursuing her studies, Barb also worked for the telephone company as a long distance and information operator. When asked, "If you could be or do anything else- what would it be?" Barb readily replied, "I would like to act on a Broadway Stage. I really wanted to go to acting school!" In response to being asked if she agreed or disagreed with Anne Frank, that "In spite of everything, people are basically good," Barb's answer was immediate



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of strong character, whimsical, a dreamer, deep, persevering, conscientious, loyal, and dedicated. She named her father as her greatest influence, saying he encouraged her to "do my best in all things." As a child she "wanted to grow up to be an elevator operator for Bonwit Teller and be impressive." Her working years began when she was 14 with various part time jobs. She delivered papers for a local Czech newspaper, stuffed envelopes for a local printing office, and later helped with their bookkeeping. Barb was the first person in her family to graduate from college, graduating Magna Cum Laude from Ursuline College in Cleveland Heights, Ohio with a double major in English and Drama along with earning a Secondary Education

and intense. "I agree, because I played her part in my senior year of High School at the Lakewood Civic Theater in front of 2,000 people. I am like her: I give people the benefit of the doubt and if more people believed that way, there would be less struggles and war." Barb's hobbies and interests include: reading biographies, fiction, and mystery novels; filling out *The New York Times* crossword puzzles in ink; and theatre. She is devoted to her four grandchildren and drives back and forth so often from Indianapolis and Cleveland to see them, that she says, "I think I'm going to ask my kids to put a steering wheel on top of my tombstone."

- Susan Hamilton