

Edwin Duerr
1905 - 1985
PROFESSOR OF THEATRE, EMERITUS

B.A., University of California, Berkeley; M.A., Cornell University
California State University, Fullerton From September 1, 1964 to June 30, 1974
Birth: February 21, 1906; Death: August 12, 1985

"Now cracks a noble heart. Good night,
sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to
thy rest!"
Hamlet

An inspiring teacher, a true friend and a scholar of the theatre - Professor Emeritus Edwin Duerr passed away in his sleep in Downey, California, on August 12, 1985.

It was the spring of 1964 when Drs. Young, Brown and Zeltzer met for lunch at a small cafe on Chapman Avenue in Fullerton. We were there to persuade Ed Duerr (New York director and author of that definitive book on the history of acting entitled, *The Length and Depth of Acting*) to join our newly created drama department as a faculty member. I was singularly impressed from the beginning by not only his professional credentials but also his enthusiasm of returning to the teaching field. He did join us and the years that followed supported our belief in him as an outstanding teacher. During that lunch, the conversation revealed his early beginnings as a theatre professor at the University of California, Berkeley. After a most successful tenure there, he was called to New York and the professional world of theatre, radio and television. To this day, he is remembered and loved by his many New York friends.

Ed was a strong and vigorous member of the Theatre Department until his retirement in 1974. His commitment to the students and to our growing theatre program was legend. Ed was a taskmaster as a director and demanded absolute honesty from his cast, but he also had a very soft and gentle side off campus. Ed's apartment on Associated Road was a haven for students and faculty who pursued the love of theatre beyond classroom walls. The door to his apartment was always open to those students who needed someone to talk to, or perhaps they would arrive around dinner time, knowing that Ed would ask, "Had your dinner yet?", and off they would go in his little blue Toyota bound for a local restaurant.

The passing of Professor Duerr, although not quite a surprise due to his advanced age and frailty, still came as a shock to all of us who knew and loved him. So many of his former students still kept in touch with him and never forgot the positive influence he had on their lives and careers.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to have crossed his path will cherish those memories, and those who did not know him can take heart that the department's Edwin Duerr Library contains a valuable collection of theatre books that he generously donated to the library shortly before his death. What a wonderful way to remember Ed, through his beloved books.

So long, Ed. I'll miss you.

Submitted by
Allen Zeltzer
Director of Instructional Media and
Professor of Theatre
October 22, 1985