



GRINDSTONE AWARD



1984

Berneice K. Smith

To give a new twist to an old expression, "God must have some special love for the Irish; He gives them so much to do, and they do it so well."

Berneice Kerrigan Smith is, by heritage, Irish. Not content with this headstart to fame, however, Berneice has devoted a very full life of selfless and tireless generosity and service to Berea, which resulted in her being chosen the nineteenth winner of the Grindstone Award as Berea's Citizen of the Year for 1984.

Berneice (yes, her name is spelled that way) was raised on a farm near Newark, Ohio. She attended Wittenberg College and then taught in country schools for several years before coming to Berea. She married Joseph B. Smith in 1932, and, when he founded the Pipeline Development Company, the business which their two sons, Ed and Will, run today, she did the bookkeeping for him. The Smiths also raised three daughters.

The 1984 honoree is reluctant to speak of her many civic involvements, her willingness to work for people and causes and her many charities, but her works have spoken for themselves. And, though a septuagenarian, Berneice's senses of

responsibility and personal involvement go on unabated.

She is a charter member of the League of Women Voters of Southwest Cuyahoga and has long worked actively in the background of the political arena. Theater is another love of Berneice's and her support of Baldwin-Wallace theater activities, from fund raising to lending her lovely antique home furnishings for the sets of plays, is well known. She is a member of the Berea Collectors Club and also is active in the American Association of Retired Persons and in the Berea Historical Society.

In 1984, Berneice Smith capped a lifetime of charitable giving when she donated her late husband's extensive collection of Charles Dickens' first editions and memorabilia to Baldwin-Wallace College.

A brief quote from two persons who nominated Berneice for the Award best sums up the 1984 winner: "She's a special person who makes our city a special place" and "everyone who knows her finds Berneice to be an unusual person, a fine citizen, a supportive Berean and a neat lady." A neat lady and a special person she is.

Presented March 21, 1985

Baldwin-Wallace College Union