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# Remarks for Sue Perkins Memorial, delivered on September 13, 1993

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## **REMARKS FOR SUE PERKINS MEMORIAL**

**Sue Perkins came to Grand Valley at the beginning. It was an exciting time for several of us who had fought hard to bring the first nursing bachelor's degree to west Michigan. Now the time had come to recruit the nursing school faculty. Sue was among the first. I think she was attracted by the challenge of building a new kind of nursing program and building it from its beginning. Whatever the reasons, she came and stayed, contributing to the continuity and stability of the nursing school.**

**I remember the first time I met and visited with Sue. We were at ease with each other immediately, and though we did not see one another often, when we did we were two friends sharing ideas and feelings. Her open smile and friendly demeanor invited you to become her friend.**

**I cannot comment on her professional contribution as**

you who worked closely with her can, but the personal characteristics that were obvious to all of us who knew her allow me to understand and assess her contribution to our community. A new school needs people who will commit to it and stay. That commitment carries them through all the trials that come with starting a new venture. Many people make their mark and move on. It is often easier that way. Sue remained, working through the difficulties and helping others work through them too. I am grateful to her for that. At times when we needed a person who knew what had happened before in order to make the right decisions for the future, Sue was here to advise and comment.

Her open and friendly way gave me the impression that she must be part of a large, sharing, caring, somewhat boisterous family, but that was not the case. She did not have

**much family. Maybe that is why she made family from friends here. Her personal family characteristics of loyalty, interest in others close to her, and personal involvement were shared with us. The faculty and students of the Kirkhof School of Nursing became the beneficiaries of those family-like qualities she had to offer to those with whom she worked.**

**As I have so often said, "The highest academic quality is diminished if it is not accompanied by qualities of caring, respect, and humility." Sue gave us professional competence, accompanied by those qualities. I liked being her colleague for that reason. She was the kind of person who contributes through work and personal values to the building of my kind of University. I felt so comfortable with her. I felt we shared the same kind of objectives and values. In our case, we didn't**

have to see each other often to have confidence in one another, to support one another, and know we were travelling on the same track. Now her time on the track is ended. We are all saddened by this, but she served her time amongst us well. She enriched the enterprise that we remain to carry on. Her life was good, positive, and productive. She leaves us with our appreciation, respect, and affection. No one can ask for more.