Richard Lewis Funkhouser, a true leader and benefactor of the Purdue Libraries, passed away on Friday April 14, 2017 in Carmel, Indiana at the age of 83. He was born in Lafayette, Indiana, and grew up on his family farm in Delphi, a Hoosier through and through. He graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education and a Master of Arts degree in Library Science from Indiana University. He joined the Libraries on June 11, 1957, the day after receiving his graduate degree, and the start of a 44 year career with the Libraries.

Richard began his career as an assistant in the Reference Unit of the General Library, and in the following year, he became the Engineering Librarian, responsible for six separate engineering libraries at the time: Civil, Electrical, Industrial, Mechanical, Engineering Sciences, and the Goss Library of the History of Engineering. He was later head of the Mathematical Sciences and Aviation Technology Libraries. He served as the Science Librarian, responsible for the administration of four libraries, from 1975 until his retirement in 2001, and was the coordinator of the Physical Sciences and Engineering Libraries for several years. He also held a two-year appointment as Visiting Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur in Kanpur, India, where he provided advice on the development of the new university’s library, especially in collection development and the architectural design of its new library building.

Richard was well regarded in the profession and the community. In June 2002, Funkhouser was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Special Libraries Association (SLA). He served on the SLA Board of Directors, as treasurer and chair of the Physics-Astronomy-Mathematics (PAM) Division, and as chair of the Science-Technology Division. In addition, he was a member and chair of several national committees and was treasurer, vice-president, and president of the Indiana Chapter of SLA.

During his career he received the John H. Moriarty Award from Purdue Libraries, the John H. Moriarty Award from the Indiana Chapter of the Special Libraries Association, and the Achievement Award from the PAM Division of SLA. He was named a Sagamore of the Wabash by the Governor of Indiana in 2001 and received the Purdue University President’s Council Pinnacle Award in 2013 in recognition of his generous gifts to the Libraries over the years, including, with his typical humility, the anonymous (at the time) endowment of the Joseph M. Dagnese Memorial Award for Excellence in Library Service by library staff.

Richard was well known for his humble, unflappable, and positive leadership within the Libraries and across campus. He has been a cornerstone of the Libraries and oracular repository of the institutional memory of the organization. He has inspired generations of librarians at Purdue and STEM librarians worldwide. He will be sorely missed and fondly remembered.