Beulah Winchel Education Library

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An educator whose career spanned many decades, schools and continents has a library named in her honor on WKU’s campus.

Amy Bingham has more on Breckinridge county native Beulah Winchel in this week’s View from the Hill.

At the height of the great depression, Beulah Winchel’s father gave her 100 dollars when she turned 18 and told her to spend it however she liked, but that was all he could give her. Luckily she used it to help fund her education at Western. Nearly 90 years later, WKU students will benefit from Winchel’s estate gift of two point five million dollars.

The Beulah Winchel Education Library is the new name for the Educational Resource Center in Gary Ransdell Hall.

 “She was both a teacher and a library media specialist so this facility combines elements of both of that and I think she would be thrilled.”

A renaming ceremony this week honored the 1939 graduate of what was then known as the Western Kentucky State Teachers College.

 “Today we pause to recognize Ms. Winchel’s spirit of giving.”

As an Educational Specialist in the Army Civilian Special Services, Winchel was able to travel the globe.

“She was sort of an exotic person. She was in Japan, this is in the late 40’s early 50’s and then in France and Germany. We would get postcards and letters with photographs in them. Pictures viewing the pyramids or sitting on the back of a camel.”

Monarch has a personal and professional connection to Winchel. His mother was her first cousin and he was her banker beginning in 1970.

 “She was raised in a time in which waste was really a vice. She believed everything could be repurposed and used.”

 “That quality I think helped her make these donations to WKU.”

Winchel was thankful to WKU for her unique professional life and wanted to give back.

 “She saw that as a way of helping other young men and women gain an education and gain a future.”

Winchel died in 2015 at the age of 103. The Beulah Winchel Trust supports four distinct areas at WKU. Scholarship fund, Library Fund, Kentucky Museum and WKU’s Department of Agriculture.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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