

WHERE AWAY

1

A SCHOOLBELL RANG

The second year I was in the library development program in Carrollton, the State was fortunate to add another truly great librarian to the Staff to take over the consultative responsibilities relating to the public program. Sarah Jones, the chief consultant for the state agency, had told me some months before that the Department of Education was trying to do this.

"We are making every effort to get the finest public librarian in the country to come to Georgia and serve on the State Staff as Public Library Consultant," she said to me one day as we were discussing some problems and our concerns for the future.

"Would it be Lucile Nix?" I quickly asked.

"How did you find out?" Sarah wanted to know. "We have kept this a secret."

"Oh, this is a judgment question, I know Miss Nix. She is the best. She came to Emory to talk to our class about regional libraries. Margaret, Byrd, and I were fortunate to have a couple of hours of quiet talk with her later in the day. I can't conceive of a greater librarian anywhere. Is there a real chance she will come?"

"We are almost sure she will. She is on the staff at Lawson-McGee Regional Library (TVA sponsored program) working out of Knoxville," Sarah said; however, she is a native of Commerce, Georgia."

Upon her arrival Sarah and Lucile were to make a marvelous team, working unselfishly in tandem always, with the best interests of our state's libraries at heart. Each was recognized nationally as a fine professional educator-librarian, and the smooth coordinating of educational efforts is a beautiful part of Georgia's educational development. Due

to their leadership, Georgia by the 1960's was to be recognized as having the finest cooperative school-public library program in the nation. Unfortunately, after Lucile and Sarah retired, the school-public library cooperative on the state level was abandoned on the alter of reorganization of state government.

On the local level, in our own region, I was to take a leaf from their book and work very closely with the public schools and West Georgia College as well as with governmental authorities, to develop a cooperative service with cohesion as well as quality in mind. My initial plan for establishing recreational service was to become involved with community activities to get to the people. At that time all neighborhood and/or village projects and programs were very, very close to all the people of a settlement. Only the direct roads north-south and east-west out of Carrollton — the main highways — were paved. There was absolutely no black topping on the county roads. What I am trying to say is that such factors as these restrained somewhat both constant local movement and outside daily contacts as we know them today. "New" faces were "strangers"; hence I had to become part and parcel of the people where they were spending their daily lives.

My survey had convinced me that we did not have a generation of adult readers. As a matter of fact, in 1944 the reading level in Georgia was about fifth grade! Ah, the children! Most parents had never had access to books, and had little reading material beyond the Bible, sales catalogs, The Farmer's Almanac, and the weekly newspaper; as a result, their children were not accustomed to having "reading" books at home.

This by no means indicates that the Georgia Department of Education was blind to the need to have library books in the schools. As a matter of fact, at the time we were setting up our public library region, there existed a fine state program in operation, encouraging and helping the schools buy library books. It was a State Matching Fund with a certain amount provided based upon the number of teachers employed by the system, as well as its average daily attendance.

Some school boards put the local matching allocation needed into their budgets; others required the local schools to raise part or all of the amount involved. In our library service area it followed that not all the state funds were being matched since the required local amount was not totally provided by the county boards, and in some instances, not provided at all.

My Emory survey had it spelled out: Make contact at the school and the church to get to the people. Through the school I knew I must somehow really reach into the homes — not to help the children

in their school activities and assignments only, but also to reach their parents and their neighbors. Here I felt I would make the greatest impact in the beginning.

We set out to reach the child immediately by initiating a program to help answer the need for books in the public schools — not just to meet curriculum needs but also the child's individual interests. The County School Superintendents recognized the importance of my effort, and committed part of their operational budget to support the public library program. It was my conviction that by setting up the library program in this way, we would be building a substantial base for the future. It would permit us to develop a system and concentrate our efforts because the old door-to-door service had long since worn itself out without reaching the total life of the communities.

Thinking that in the rural areas the chief community gathering place was the school, I was convinced that the adults in any school community would follow with interest and approval the feeding of good, wholesome literature into the schools; furthermore, that the parents and neighbors of the children would get their hands on the books too. This would be a service to the school and through it, to the home.

Some churches wanted centers. I tried this method, letting my heart rule my head; but it wasn't successful. There are just too many small rural churches; besides, churches don't lend themselves to a public project of this magnitude. Someone knowledgeable has to manage the library and at that time there were neither rural church libraries nor librarians in the area. The public could not consistently be reached through the church.

Once the schools were incorporated into the library program, interest was so great that I did not find it difficult to work in their communities during the summer or harvest-gathering months when schools normally were closed. (In the early years many rural schools were closed so the children could be at home to harvest the crops.)

In our situation, anyway, the school was the answer to establishing wide-spread initial service.

It happened just so. Superintendents, principals, teachers, children, and parents were delighted to have us "save" the county allotments. The first year, the Regional Library used \$1,682.80 of this matching fund; the second year, \$1,936.08; the third year, \$1,544.82; the fourth year, \$575.14.

It is interesting to note that thereafter, the school boards in our counties drew all available Matching Funds from the State allotments. We are confident our hard work and determination were paying off.

The horizon was broadening. The need for books and more books was being felt and a way was found to fill this felt need; furthermore, a healthy respect for our services was developing.

I now realized that serving the schools by the public library as the first step towards developing a total program was significant: I was adhering to my convictions that the public library should be an educational institution and should reach the greatest number by the quickest way possible, moving into the center of small community life.

At the schools I soon was being welcomed not only into the classrooms but also to meetings of the P.T.A., the school patrons, the community improvement clubs, faculties of the schools, community and/or neighborhood leadership committees, and student groups often times.

I was asked to go out to a school to read poetry or to tell stories; other times, to explain how the little Station Wagon Bookmobile was set up. Once in a while a school committee would call me and say something like this:

“We’re having a big turkey dinner next Friday. We want you to come down here and eat with us. We’re having a basketball game, too. Please come.” I went — as was my custom whenever possible.

I shall never, never forget the fine country-steak dinners I used to enjoy at the Maple Street School in Carrollton. It is the truth that so close was our relationship that whenever old-fashioned steak and gravy was to be served, the school children, the principal, and the Lunch Room Supervisor all thought of me. The library was becoming a part of the school program in a very large and “fattening” sense.

From the beginning I would return to each school on schedule down into each classroom to change and freshen the little collections. This took on a look of more importance as the months passed, because I had begun to select, purchase, process, and catalog books to the tune of 5,000 brand new volumes by the end of the first fiscal year that the library program was in existence.

The public schools did need us! It took a while for some of the teachers to realize that I was not there to dictate but to help. At the beginning of our program, I could detect here and there a fear of outside intervention, though it was my policy always to ask permission to speak to the teachers. My comments usually went like this:

“Your School Board and Superintendent have asked us to work with you. We shall be bringing library books into the school on schedule to help you in furnishing the children material to spice up their

class work; to afford the youngsters with wider choices in reading about their interests and self improvement; to provide you with materials to plan school projects; to place into your hands needed materials for your assignments; to assist parents as well as you teachers with child behavior, as well as in preparing programs for the local Parent-Teacher Associations. We hope you will permit us to maintain an Adult Library Center somewhere in the school for your enjoyment and for all patrons of the school to use. We solicit your advice on what subjects we should choose, on what specific titles you would like to see in the collection, and on how our service might enhance your own school and community projects."

In one situation I recall a school building with a rather thin partition north and south for the length of the building, crossed with another east and west. The grade center collections there were practically nil. In one room, for example, a very poor open bookcase was filled with old papers, old texts, etc., spread about in haphazard fashion, covered with dust. I straightened up the book station, adding new books; then I asked permission to talk a little about the books. I always did this when going into a classroom, beginning by telling an incident to attract the attention of the children; then I would briefly explain the purpose of the center and how it functioned. I also asked for two to four children to serve as my library pages, to be trained by me (later by my staff) to carry out the procedures connected with keeping the grade center neat and in order, with checking books in and out, with keeping up with the statistics and reporting to me, and with recording requests so I could bring these books especially needed. The children pages loved it and usually did a good job. The teachers warmed to the program when they realized that no dictatorship, no burdens, and no tattling were involved.

Not often did I experience a sense of foreboding; but I did once. I had gone into a senior home room one day while on a Bookmobile visit to the school and had the usual trouble finding our books, a situation which I had to face every time I went there. Though it was a first through twelfth grade school, there was no librarian. The principal was our liaison person; but he just couldn't be bothered about hunting the books. I set out to look for them. I was getting more disgusted by the minute. Finally, I found the books strewed here and there except for about a dozen. I was about to give up when I spotted them. The principal had them stacked three under the four corners of his desk to raise the height. To say I was angry is to put it mildly. I clamped my mouth shut to keep from berating the man before his students (which he deserved) as I lifted those books out with help of some young people and went out to the Bookmobile to get my bearing — and to count to the proverbial ten!

Twenty girls and two boys — lovely kids to behold — followed me right out into the Bookmobile, and some around the door, which was propped open.

“You aren’t coming back, are you?” they asked.

“At this point I can’t say,” I told them.

“We know this is awful; but listen, Miss Foster,” they begged, “if you will come back, we’ll form a library club as you asked Mr. Blank to do. He wouldn’t do it but we will anyway and keep up with all the business. We’ll handle it all. We promise. You’ll never put up with this again. We are truly ashamed.”

I looked into their bright faces and reminded my self that I had to take the ill with the good in this business. I trusted them.

“Let’s keep this as a quiet agreement. You organize and get a library club chairman. Let me hear from you when you are ready, and I’ll come back and we’ll work out the details. I cannot provide the service if your principal refuses to cooperate; nor do I want to cause trouble between you and him. If this works out all right, I not only will provide books during the school year, but I also will help you this summer. We can meet and check out books directly from the bookmobile, never going into the school during the summer after it is closed. Tell your parents, because I’d like to have them come also.

It worked out without a mishap. Later that year the principal was brought before the County Board of Education for carrying a gun and was fired at once. He left the community and the state before school was out.

I told Dr. Ingram about the incident. He said: “I was the Commencement speaker there last year. I am sure that was the dirtiest school I ever saw. You are meeting some of the saltier situations, but I see you can handle them and come out with healthy results.”

Fortunately such situations as these were rare. Cooperation was usually marked with mutual respect, followed by warm regard and even affection. The peak of respect and appreciation on the part of the faculties of one county in the region came in a rather ostentatious fashion the year I was honored by the Carroll County Teachers’ Association, as Carroll County’s Woman of the Year in Education. I did not deserve this accolade; as a matter of fact, a teacher doing a superlative classroom job the year around should have received it. I think the excellent classroom teacher is not sufficiently thanked for her life of dedication.

Most small rural schools were a joy to visit and to serve in the beginning years. I had more happy experiences than I could possibly relate. I did love to go to Oak Mountain, a very small two-teacher school with capable, loving teachers. The principal was Effie McGuire, maybe a little short on "higher" education but a post-graduate in the art of loving and handling children. The atmosphere was easy, the sharing experiences delightful, the participation by all children simply superb! This one-room building was a West Georgia College Practice School, for training future teachers. The very setting of the school was an inspiration. It was on top of Oak Mountain, surrounded by dogwoods, sassafras, sweetshrubs, oaks, poplars, sweetgums, blackgum, and the ever present pines. Inside, a huge potbellied stove occupied the center of the room. To one end was a slightly raised platform where the children put on their performances.

Very shortly after starting the program, I had bought a record player and recordings as a sort of "ice breaker" device. It worked everywhere — but especially at Oak Mountain. We shared happy hours listening to stories on record, to instructions on how to do the minuet and square dances, etc. Sometimes the children would write their own versions of old stories or fairy tales, using library books and recordings to help them, or they would plan May Day celebrations.

When Norman Rockwell, the internationally famous artist, wanted to capture for posterity American Education in the small one or two teacher rural school rapidly disappearing from our life, he first went to the Department of Education in Washington, D.C., for guidance. Dr. Kerry Smith, on the staff there, remembering his days on the faculty at West Georgia College recommended Oak Mountain School. He came and believe me, it was marvelous experience to watch this great artist at work. In a short time he had all the children flocking around him, chattering away like little magpies. For sketching purposes, he arranged the group with the potbellied stove very much in the setting and with the barefoot children surrounding "Miss Effie" — as we all called the principal — examining library books in one sketch. He made many simple sketches. This authentic art work appeared on several pages in *The Saturday Evening Post* on November 2, 1946, and was included in Thomas S. Buechner's **Norman Rockwell, Artist and Illustrator** (Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1970) as Plate 437.

Not long ago when I was in one of our branch banks on business, one of the cashiers said:

"Miss Foster, you may not remember me as a small child; but do you recall the Norman Rockwell visit to Oak Mountain?"

"Oh, yes, I do. Wasn't that a marvelous thing to happen to us!" Before I could ask any questions, she volunteered:

"Do you remember the little girl in pigtails to the right of the picture? That was me. Do you have that picture at the library?"

"Yes, in the Abrams book of Mr. Rockwell's work. Come by to see it." I invited with a happy heart.

Another very special rural school that I cut my library teeth on was Little Tallapoosa, where the fabulous Ethel McGiboney was principal. Something was going on all the time there, and to my great joy, I was usually invited. The whole community loved this school, supported its program, utilized it as a community gathering place, and really appreciated the help of the West Georgia Regional Library and its Bookmobile. The faculty boasted such excellent teachers as Bea Fisher Dye and Gladys Eddleman, who had a knack for tying the learning process around things about the school and the children. Ethel McGiboney, Bea Dye, and Gladys Eddleman used to amaze me with this and other teaching abilities.

I remember one experience I shared with them in glee — almost in disbelief! A youngster discovered a birdnest in the process of being built in a bush near the road circling the schoolyard. He went running into the building before school one early spring morning to report his "nature" find. Teachers repaired at once to the scene of discovery. All the children were allowed to view it; then a conference was called to determine what to do about it.

"Why can't we do a Nature Study all about birds?" the children asked. One of our pupil library assistants said: "Let's get Miss Foster out here to see this and talk with us about how the Bookmobile can help."

Ethel said: "All right, but you know, if we do this, we must protect the nest — not let anything happen to it." A call came to me to get out there to Little Tallapoosa and share ideas. I went immediately and participated in the project from first to last.

In the corner of the large classroom was an area set aside for nature exhibits. It was decided to develop a "bird" center, including any material the Regional Library could bring out, in addition to nature's own objects relevant to the purpose.

I carried out a number of bird books and filmstrips and birdcall recordings. In addition to reading aloud as sharing experiences, the children learned to spell the words encountered in their reading. Scrapbooks were made. They wrote short stories about the experience. A

calendar was kept on the development around the nest. When the fledgling babies began to peep their way into the little family circle, you'd have thought the kids had served as midwives!

Our work with the elementary and secondary student assistants resulted in the organization of library assistant clubs in every school. It was showing common sense for us to organize the children and youth in each school. We then could give consistent instructions and outline a program for them to follow, taking a great load off the teachers, and giving the young people fine learning experiences.

From 1944 until 1958 (in one case, 1960), we utilized the junior library club system to keep each school grade in touch with us. During the earliest part of these fourteen years there were no central elementary libraries; so we provided library services through the help of these youngsters all year long. At the end of the school year, we awarded Honor Certificates to them on each elementary and high school level, requesting that the principals or superintendents spotlight the program by giving the certificates out at Seventh Grade or Senior graduation exercises.

The library assistants became adept at housekeeping chores: shelving, checking materials in and out, collecting requests to go to the Bookmobile staff, getting materials which had been mailed from our headquarters to answer quick needs into the proper teacher's hands, keeping daily grade and school statistics on use of materials. They always were a credit to their individual institutions and to our profession.

Believe it or not, one of our finest groups from year to year was comprised of **third grade pupils** in the Sand Hill School. There was a wholesome philosophy evident all the time in that little rural teacher practice school. This was fostered by West Georgia College and encouraged by the community. These little children — boys and girls — were equally at ease welcoming outstanding guests who came from far and wide to see the institution in action, and overseeing our library materials.

Sand Hill was influenced by two great personalities, Katie Downs, who headed up the Practice School Program at West Georgia College, and an outstanding principal in the early years, Mary White (Davidson), who later joined the college staff in the Education School. Both these women were superior in ability, character, vision, and determination.

Katie, who taught Children's Literature at the college, often would say to me:

"We do appreciate the use of your Regional Library books. It gives our college students such a great variety of authors and material, and so much of it is fresh and new — far more than we could manage alone."

Then near the end of each quarter she would remind me to give her a list of the books borrowed by the students but not returned, and would say:

"If we are negligent in strengthening character, what good is all the rest?" I do not recall that we ever lost a book at the college. It was our pleasure to work with both of these fine professionals. We would talk together about our ideas of public library — rural school cooperative efforts and come up with some very fine promotions.

When I was presented the keys to our big new Gerstenslager Bookmobile in front of the Sanford Library in 1951, who should show up to add to our great joy but a large delegation of pupils from Sand Hill School led by our pupil assistants! The children were at ease but excited — as well they should be. This was one of Georgia's very first big new Bookmobiles, and they were there on that auspicious occasion. Those were halcyon days!

Having been a happy teacher myself, I found it a joy to work with teachers, children, parents, and friends of the school. It was not an assumed attitude. Never in my thirty-two years as Director of the Library did I offer adverse criticism to any teacher.

The first impression I tried to give teachers was an honest one: That I had a great deal to learn and would appreciate their help in setting up a library service to provide all members of the school community with the library materials they needed. I found them eager to have the world of books opened for their use in teaching.

My earliest effort to put our library program into operation in the schools was to appear at the fall county-wide teachers' meetings. I followed this practice for a good many years. By planning in advance with the superintendent of schools and the chairman of the teachers' associations, I was given time each year to "break the ice" to acquaint them with our purpose.

An immediate follow-up at each school was then arranged so we could involve them early in the school year. A teacher volunteered or was selected to serve as teacher-librarian (without pay). Since there were no central elementary school libraries, her/his assignment was mainly to act as liaison for dispensing or gathering information, such as grade circulation statistics, or alerting school personnel of impending visits by the library-on-wheels, or serving as individual teachers needing

special materials for classroom teaching purposes. The volunteer librarians took care of all necessary chores. It was invariably our wish to show our appreciation for their unselfish service, and I became fast friends with many. These volunteers — one chosen to represent each school — particularly appreciated the annual institute or workshop to train them.

We set these workshops up to help the schools as a part of our service — first for our volunteer school librarian, then later on expanding them to include all librarians in the region so that school and public librarians could share and learn together and thereby get to know each other. Library specialists from the Department of Education and outstanding graduate school librarians from outside our area volunteered to teach and/or to offer consultative services. We counted on them heavily and benefited greatly from their expertise.

From time to time during the school year, we followed up our annual workshops with individual school or county-wide clinics to assist the volunteer in expediting routines in teaching youngsters who worked with them as pages or library assistants, and in working harmoniously with the teachers they served. We always tried to temper our professionalism with down-to-earth practicality.

Nearly all of the schools had the policy of ordering new materials in the late spring instead of waiting for fall. When the new year began then in late August or early September, book orders (or other) would have already been delivered, ready for accessioning. In our workshops we always taught them how to initiate orders. We introduced them to some of the professional tools to use in selection of as well as in cataloging books. We explained the meaning of the Dewey Decimal System of classification and how to use the catalog cards made available by the State Department of Education Division of Instructional Materials and Library Service. We held processing and mending sessions so they could in turn teach their library assistants how to mend damaged materials. We encouraged them to prepare attractive displays throughout the year.

When the Pre-planning and Post-planning weeks for teachers became a part of the public school calendar as a tenth month of employment, one day of Pre-planning Week was designated as "Library Workshop Day" on the calendar. Two or three important purposes were accomplished in those annual workshops. It gave the volunteer teacher-librarians (working without extra salary for it) a chance to develop a good philosophy and to understand why we were using the school. They also acquired skills to coordinate our public library services with their own school projects and programs, and gained

insight into supervising the student assistants who were serving as junior librarians in the schools. These library cooperatives were helpful to each local school and helpful in developing the Regional Library services throughout the area.

The teachers soon learned that we cared about their desire to better their own teaching capabilities, too. One of Haralson County's outstanding teachers who volunteered to be the library liaison for her school Beulah Porter (now retired), recently wrote me following a talk I had made about our early history and purpose, and said:

“. . . Your institutes were of the highest quality . . . Being a member of your library classes twice, and learning in the workshops, gave me a love and understanding of library systems that contributed to my successful years of teaching . . .”

I am appreciative not only for the gratitude she expressed, but also for the recognition of the vital part the Regional Libraries played in the area of the school programs.

In the 1940's and 50's, very few teachers had Masters' degrees and many had not completed their undergraduate work. As they worked toward achieving degrees, we librarians attempted to help them. I know how difficult it was for teachers to work hard during the school day and then have to rush some distance to attend late afternoon or evening classes. When was there time to research and study quietly in college libraries? This same problem confronted them when they had Saturday classes. To assist, we prepared packets of materials as lengthy loans to be used in writing papers and theses. One of the finest teachers I ever knew, Ruth Burns, upon receiving her degree came by the library to say to us: "I feel I should share my degree with you. I never would have made it without your help." We happily accepted this expression of appreciation — that her way was made a bit easier because of our services.

A collection of recordings and filmstrips was begun early in the library program as a special service for schools. They are still in great demand daily for use in classroom teaching, particularly in geography, in history, and in science. Through requests for special materials apart from our routine bookmobile units, we began to build up a close relationship with individual schools and teachers.

I recall that once Ethel McGiboney, whom I have previously mentioned, was teaching about moths and butterflies and we together had set up a special corner for books. I had also carried some filmstrips out for her to use. Before beginning the unit of study, she had asked that I bring a copy of Gene Stratton Porter's **Girl of the Limberlost** so

that she could read aloud from it every morning before classes began. The children became enthralled with Elnora and her work with moths and butterflies.

One of the boys begged to be allowed to take the book home on Friday so that he could re-read some parts which fascinated him. Ethel agreed but was most embarrassed the next Monday when Hal didn't bring the book back. She sent him home for it; but he didn't return. This went on for a few days while the children became more and more disgusted. Finally the boy admitted that he had "lost" the book. When Ethel called me about it, I drove out and carried another copy so the reading aloud hour could continue. Months passed; then one day the book turned up in a small Baptist Church — mixed in with the song-books stacked on top of the piano in the sanctuary. I know nothing about its wanderings, but that copy of **Girl of the Limberlost** did finally come back into the collection.

I spent long, long hours preparing for the "next" day's run in the Bookmobile. Early organizational years, I was out working so much that my time for processing materials at the headquarters was somewhat limited as I did not have a staff to help me. After two years, I secured a fine business assistant, but I was still responsible for processing and cataloging. The third year when Newell Spangler joined the staff, office and technical services management in essence became professional. She remained on the staff as office manager until she retired. When Mary Baxter and Rudene Hollingsworth joined the staff to help me through the Bookmobile services our program progressed by leaps and bounds. Both having teaching experience and both highly professional and skilled, they proved to be invaluable.

I was something of a nighthawk in my zeal to get the job done and often would still be hard at it at ten o'clock in the evening with such a stillness around the College Library and the campus! The first time the night watchman came by to see whether or not I was all right, I nearly swooned!

"I just want to let you know I am looking out for you," he said. "You and me are the only ones up and about, I think."

After that, I was glad to know he came by the outside of my windows frequently — just to be sure all was well with me. I was never afraid. My family did not think well of my working so late nearly every night; but from the viewpoint of my folks, it was more in the nature of a nutritional hazard than of personal safety, since I sacrificed my supper on the altar of cataloging. (I told you the Catalog Card might rise up to meet me!)

Our library always tried to meet teachers' timetables when special requests were made. If the requests were made by telephone, all pertinent data were recorded so that the "right" material could be provided. If the next trip of the Bookmobile to the area would be too late, the requested materials were either mailed or carried out via the utility wagon. We also tried to keep in personal touch with each school principal as this gave us an opportunity to be aware of the individual school's overall programs as well as its problems. If the Regional Library could serve in some specific capacity, we considered it an opportunity to do this.

One year Etoil Banks, librarian at Douglas County High School, broke her hip just two weeks before Pre-planning Week. Knowing a large collection of new books would be left boxed for several weeks or months, with invoices unchecked, I took our Cataloging Specialist, Rudene Hollingsworth, with me over to Douglasville to volunteer our help. Robert Alexander, the excellent principal (later he served several years as Douglas County Superintendent of Schools) said:

"I am not surprised to see you. That is your usual fine service. I will appreciate it if you can straighten this out for us."

When school opened, we still were working on the card catalog; but at least all invoices had been checked and turned in to the school office and all books processed and shelved ready for use. This region had no system-wide supervising school librarians until a later date when Van Shigley, one of Georgia's finest school librarians, took on that responsibility in Douglas County; so the public librarians literally pioneered in our school libraries by coordinating good library materials with classroom and school needs.

For years in the summers we also promoted a regular **Summer Reading for Fun** program for teachers only, just to maintain a warm continuing relationship with them. At the end of the summer, we conducted a Recognition Hour for them, awarding little **Bookworm Diplomas** for all teachers who had read at least ten books for pleasure and recreation. We always served punch and cake at this affair while we laughed and shared together!

In many ways throughout the years the teachers and our library staff enjoyed a very special partnership. I grant you that as consolidation of the schools proceeded, as well as the more rapid development of public library branches and their time-consuming programs, something of the person-on-person touch in the schools has been lost; however, the relationship has remained warm and constant. We continue to work with the excellently trained school librarians, and so far as I am

concerned, the teachers I worked with were "all square and a yard wide". As a matter of fact, I am glad I heard the bell ring — and I do believe we got to school on time!