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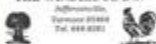
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THE WINDBRIDGE INN



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The Harold Free Library in Derby, Vt. stands the U.S. Canadian border.

Windstock in the Norman Williams Library across from the Green. There, Mrs. Vivian Bates serves as librarian and business. You can't hear to let strangers come in without greeting them and telling them she's glad they came. Since all the good librarians also know all their regular patrons, they are almost always friendly people as well as competent professionals.

The Williams Library was given, as a memorial to his father, by Dr. Edna and H. Williams who studied and practiced both civil engineering and medicine. His assistant George Worthington in developing many technical devices and went on to become president of the Baldwin Locomotive Company. When Commodore Perry opened up trade with Japan, Dr. Williams was not far behind. He delighted in that nation as a source of art and of course it was a good customer for his inventives as well. The extensive Williams Collection of Japanese art objects, since 1910, is on display throughout the library.

Also downtown is a quiet, well-kept building, left over when the building was converted to an oil heating system. With bookshelves around it, it's just right for the many story books held for children. Mrs. Bates says the kids love it. They have a 100 children's books in their attractive children's room where even the stacks are colorful.

Because it already got an addition in 1989, the main rooms of the William Library is large. Church-sized. Among the 50,000 volumes, there is a good selection of Vermontiana and genealogy books.

Last, but not least, an eye attraction to Vermont libraries, I visited a library

a-banning. As you may have noticed, libraries get going faster when they have benefactors . . . or a group of them. But not all towns are so fortunate. In Cattsburgh, Joan Albrecht and her neighbors are doing it the hard way. There was an old school building, no longer in use, and it seemed a perfect place for a library. That was incorporated to May, 1975. They felt they could best gain support by showing what a library could do for the community.

The trustees have not received small benefits, including a penny coin which valued about \$18. They've had a nice lot of gifts of books, and gifts of volunteer time. One Tullard Free Library gave them some adding chairs. Someone else came through with a second player. The project is on loan from the Regional Library as an generous selection of books. The rest is only the cost of maintenance on the building. Mrs. Albrecht doubts her time as librarian. The place is colorful and inviting, whether there is money in the treasury or not. I both hope and believe the Cattsburgh Library is going to succeed.

Sometimes, these visits to libraries, have served like only a single episode in a serial story. These libraries are alive and well. So I wonder: Will Cattsburgh be able to pay for the fuel oil winter? Will the Madoff (you know just what perfume?) What do you suppose Windstock and Vergennes will do too?

This Summer, visit a few libraries for yourself. You, too, might see a stuffed owl, or see a raw shell. There's excitement and promise behind these author project walls, waiting to be discovered.

— Eric Edwards

Department Services, Direct and Indirect

More Vermonters have a pretty good idea what goes on behind the closed doors of the State House and the Pavilion in Montpelier but the building between is less familiar. Called The Library and Shapiro Court Building, the stately granite structure is the home of the Vermont Superior Court and another state agency. "Library" is not a term which does justice. The Vermont Department of Libraries, contrary to what many people might think, is not just a large archive library. A warehouse of materials and a treasury of information, this agency provides Vermonters with services that are many and varied, and—too too frequently—unknown.

It has been my experience as a librarian that what's available at the Department of Libraries is often a surprise to many Vermont residents. One bookbinder around Christmertime I was in a local bookstore and overheard a customer inquiring if large print books could be bought or ordered. The clerk seemed doubtful, but went to find out. While she was gone I asked the customer if she would like a suggestion. She said she would and so I explained the Department's service of making large print books to people with vision problems. She told me her elderly mother, in spite of failing eyesight, "read like a wildfire," and because of this it was hard to keep her as books. Large print paperbacks didn't last but she was at all following the woman to her local library and the Department of Libraries, I left wondering how many other Vermonters were unaware of this special service which is only one of many offered by the state library system.

Some of these services benefit Vermonters indirectly and some directly. One of the major functions of the Department of Libraries, according to former State Librarian John A. McCowan, is to point local libraries to improve their services and resources. This is the indirect service. It includes consultant, auxiliary loan and reference help, film, catalog cards, continuing education of librarians, and grants to public libraries.

"The Vermont Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped" is the official title for the unit which handles large print books, among other materials, but it's best known for years as "The Special Services Unit." The staff of four, headed by Special Services Consultant Dorothy Allen, deals with Vermont state and pri-

vate institutions and with individuals. Besides large print books, there are talking books on records and cassettes (and the machines to play them), reading aids and pictures. To persons who can read in the conventional way — those with no eye problems, and those who can hold a book without any trouble — these services may not seem too important. But to many Vermonters they are a godsend. It's been several months since I've been able to read more than five minutes at a time, when all my life I've been an avid reader. One Vermonters told me, "So when I opened the boxes for large print books yesterday, it was like Christmas. New Year's, Fourth of July, and vacation all rolled into one."

Like that of the rest, other Department of Library services may also seem new to some. Assistant State Librarian Patricia E. Kinch shared one letter which dramatizes the point. A woman using the Books-by-Mail Program (formerly called "Booklet") wrote: "Being pregnant all winter and unable to get to the town library, I appreciated the mail service tremendously." As simple as that. "And some people really cannot get to a library," Mrs. Kinch said, showing me another letter which mentioned "the very great need a life in Vermont . . . it makes people like myself who work every day and cannot get to the library between 1 and 4 p.m. on Tuesdays."

A 1971 innovation of the Books-by-Mail Program is primarily for readers who don't have convenient access to a library, although Mrs. Kinch noted, "Anybody can use the program. If you live in the city, and it's hard for you to get out, use the program." Every Rural Free Delivery household in the state receives the compact brochures listing available books. Local libraries are given supplies of the brochures which are available for the asking. All the brochures have to do is select three books, then fill out and mail the coupon to the Department of Libraries. From then on, the books are mailed — free to the borrower. The state pays the postage both ways.

In spite of Vermont's small size and population, it has a very sophisticated system for obtaining reading materials for Vermonters. The slogan could be: "If somebody needs something, we'll do our best to get it for him." Assistant Reference Librarian Charlotte Kent discussed the Reference Services Unit. "We are very fortunate in having the Vermont Univer-



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1889
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Weekends until
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**DICTIONARIES
SERVING**

Ashery/Books: a place where books is made — Webster's New International Dictionary, The Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary also states that an ashery is a place of deposit for ashes.

In 1889 when the Red Store and Ashery was built it served as a general store selling dry goods, groceries, clothing, hardware and notions. The store also served as a collection depot where citizens brought the ashes from their wood fires. These ashes were collected and then transported by wagon to Montreal, the journey taking about two days. In Montreal the ashes were used in the making of soap and as fertilizer.

Home & Book Lovers

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Catalog, which includes all the collection holdings of most of the libraries in the state. We're one of the few New England states that has a complete statewide union catalog. The WPA started the catalog as something to do. This essential "tool" is the reason the Interlibrary Loan service is an effective. Requests come in from local, state colleges and other college libraries, and from the five regional libraries which filter requests from public and school libraries and from individuals. "The catalog performs a tremendous service for us," Mrs. Kay noted. "It wouldn't have the back-up of our college libraries, we couldn't provide the service we do."

What does this service mean to you? It means if you want to learn how to harness a horse, raise goats, stear, or keep bees, to produce wood-pewee or to use solar-energy (these are all recent requests), you can go to your local library and ask for material. If the local library has nothing on the subject, you can ask for an Interlibrary Loan. The librarian calls the regional library in her area and places your request, and checks are that within a short time the desired book, magazine article, or information will be located somewhere in the state. It will be

mailed to your library where you can pick it up. Many libraries borrow and loan books daily through Vermont's interlibrary loan network. A telephone service provides rapid communication between the main reference office and the larger libraries in the state.

Fred Lerner, head of this unit, de-

scribed other services his unit provides. He maintains a Library Science collection which serves as a basic resource of this type of literature. "We have the largest such collection in the state," he said. "A good deal of it belongs to the late Joseph L. Wheeler, an eminent librarian." Lerner also explained the Foundation Interna-

Library Department's First Access display "Books By Mail" brochure.



tion Center, a collection of information on foundations and grants, is available to the Vermont Department.

"We're very friendly with our reference libraries," Lerner pointed out. "Whenever new things come in, we have a little staff conference, or if somebody is on the phone from Bennington, for example, and needs an answer, we don't have to spend half an hour deciding whom to go for the information." The reference and a collection for research begins the usual stacks of encyclopedias and other multiple sets available to the three-member staff.

Another extensive collection, containing five stacks of material, is the Law and Documents Library. The circulation desk and research area located on the second floor are handy to the courtroom which is down the hall. The law collection, by far the most comprehensive in the state, is a national one, not being simply on Vermont. It includes statute law, court-made law, and secondary legal reference works and materials such as law dictionaries, encyclopedias, and legal periodicals. The documents collection contains Vermont state documents and those of other states, as well as federal ones.

The most complete collection anywhere of Vermont newspapers is stored here. Most prior to 1960 are kept in their original form, and some have also been put on microfiche. Those later than this date, as well as current newspapers, are usually on file. Since newspapers often tend not to disintegrate within a short time, something as they are handled, it's vital to get them on file.

Services to adults seem to be highlighted at the Department of Libraries, but there is one unit for children and that's the Book Exhibit Center on the first floor. Though the school collection is a non-circulating, dissemination collection of children's books and materials, young Vermonters and others are welcome to come in and browse, read, or look at picture books, and films. The Center is open to anyone interested in examining juvenile literature or in doing research.

Another department, serving both children and adults, is the Audio Visual Services Unit located at the Main State Regional Library. This unit provides loanable picture films to libraries and to non-profit organizations in the state. In 1973 it was estimated that 70 per cent of the viewers were under age 16. There is an extraordinary range of titles, but the films are not loaned on an individual basis. They are borrowed by a large operator of group institutions, churches,

Boy and Girl Scouts, sports-oriented groups and issue-oriented groups.

The Department of Libraries in the many other state agencies or successful libraries. Its home office is in Montpelier, its branches are scattered around the state. The regional libraries are "Northwest" (Green), "Northeast" (St. Albans), "Midstate" (Berlin Center), "Southwest" (Rutland), and "Southwest" (Dunsmuir). The UVM Access Office is another branch of the state library system in Rutland.

The Regional Library System was started in the 1930s when the collection was housed in five different areas of the state in favor of Vermont's local public libraries and in the basement of the state library building. Today's regional system officially began in June of 1967 with the dedication of two of these libraries. Since then, the "regions" have been providing a very effective educational service to other Vermont libraries and to individuals. Vermonters and visitors alike.

— Patricia W. Boley



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