

Staff Memories of Rotorua Libraries

Council Building 1940

Old Clerk's rules (library rules)

Glass doors opened into a tiny garden at one end of the library

On Friday the Library was open 9am-9pm. There was standing room only after 6pm.

People pounced on trolleys of books being wheeled out.

New fiction titles were 10c to borrow and old ones 5c.

Books on shelves over heaters, plastic jackets melted.

Mrs Wright had tea in a silver teapot delivered on a silver tray to her office with the Herald every morning.

Floors were wooden as were the shelves. Children's visits were very noisy - feet clattering on the floor.

Dress – Mrs Wright used to inspect length of skirts.

- Arms had to be covered and definitely no bare shoulders.

- No sneakers to be worn.

Stinky light wells - Council building had a drain in the bottom & we watered plants on the ground.

Fish tank - old council building - had to be cleaned out periodically by a junior

Masonic Building, Fenton Street 1970

Head Librarian - Miss A. or Miss Armstrong, but never called her first name (Leslie) by Library staff.

Temporary premises – for 21 years.

Smell and the fire brigade – What happened?

Public ignoring the fact a fire engine was parked out the front of the Library and climbing over a planter in front of the door to get in!

Mouse behind the heater

Pond in the stack room - with a yellow plastic duck floating in it

Staff were not allowed to talk to each other.

Feather and/or sheepskin dusters that everyone had to use while tidying. Miss Armstrong gave Mary Ellen Wilson a lesson in how to dust properly when she first came to work in the Library. It involved picking up every single book and dusting over, behind and under it. A very impressive demonstration but it did not take long to work out that if one actually dusted like that one would get into trouble for not doing enough work, and besides, no one else dusted that thoroughly.

Stacking up books in Miss A's office. - all around her desk. Cataloguing process meant' books hung around for 6 months or more.

Lunch room with musical pipes and lockers. The plumbing and drainage pipes for upstairs ran across the ceiling. It had no windows either.

"Silver" tea tray in staffroom which was rusty under the plastic lace cloth.

Tracey braving the weather to go out for a cigarette and coffee.

Male stripper (actually the mail man and he didn't really strip, started unbuttoning his shirt before getting embarrassed) as part of Robin Stonehouse's farewell.

Catalogue cards were typed out, several cards per book to include entries for author, title and subjects. Books were first catalogued by staff who wrote entries put long hand and then the typist Colleen Pakes copied them.

A gorilla with a bunch of bananas to celebrate Rachel Pinkham's birthday. Husband Ron dressed in a gorilla suit. Sang??

De sensitising books with the big, heavy "irons".

Pruning the roses outside the Library – funny how fresh looking the "deadheads" were. Marmelade was the name of the rose.

Library Liplickers Cookbook printed by staff for the Library's centennial - funds from this paid for the stained glass windows and several original art works

Centenary of the Library 1989 - Staff dressing in period costumes

6 little Mills and Boons

Moving books to Haupapa Street using hospital trolleys - combined Service Clubs provided labour, wives provided morning tea - they charged the Library and then gave the money back as a donation.

Stack room over the road

Junior Library assistant being sent home to change because Miss A, said her skirt was too short!

Corduroy trousers were deemed too 'Saturdayish' by Miss A.

Computer system so slow 3-4 minutes to ??? While installing new library management system.

Queues on Saturday morning ran the length of the Library.

Computer systems - Larri, Dynix, Horizon

Dynix gave us the first ever computer catalogue for the public.

Cards

Card Catalogue - filing cards

Collecting heavy mail bag - from the Old Post Office - now i-site.

First photocopier

Old Kodak reader/printer for microfiche which was given to the Library by Daily Post when the early Rotorua newspapers were put onto microfiche. It used rolls of thermal paper and made extremely alarming loud clanking noises when it printed.

Own chairs and no one else was allowed to sit in them.

Masking tape on the carpet covering cables, power cords, etc.

Annexe in the building next door (when preparing for move to new building). Holes in the walls for the computer cables.

Edgecumbe Earthquake 2 March 1987

Power cut in the evenings and working with Miss Armstrong in darkness.

Putting candles out on the information desk during a power cut.

Western Heights Branch (c1969-1981) - created in on of the shops on Brookland Road shopping area. Mrs Roberts was in charge and one of the juniors would travel out there to help.

Western Heights Branch - mid 1970s Mrs Chris Watt was librarian there.

Getting a mobile library.

Wearing hats, gloves, scarves - no heating in winter - death of the thermal.

Sitting on the industrial sized night store heaters throughout library to get warm.

Climbing a ladder to put up displays in the Children's area.

No talking while sonar was used to find the leak

Stacking books in Miss A's office was while the computer was down – cataloguing backlog was all in the workroom by Mary's desk and in the alcove where the Glass Case overflow was

Ron Pinkham played a CD and danced (don't remember him singing)

LARRI (Library Automated Recording and Retrieving of Information) – designed specifically for us with Mary Archer leading

Stack room 'over the road' was in the old Council Building before it became the Performing Arts Centre

Our first Puppet Show was packed with over 100 children + parents!. People watched from the adults magazine shelves on the outer side of Children's.

Climbing over fire services hoses one morning when there was an emergency call out.

New carpet (recycled, I think from somewhere) replaced worn carpet in the high traffic areas only.

Old Daily Post's in oversize, heavy bound volumes.

Don Stafford was a regular visitor as he read the Daily Post and its predecessors researching for his Rotorua history books.

Haupapa Street Building 1991

Dead rat under floor. Jane called the fire brigade thinking it was gas.

Entertainment at staff parties including Brent McKenna and Dean Phillip's audition for ABBA; the "Rapping Mommas" = Kathy Edmonds and Shirley White; Trolley Shuffle by Technical Services; "The very model of a reference librarian by Claire Ford, Jim McGregor and Mary Ellen Wilson (Don Stafford Room).

Technical Services staff and others singing happy birthday to Awful (visiting Library monster) with everyone singing out of tune and out of time with the others.

Hot swimming pool under the Lending Services workroom – a pipe taking very hot water to the court building broke and filled up the spaces under the floor. It was discovered on a Friday? When it was only a few inches below the floor and away from a major flood.

Going into Technical Services one Saturday morning after a public holiday on Friday and finding the carpet in the computer room was wet. Discovered water was coming through the ceiling in the first floor men's toilet, flood extended from the New Zealand Services study area, through the sick room and ended in Technical Services. Went to the ground floor and found the ceiling in the Lending Services workroom had collapsed.

Doing the banking and having to stay and work overtime to find 5 cents when it didn't balance.

Pukuatua Street 2016/17

The orange curved wall

Leaks aplenty.

Press Reader - Newspapers online for free ; Zinio - emagazines

Te Waka Pounamu

Te Waka Matauranga - our new Mobile Service

General

Borrowers climbing over ropes when the security gates were being installed at the front door and also when the library was closed while the carpet was being laid and the installers opened the doors to get some fresh air (summer).

FOOD - Kept our spirits up with rostered morning teas waiting for our new Haupapa Street Building.

Small windowless cramped Staffroom.

Mrs Scott's cleaning binges – going around with buckets of hot soapy water with disinfectant cleaning telephones and desks

NZ Stack and under the stairs an area known as the black hole.

Mary Ellen's menagerie and colourful birthday cakes for 'Awful'.

Hat parade - Easter Bonnets

Issues and bookstock

Conferences 1972 and 2001

H/Board

Shifting books

Friends of the Library and book fairs to raise money for the Library

Staff increases

Morning tea tray – silver salver

Man on the moon - Mrs Wright brought a radio into the library so everyone could listen to the broadcast from the moon in 1969.

Wedding in 1981

Diana's (Princess of Wales) funeral

Olympics

11 September 2001

America's Cup

Children everywhere

Workshop manuals behind the information desk, people had to ask for them.

Don Stafford Room

A Carrick-Johnson - his breath reeked of whiskey fumes (American whiskey or Scotch Whisky?) but he was also a real gentleman.

Mary Ellen Wilson our eccentric but lovely Reference Librarian.

Mary Ellen's first encounter with Don Stafford – she approached him from the public side of the counter and asked if she could help him. He said he wasn't used to being asked from that side of the counter, she replied asking would he like her to leap over to the other side. On his reply "I would like to see you try" she hoisted herself up so she was sitting on the counter, swivelled her legs around and dropped to the ground on the staff side. Mary Ellen then turned to Don and asked again if he needed any assistance, he roared with laughter.

Mr Carrick-Johnson raising his hat and politely greeting staff members with his boozy breath.

Mary Ellen falling asleep at her desk due to hot weather and lack of fresh air.

Library entries in various Christmas Parades.

Bagpiper playing the last patron out from Fenton Street and the door being locked for the last time