

York Haven library community focal point

Dancing lessons, cake-decorating demonstrations, cornhusk wreaths, teddy bear picnics, baby-sitting tips, quilting, basket making: the variety is astonishing, and the list is long. But the York Haven library is practically a tradition. It has offered patrons not only library fare, but also a sampling of crafts and activities to please every taste.

Established in 1920, the York Haven library is the second oldest in York County. It was built as part of the York Haven borough offices, with funds from the local paper company, which stipulated that part of the building be maintained as a library.

It joined the York County Library System in 1982 and was remodeled, fitted with new shelving and stocked with new books. Though the furnace isn't perfect, the windows don't open, and there is no air conditioning, the library has stood the test of time. There is a children's corner, a new books area, a research corner, and plenty of work space.

Like the steadfast tin soldier, the library remains a focal point in the community. It's a meeting place, a storytime gathering, a learning experience.

Cynthia S. Weber recently was appointed librarian at York Haven. Mrs. Weber, who holds a master of library science degree from Drexel University and was regional librarian for the Occupation Safety and Health Administration in Philadelphia. Prior to her appointment at York Haven, she was Resource Center director of the Presbytery of Carlisle in Camp Hill.

Mrs. Weber hopes to bring York Haven into the '80s with the introduction of the computer catalog system already adopted by the 14 libraries in the York County System. Library patrons will be encouraged to learn and use the Fat Cat, as it's called, to locate books housed most anywhere in the state. Fat Cat, an acronym for "friendly access terminal catalogue," will be used in conjunction with Access Pennsylvania, to begin Jan. 1, 1988.

York Haven Library Determined To Survive

YORK HAVEN — Ironically, the York Haven Free Library is being painted not wallpapered.

The library building was a gift to York Haven residents in 1920 by Henry W. Stokes, then president of International Paper Co.'s York Haven mill, a mill which makes wallpaper.

But the paper mill is closing come July 16, and because the library has survived all these years unendowed except in the grin of the good graces of York Haven's only major industry, the library's survival seems also at stake. Survival means nothing less drastic than a heart transplant.

Yet old and rickety as parts of it are, the library is getting a face-lift and tone-up, and rather than dying as its Big Brother is doing across the road and down by the river, YHFL is planning for its future.

Four Northeastern Jaycees showed up Thursday evening at the Front Street Pennsylvania Avenue corner where a Boy Scout troop and Local 449 of United Paperworkers and Papermakers were already meeting. On some nights in summer the library becomes the scene of community activity.

The Jaycees were there, upon request, to plaster and paint. And the place certainly needs it. Parts of it bring to mind the present and decadent Crispus Attucks Center.

Though the five volunteer librarians don't notice it anymore, the library's dependency upon the mill is pointed out each time the lights dim. The mill provides the library-free electricity. You get what you pay for, so no one has ever complained about the lights getting dim when generators at the mill are switched and electricity is interrupted en route.

In winter, the plant sends over coal for the furnace. Benefactor H. W. Stokes' imperious visage peers down from one wall. Handsomely



Morguekeepers Defy Dying

Three of York Haven Free Library's volunteer librarians—morguekeepers, so-called—watched appreciably Thursday as a quartet of local Jaycees painted and plastered the deteriorating library. Head librarian, Mrs. Martha Walton, seated, signed out astrology books for Mrs. Margo Setzer, second from left, while the activity went on around them. Mrs. Frances Klinefeher far left, and Mrs. Kathleen Copenheaver, right, are assistant librarians. (Daily Record Photo)

framed, suitably inscribed.

The Jaycees painted and plastered around it. Libraries are supposed to be quiet havens outside the hubbub, but Thursday evening all the shhhing roweled out from under paint scrapers.

Mrs. Martha (Marty) Walton, head librarian, tolerated the disorder happily. It was she who put the idea to the Jaycees in the first place. She was obviously pleased that the parchment-colored walls were getting a light green coating and cracks and

peeled paint were vanishing under plaster.

YHFL, next to Hanover's the oldest library in York County, is determined to survive. It's the only library between Harrisburg and York. After the Jaycees are done renovating, its determination will be difficult to deny.

Yet old Stokes' deed requires the library be maintained, and it'll be up to the borough to do when International Paper pulls out. As a free library, it holds its own fundraising dances in its upstairs



Scrape, Scrape

Milton L. Carter, first vice president of the Northeastern Jaycees, was among the group who volunteered to redo the York Haven Free Library. Carter and his associates found the job more than they expected and consequently added another day's labor to their renovation project. (Daily Record Photo)

auditorium and holds book sales on occasion to raise some revenue, since it gets none anywhere else.

While Jaycees Bill Eckman, Milt Carter, Jim Cauler and Frank Gross mounted scaffolds, skittered shelves about, scraped, plastered and painted, the librarians explained to a freckle-faced youngster named Mike that no, "Love Story" hasn't come back yet, and yes, it is overdue.

Beside the Susquehanna, the paper mill is still belching smoke as it produces paper, provides a

tax base and employs 250 people. Up on the hill, Marty Walton rearranges her magazines and dusts her new World Book

Encyclopedia set. The Jaycees are drinking coffee that Bill Eckman's wife sent along.

Somehow all these events seem far removed from one another. Yet they happened in York Haven, the

paper mill place, where the library, like the town, could die if it didn't determine to live.



Library Lift-Off

Northeastern Area Jaycees volunteered time and talent last weekend to paint and plaster the York Haven Free Library. Four Jaycees turned out Thursday night, three of whom, from left, James

Cauler, Milton L. Carter and William D. Eckman, found themselves moving bookshelves to get to peeling paint and plaster. (Daily Record Photo)

Volunteers Keep Library in Circulation

"I thought it was just impossible for a town not to have a library so I volunteered to be responsible for it."

In October 1968, the York Haven Library reopened with Martha Walton ("The kids call me Marty") in charge and it has been operating and expanding ever since, in the hands of a group of faithful volunteers.

Recently it got a repainting and refurbishing by members of the Northeastern Junior Jaycees — "a great bunch of boys," according to Mrs. Walton.

Mrs. Walton was the sole volunteer when the library got started again after having been closed for three years. Now there are several women who give their time to the library.

In fact, Mrs. Walton and a co-volunteer, Kathleen Copenheaver, took a correspondence course in library science through Loyola University in Chicago. They completed 40 lessons and both got a B-plus average.



THE YORK HAVEN LIBRARY is alive and doing well thanks to a few dedicated volunteers, among them Mrs. John Walton, right, who is responsible for reopening the library three years ago; Kathleen Copenheaver, seated, and Frances Klinefelter.

"We gained a great deal by doing it. There are so many things in library work that the layman just doesn't know about," Marty Walton said, "and the library never had a graduate librarian."

Her helpers also include Ernestine Lemkeld, Francine Klinefelter, Audrey Brady and Harriet Anderson, and since reopening of the library they have pulled out the old books and have recatalogued the whole library, over 3,000 volumes.

There are about 10 steps for placing each book including putting on the plastic cover, according to the librarian. Over 700 card-holders belong to the library; not just from York Haven, but the whole northeastern section of the county.

"We have room for 30 students to come in and study. They use encyclopedia and reference books. It's a good place to study, especially when you live in crowded places with television going," Mrs. Walton said. "In the summer we play records softly while the youngsters read, but not during the school year. Truthfully, it's about the only place for children to go. York Haven really doesn't have too much to offer."

Mrs. Walton, herself, has "always been a reader." Like most book-lovers she sees no point in just having books sitting on shelves, and so has donated over 100 books of her own to the library.

"I thought the need was

greater here than at home," she explained.

Nonfiction Popular

During the winter she believes that nonfiction outranks fiction in popularity. Older children, particularly, read a lot of non-fiction.

"It could be, too, that we've built up our nonfiction faster," she reasoned. We have bought more nonfiction, but most of our donations have been fiction."

The library boasts a complete collection of Zane Grey and is beginning to build up its stock of periodicals. Paperbacks and newspapers are taken out on the honor system which seems to work very well. There has been very little loss.

The library relies a lot on contributions since it does not spend enough to be eligible for state funds. It gets \$300 a year from the county.

"Last year we spent \$456.63 on books and \$57.80 on periodicals. In 1969, we spent more on books because we were desperate for them," Mrs. Walton said.

Until now, the International Paper Co. supplied the library with electricity from its generator and with coal for heating. But with the closing of the paper mill, the borough will provide for electricity.

In the library — which is part of the building built in 1920 for the community by Henry W. Stokes, then owner of the paper



THE COMMUNITY BUILDING houses the public library recently refurbished by the Northeastern Junior Jaycees. Volunteers scraped and scrubbed and painted the dingy, peeling walls to give the library, built in 1920, a bright, fresh look.

company — there are some antique paintings and prints which are going to be sold to raise money. Occasionally, a dance is held to raise funds.

County's 2nd Oldest

The volunteers select the books to be purchased and are advised by a representative from Martin Memorial Library, Ann Henry, who visits the York Haven Library once a week. And there is a library board comprising one representative

from the mill, from each of three churches, the borough council, Parent Teacher Association and the school board.

The York Haven Library claims the distinction of being the next oldest library in York County, second only to the Hanover Library. It is surely one of the most appreciated, according to one borough resident, who said, "There was a time when I think I had read every book in the library."