

Tay Clark Honored For Service To Library, Town, And School

By Ray Mitchell
Beacon staff

"There was never a day that I dreaded coming to work."

That was how Tay Clark described her 33 years at the Andover Library. She has seen it grow from a couple of crowded rooms into the attractive place that now offers us so many resources. A telling of the things that Tay has done over the past 33 years. A computer is now as much a part of the library as a book. "It helps us to get the most and best information as quickly as possible," according to Tay. The entire collection is being catalogued in the computer for speed in finding books. It also helps us borrow books that are not in our library through the inter-library loan program.

Tay's goal was to serve the public by making available resources to meet the needs and wants of patrons. This has led to the variety of media and programs of our library. Our libraries are building collections of movies on VCR and DVD. People with disabilities are served by our library, too. Some books are in large print. Some are on tape. When patrons are unable to come to the library, arrangements have been made to deliver books.

Children have been an important part of Tay's work. She began by volunteering to start a library at the elementary school. That has grown into an independent facility. Then Tay welcomed students in grades one to three on their weekly visit to our library. This program continues to be offered.

One of the busiest times at the library is 10:00 Wednesday mornings. At story time you will find children and parents gathered to hear books from our children's collection read. In summer there is a reading program for older children. This challenges children to read, even when there is no school assignment.

Tay says that children are reading earlier and better. Their choice of books is more sophisticated. This may be a surprise to those who predicted that TV would bring an end to children's reading.

If you think of a librarian as someone who is old and crotchety and always shushing people, think about all the innovations brought to our library over the past 33 years. A computer is now as much a part of the library as a book. "It helps us to get the most and best information as quickly as possible," according to Tay. The entire collection is being catalogued in the computer for speed in finding books. It also helps us borrow books that are not in our library through the inter-library loan program.

The core of a librarian's work is to build and maintain the collection. Most of this is done behind the scenes. What patrons see and appreciate most is the librarian's knowledge of the collection and ability to guide us to the book or article we need. Tay was a master at this.

When asked, "What gave you the most satisfaction?" Tay replied, "Planning the new addition when Town Hall was renovated." As we sat in the comfortable chairs in the pleasant surroundings of the reading room, I could understand why she valued that work. The 2001 project made our library an inviting place.

Tay Clark was a fountain of information for anyone who walked through the door. We will miss her pleasant demeanor and willingness to share. We wish her well in retirement.



On September 24, everyone turned out to honor Tay Clark's many years of service to the community. There were tables full of delicious snacks, a rousing tribute to Tay by the Andover One Wheelers,...



...lots of conversation and reminiscing...



...and finally, tokens of sincere appreciation from many of the groups that Tay served.

