



A memo to the ALA Executive Board and Headquarters Staff

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(Following is the annual report as given by Ruth White, 1963 president of the ALA Staff Association, at its annual meeting January 9th:)

ALA STAFF ASSOCIATION
PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1963

The first year in the new Headquarters Building has brought many pleasant experiences to the ALA Headquarters Staff Association. There were some problems at the beginning of the year; but as the first anniversary approaches, most of the problems have been forgotten and only the happy memories remain.

We are gratified that the ALA management chose to ask our advice on the furniture and furnishings of the staff lounge. Reports indicate that everything is much nicer than anticipated. Many were disappointed that the staff uses were not taken into consideration in planning the kitchen. But, as things have worked out, Mrs. Krol reigns supreme in the kitchen until the second lunch hour ends and the staff has reconciled itself to cold, home-prepared lunches.

The arrangements for making the coffee led to conferences with an executive from the Coffee Brewing Institute (even though we cannot be in competition for their gold cup), interviews with manufacturers of equipment, and finally to the two percolators which we now use. The housekeepers checked the various bakeries, coffee wholesalers, and dairies to make arrangements for the most economical and efficient deliveries. Until each of you has served as housekeeper, you will have no idea how often you almost didn't get your daily cup of coffee with cream, sugar, and roll.

After we started making our own coffee, the owners of the coffee, rolls, and candy machines took out their machines because of the reduced revenue. That led to a search for a vending machine not requiring a fixed income. We hope the Minckly-Schmidt with its three choices has met most of your needs. So much for some of the details of setting up a new staff lounge.

In other things, the year has repeated many of the happy social events we had learned to expect and enjoy before the demolition and erection. We opened the staff lounge with the Valentine party and ended the year with Christmas party.

We continued the orientation meetings started in previous years with Mr. Asheim showing slides from his Far East trip, Mr. Asheim and Mr. Clift combining slides and comments on their Brazilian trip, and Mr. Clift presenting an illustrated talk on his German trip. Plans have been made for Mrs. Stevenson to tell us about ALA and its place in American and foreign library progress.

The Information and Welfare Committee went over the merit award proposal again and presented it to the membership, incorporating the suggestions made at the last annual meeting. The idea behind this award had been suggested several times over the years, but it had never become definite until last year.

The Staff Association continued the practice started in 1962 of honoring those staff members who have worked at ALA for 20 years and planning farewell luncheons for those who had been on the staff at least four years.

The Staff Association recognized its debt to ALA for such attractive and comfortable working conditions by a \$100 donation to the building fund and the gift of a flagpole and flag. Mr. Clift has referred the latter to the Executive Board for approval. The absence of a flagpole was especially felt at the time of the death of the President. Some have felt it also on happy occasions.

We were very pleased when Mr. Clift recognized the organization and host abilities of the staff and asked the Staff Association to arrange a reception and tea for the Executive Board when they met in the new building for the first time. Accordingly, our Social Committee with Myrtle Robinson, chairman, made all the arrangements with the willing assistance of many others. I think every staff member was able to meet each member of the Executive Board and become acquainted with some. We are grateful to Mr. Clift for giving us this opportunity.

The Illinois Chapter of the Special Libraries Association was given permission to use the Staff Lounge for its Christmas party. All of the staff were invited, and our social committee chairman graciously assisted in the advance preparations.

The committee reports have told of such activities for the staff welfare as flowers and cards to the sick or bereaved, requests for blood, progress on the staff manual, magazine subscriptions and Christmas cards at reduced rates, books for the Staff Lounge, and future plans for helping the new employee become acquainted.

As the Staff Association moves ahead, I hope that the orientation meetings will be continued and that plans for helping new employees become better acquainted with ALA and its staff can be perfected. The much talked-of staff manual, on which earlier Personnel Committees worked, seems to be almost a reality. It should prove a help both to old and new employees. Beginnings were made on a book collection in the Staff Lounge, but many of the reading staff have, unfortunately, considered the books theirs and kept them permanently. I hope that some way can be worked out so that all the staff will have use of a general collection of books in the lounge. Mrs. Holsman has ideas for activities for the coming year, but she, like me, will welcome your suggestions.

Contributions to the Crusade of Mercy exceeded that of any other year. We like to think this was due to the Staff Association sponsored appeals in the Headquarters Reporter and the Accounting Department's agreement to make two payroll withholdings if requested.

This year with all its opportunities and new arrangements and, yes, problems, too, would not have been bearable without the reliable and cheerful help of the Executive Committee, the seven people who never failed to do what the occasion required and usually rose above what my feeble imagination could see. So, to Mr. Carner, past president, Mrs. Holsman, vice president, Mrs. Breitenbach, secretary, Roland Wright, treasurer, Miss Synwolt, Information and Welfare chairman,