

# **LIBRARY SERVICE TO AN AGING POPULATION**

An Institute presented by

The American Library Association Adult Services Division

and

The American Library Association Office for Adult Education

JUNE 22-26, 1959

Edited by

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Assistant to the Executive Secretary

Public Library Association

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## FOREWORD

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The problems that come with age may appear in any aspect of living — income, employment, health, housing, and civic and social participation.

The solution does not lie in any one of these areas . . . but in all of these and the interrelationships among them. We must see the field of aging whole. There are no quick and easy solutions. . . .

If we continually examine our needs and potentials in the field of aging, we will continue to advance as individuals, as communities, and as a nation in this aspect of life which touches every family. Passage of this legislation will mean that, in the next two years, not only the "paid professionals" but citizens in every state and in many communities will get together to explore and take action to meet the challenge of aging, building up finally in the White House Conference to a truly national expression of the goals of our people for living in the later years.

Senator William A. Purtell, Connecticut<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>From a statement supporting legislation for a White House Conference on Aging, *Congressional Record*, August 18, 1958, p.16660.

## PREFACE

The Adult Services Division of the American Library Association owes gratitude to the many who took part in the planning and carrying out of the plans for the Institute on Library Service to an Aging Population. Developments since the Institute indicate that its purposes have been admirably fulfilled and that its influence has reached well beyond those attending its sessions.

Over-all responsibility for the Institute was undertaken by the Adult Services Division Committee on Library Service to an Aging Population — Mrs. Orrilla T. Blackshear (chairman), Elizabeth Ferguson, Mrs. Helen F. Hirson, Mrs. Winifred E. Stone, and Rose Vainstein. The planning was carried out by a special planning committee — Mrs. Orrilla T. Blackshear (chairman), Clara E. Lucoli, Mrs. Dorothy Kuhn Oko, Hannis S. Smith, Mrs. Winifred E. Stone, and Rose Vainstein. The Institute co-ordinator was Eleanor Phinney, executive secretary, A.L.A. Adult Services Division and Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries, who was assisted by Dorothy Kittel, consultant, A.L.A. Library-Community Project.

This report on the Institute was compiled from a variety of sources and represents the contribution of many individuals. Participants served as reporters for each session except the fifth, for which a stenotype report was made. The Institute staff and the Adult Services Division are indebted to Mrs. Ellen Commons, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Mrs. Dorothy Lynch, Westchester Library System; Mrs. Miriam Reeves, Louisiana State Department of Education; and Miss Elaine von Oesen, North Carolina State Library, for their work as session reporters. The speeches by Miss Randall are reproduced in the form in which she provided them in advance.

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Director, Library Division

State Department of Education

St. Paul, Minnesota

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      Library Services Branch, Office of Education, U.S.  
      Department of Health, Education, and Welfare)

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# INTRODUCTION

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## PURPOSES AND PLANNING OF THE INSTITUTE

The American people are living longer, and remaining relatively active longer, than ever before in history. The American Library Association has been concerned with the many aspects of library service which take into consideration the needs of this increasing number of older people in our society. Studies made by the Office for Adult Education, with the advice of a committee of the Adult Services Division, indicated that there was a real need for public libraries to recognize these needs, and to have a better understanding of what they meant in public library service. With the announcement of plans for a White House Conference on Aging, to be held in 1961, the Adult Services Division of the American Library Association felt that now was the time to work with the Office for Adult Education on an institute which would help librarians recognize and define their responsibilities and capabilities in this area of service. Such an institute would also provide a basis for active library participation in preparation for the White House Conference on Aging.

A special planning committee for the Institute was drafted, which included the chairman of the Adult Services Division Committee on Library Service to an Aging Population; the chairman of the committee which was planning the special joint session on the handicapped reader to be co-ordinated with the Institute; the chairman of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups; the librarian of the National Committee on Aging; and the public library specialist of the Library Services Branch of the U.S. Office of Education, who had specific responsibility for service to the aging. The president and the executive secretary of the Adult Services Division served ex officio.

At an all-day planning meeting on November 11, 1958, this committee set up the following objectives for the Institute:

1. To help librarians recognize and define their responsibilities for
  - a. serving as a source of information on all aspects of the aging process
  - b. making people of all ages aware of the problems and of the availability of materials about these problems
  - c. co-operating with, stimulating, and supplementing the work of community agencies responsible for working with and planning for older people
  - d. meeting directly the special educational needs of the older individual, either singly or in groups
  - e. aiding those working with older people either as volunteers or as professionals
  - f. helping the individual adult to prepare for his later years

2. To develop knowledge of some types of library services with which to carry out these responsibilities
3. To prepare librarians to take part in the preparation for and carrying out of the White House Conference on Aging on the local, state, and national levels

In order that the Institute would not be too large for discussion from the floor and that sufficient working materials would be available, the number of participants was limited to 300, and advance registration by mail was required. Future liaison in the states with the White House Conference on Aging and other activities in the field of aging was assured by inviting state library extension agencies and state library associations to designate official delegates, who would be expected to report back to their state groups and to serve as future contacts.

The Institute was planned as a part of the Adult Services Division program during the American Library Association Conference in Washington, D. C., June 22-26, 1959. It took place on successive days and consisted of five sessions, each beginning at 8 o'clock in the morning and running for an hour and a half. Because the chief purpose of the Institute was to inform, presentation of the subject was made largely through talks by experts in their fields. The talks were followed by panel discussions, in which librarians sought to relate library services to the subject area, and by questions from the floor. One member of the Institute planning committee took the major responsibility for each session, assisting in the selection of the speakers, briefing the panel members, and acting as chairman for the session.

During the first four sessions, participants were asked to prepare questions on the library's role in meeting the needs brought out in the discussion. These questions were collected at the end of each session. Participants were also urged, between sessions, to make use of the question box which was kept at the Adult Services Division booth in the exhibit area. From these questions the panel discussion in the fifth session was developed.

Two other programs during the A.L.A. Conference were planned in relation to the Institute. The noonday film showing on June 24, presented by the Audio-Visual Committee, was devoted to films on understanding the aging and the handicapped. A session planned and sponsored jointly by the Adult Services Division, the Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries, the Audio-Visual Committee, the Library Service to the Blind Round Table, the Public Library Association, and the Young Adult Services Division took place June 24 from 10 A.M. to noon, immediately following the third session of the Institute. The topic was "Helping Readers Who Present Special Problems." A panel considered the responsibility of the librarian to readers who lack reading skill or basic knowledge or have physical handicaps — all handicaps which occur among older people.

The speeches and discussions were supplemented and augmented by a variety of means. A workbook was prepared for the use of the participants, which contained not only the program, objectives of the Institute, and names of speakers, but an evaluation sheet and a list of selected materials on the field of aging, which had been compiled by



the Institute planning committee (for the list see Appendix II, page 51). Copies of Miss Randall's keynote speech on June 22 were provided for participants at the end of that session. In addition, kits were distributed which contained the bibliography prepared by the Federal Council on Aging, *Federal Publications on Aging; A Bibliography on Aging*, supplied by the National Committee on the Aging; a sample issue of *Aging*; and the Adult Services Division bibliography, "Service to the Aging," prepared by Rose Vainstein of the U.S. Office of Education (see Appendix III, page 54).

In order to provide a wide sampling of material and information on current programs and services of public libraries in this area, libraries were asked to send folders, book lists, programs, and other publications for distribution in quantity. The generous response from all over the country made possible a valuable and attractive display, which was set up at each session by Mrs. Mary Backer, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

At the last session participants were asked to fill out and hand in, or mail, the evaluation sheets contained in the workbook. A summary of their evaluation is presented in Appendix I (page 46).

## SESSION I

# AGING AS IT AFFECTS THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

### *Chairman*

MRS. ORRILLA T. BLACKSHEAR

Assistant Director, Madison (Wisconsin) Public Library

Chairman, Library Service to an Aging Population Committee,  
Adult Services Division

### *Purpose of session*

To orient participants to the objectives and structure of the Institute and to give participants a sense of the impact of aging on the individual and society

## Libraries and the White House Conference on Aging

BERTHA S. ADKINS<sup>1</sup>

Undersecretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

It is a pleasure to be a part of this imaginative effort to help librarians find new ways of serving an aging population. I know that you are determined to make the best possible use of all resources and opportunities, so that older men and women in our society may find lives more personally satisfying and productive.

During the seventeenth century a writer made this down-to-earth statement: "Early sow, early mow." I am pleased that you are beginning now to sow the seeds of ideas for future directions in your work.

I do not have to repeat statistics to emphasize the scope and size of our public library systems except to state there are 7500 such systems in our country exclusive of branches. What a tremendous national asset and national resource our libraries represent!

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is vitally interested in the public library program as demonstrated by the activities of

<sup>1</sup>Bertha Sheppard Adkins, Undersecretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, was previously Dean of Women at Western Maryland College; Dean of Residence at Bradford Junior College, Massachusetts; executive director of the Women's Division of the Republican National Committee; and assistant chairman of the Republican National Committee. As Undersecretary, she represented the United States at a UN seminar on the Participation of Women in Public Life in Bogotá, Colombia; was the featured speaker at the fourteenth annual American Days Festival in Pori, Finland; and was the only woman member of an official U.S. mission to Poland sponsored by the International Educational Exchange Program of the Department of State.

the Library Services Branch of the U.S. Office of Education. This branch has, as one of its assigned responsibilities, that of library services to the aging. Through its public library specialist, Rose Vainstein, advisory and consultant services are made available to librarians, educators, community agencies, and others concerned with the educational and recreational aspects of aging.

We are depending on the branch's continued support in preparing for the White House Conference on Aging, just as we are also counting on the support of the American Library Association. For only through the co-operative effort of all agencies, groups, and individuals — government and private — shall we be able to meet some of the challenges presented by our aging population.

The ability and competency of our library personnel cannot be questioned. It is encouraging to note that, in North Carolina, the governor has designated the state library agency as the clearinghouse for information on aging. This will be a distinct asset in North Carolina's planning and preparation for the 1961 White House Conference on Aging.

The chairman of the Wisconsin Interdepartmental Committee on Aging Population is S. Janice Kee, secretary, Wisconsin Free Library Commission. Here is another example of the important role our libraries and our librarians can and will play in the White House Conference. Grace Stevenson, deputy executive director of the American Library Association, is a member of the Advisory Committee to the White House Conference on Aging. We will be looking to her for guidance in bringing our public libraries into the conference programs.

The needs and problems of our rapidly increasing older population are many-faceted. We want to develop sound programs in the fields of economic security and income; health, medical, and restorative care; and housing, recreation, and social and civic participation for our older citizens. The White House Conference is the instrument by which we can develop sound programs in these areas providing we get on with the job now.

Our libraries reach all classes, all religions, and all ages, and the public libraries especially can offer tremendous educational services to older persons. More and more of our older citizens are turning to our public libraries for information on their specific problems — on retirement plans, on geographical locations best suited for their health and general well-being, on hobbies, on diet, and, in fact, on every subject that bears on living in the later years.

This is the time for our librarians to be aggressive in contributing imagination, ideas, and energies to their respective state efforts in preparing for the White House Conference on Aging in 1961.

It is my hope that you will get in touch with the official in your state who will be responsible for the plans and preparations for the White House Conference. A "Directory of Official State Agencies on Aging" is available from the Special Staff on Aging in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. If there should be no such person, or your state does not have a commission, council, or agency on aging, then by all means call this to the attention of your governor, stressing to him the importance of taking action in this area so vital to American life.

I further hope that you will emphasize the need for bringing the public library and all its resources into your state's program on aging.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote: "Books constitute capital. A library book lasts as long as a house, for hundreds of years. It is not, then, an article of mere consumption but fairly of capital..."

Let us hope that we can find more ways of using the vast capital that our great public libraries hold, and particularly that we may find new ways to draw interest from this capital to benefit the older men and women in our society.

## **Aging as it affects the individual and society**

OLLIE A. RANDALL<sup>2</sup>

Vice-Chairman, National Committee on Aging,  
National Social Welfare Assembly

The topic we are discussing today definitely implies the interrelatedness of the effects of aging. The individual member of the population is most intimately and directly affected by this process natural to all living things. The inevitable corollary is that the society of which the individual is a part is both directly and indirectly affected as the numbers of individuals who are feeling or experiencing the impact of aging increase. Actually the effects upon the one either create or help determine the kind of effect which aging has upon the other.

### *Aging of Society—What Is It?*

In the effort to be accurate, the aging of a society might be defined in at least two ways. There is the society which by its very survival over many years and centuries is a society which has aged by virtue of the length of time it has existed. Take, for example, the societies of some of the countries of Asia, South America, and Europe — and even our own American Indian people who have retained, through our governmental policies, the individual characteristics of an old society in some parts of our country. On the other hand, the aging of a society as we are using the phrase today usually means the change in the composition of the age groupings in that society. This can take place from several

<sup>2</sup> Among Miss Randall's many activities and contributions to the study of the aging are: past president, Gerontological Society; leader, 1954 International Gerontological Seminar in European countries; member, former Commission on Chronic Illness; consultant, New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging; consultant, New York State Joint Hospital Survey and Planning Commission; formerly consultant, New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Interstate Cooperation; member, New York State Council on Recreation for the Elderly; consultant, Ford Foundation, Program on Aging; program consultant, 1950 National Conference on Aging; member, Committees on Aging of several national associations; for many years associated with the administration of services for the aged of the Community Service Society of New York.

causes which do not necessarily relate to the years the society has existed. As we think of the population of the United States, it is clearly evident that it is not the years our nation has been on this continent, either in colonial days or as a nation of states, that account for what we describe as its aging. Ours is a relatively young nation, chronologically speaking, yet we know that some of the changes in our immigration policies and some of the advances in the several sciences — resulting in improved living conditions as well as in the improvement of individual health for many people — have brought about this phenomenon we are pleased to call the “aging of the population.”

By reducing mortality rates of both infants and older people, and by relating these to a fluctuating birth rate, we find ourselves with a new high in the proportion of older people in our midst. Annually the number of persons reaching 65 and over — this is the bench mark in the life span at which old age is presumably reached — is now in the neighborhood of some 400,000.<sup>3</sup> Deducting from this number about 20 per cent for mortality losses, we find ourselves with a net annual increment of some 320,000 persons. It therefore seems sound in the light of present knowledge to estimate that by 1970 there will be about 19,000,000 people in this age group who in that year — only about a decade from now — will be competing for status in society with the college age group who represent the so-called “baby boom” of the years immediately following World War II.

These figures in and of themselves seem staggering. They are even more staggering when their implication is sensed. It means that nowadays in our society we have for the first time — with life expectancy around 70 years of age — a two-generation group of older people. The younger generation of older people — say from 60 or 65 to about 80 — have characteristics quite different from those of the older generation — those from 80 or so onward. They are today more vigorous than their antecedents were at the same age. By their very survival they have demonstrated that vigor. They have greater ability to be self-directing. They have a greater desire to remain active and to continue to live as they have lived before attaining this mystical point in the years of a lifetime. The older generation is more likely to have the general characteristics usually ascribed almost automatically to older people — the more enfeebling characteristics that come as a result of years which may bring physical, emotional, or mental limitations.

So far as society is concerned, there are at least two very vital aspects to the aging of the population of the United States which cannot be ignored in our planning either for the individual or for society. One of these is the great difference in longevity between women and men. For instance, it is estimated that by 1975 women in the upper age group may well outnumber men in that group by some 3 million. Even more significant for planning for adult education and services is the fact that, in the age group over 45, women may exceed the number of men in that same group by almost 5-1/2 million, or about 2-1/2 million in the 45 through 65 age group. These ratios of women to men have distinct

<sup>3</sup> This figure increases each year. The estimate for 1959 is about 402,000.

bearing on the economic and social development of the future, and on the character of the roles of each in the social as well as in the economic environment.

The second vital aspect is the change in family relationships and living arrangements. Families now find themselves comprised of three, four, and five generations but are living in such a way that the circle of the family under a single roof is usually made up of only two of these generations — that of younger parents and their young children. We are told that the most striking fact about the living arrangements of older people is the high concentration of one- and two-person families.

The level of educational experience of persons now reaching the point at which their seniority is *supposed* to begin is considerably higher than it was for those persons who reached, not their majority, but their later maturity, a generation or so ago. Not only has public education become an actuality in most parts of the United States for anyone who should have it, but the maximum age to which compulsory education is enforced has risen sharply in the years since the end of World War I. In many states the age is established at 18 and in others at 16 — definitely a higher goal than the 14-year limit of my own school days. Also, higher education has ceased to be the experience of a very privileged few but is gradually becoming more and more accepted as an integral part of a well-rounded education.

Yet, if we pause to consider developments of the past decade or so, we cannot but be extremely grateful for the growing prevalence of adult education programs: for those adults completing their basic education and training or for those adults who are planfully supplementing both their formal education and the education acquired by the mere process of living by attending either formal or informal classes designed to meet a specific need. Adult educators, including librarians, are learning the new skills that must be used with older people who know how to think for themselves and with others who need help in doing this. The classic question is often raised as to whether older people should be included in classes with younger persons, or should remain in classes with only their own age peers. There is no single answer to this, for so much depends on the individual older person, his reason for being in a group or class at all, and his feeling of security with the group.

Adult education is so much more than instruction or teaching of information, or the teaching of a vocational technique or skill alone. The formality or informality of the method, the atmosphere of the place for the class, and the ability of the leader to understand the real aims of the members of the class or group are the factors upon which success or unsucess for the members may depend. The great variety and diversity of interests, as well as the great variety of levels of educational background of the members, provide certain problems, but at the same time offer one of the most challenging opportunities we find in any educational program. That the library — as one of the major elements in adult education programs, through assisting self-directed groups as well as those having a trained teacher — is beginning to realize its potential in this important field is a most encouraging sign.

## *Labor Force*

The composition of the labor force has come to reflect in several ways the changes in the population and the impact of our "away from the farm" trend in the nation as a whole. There is a declining trend in the employment of men 55 and over and an upward trend in the employment of women 45 to 54: 33 per cent of the women in the labor force are in this age group. This is part of the new labor situation in which over one third of the *total* labor force is made up of women; however, very few of them are over 65.

In this trend there are definite implications for society as to the *way* women spend their time, *where* they spend it, *what* their income status is, and *what* this means to them and their families during their working days and to them in their later years.

## *Income Status*

The employment situation for all of us obviously affects quite directly our income situation in the later years in these days of a social security program. With well over 90 per cent of our older people in covered employment, this means that, if employment is continuous and at a fairly good level of wages or salary, our older people of the future will be assured of a regular income which will, presumably, be sufficient to meet the basic needs of housing, food, and clothing with a few incidentals thrown in.

It probably will not be sufficient to purchase, except on some insurance basis, adequate medical and nursing care should it become a major need in the later years. Today the picture is not very rosy. Nevertheless, there is at least the possibility of some form of financial support through some one of the programs of assistance or social insurance or industrial pensions. These are more and more numerous and more and more related to the realistic needs of retirees. But lest we all feel too comfortable about this, let us remember that it will be another generation before the improved benefits will reach retirees, and that the average income of 81 per cent of the women over 65 only recently was below \$2000. Men fare a bit better. But in an inflationary period, as living costs rise and income remains *fixed*, neither a man nor a woman is apt to be in a position to take care of the expenses of health crises or to provide for the drain upon income which the high cost of continuing care places upon it.

## *Health*

Despite the fact that medical and environmental controls have progressed miraculously, it is still true that a large number of older individuals find themselves in the unenviable state of needing medical attention, and perhaps nursing care, on a more or less extended basis. The paradoxical development which enables people to stay alive longer because of a better health level, only to find the later years plagued by chronic illness, disability, and invalidism, is creating one of society's major problems. How to minimize the effects of these ailments and to make the years count as a blessing rather than as a burden is not

simple in a society prepared neither by attitude, experience, nor resources to deal with this new dimension in living in a manner both socially and personally desirable.

This whole matter of the health status of older people has a direct effect upon housing and living arrangements for those who are independent and quasi-independent and those who are nominated as "sheltered care," that is, the person is given the kind of care he needs on a 24-hour or "round-the-clock" basis with a group of other unrelated persons with similar needs of a social or health nature. Of special consequence these days are the new problems being brought to the fore by the recent developments in psychiatry and in care given in mental hospitals. There is tremendous hope for better days for older people who once were condemned to wear out their years in confusion and were isolated from their peers in the community because of this confusion. Many of the difficulties once thought inevitable and incurable concomitants of old age are now found to be reversible to some extent. A number of older persons can today be moved from the mental hospital to the community at large.

But while this solves some of the miserable overcrowding so common in our state institutions, it creates a whole new set of problems for the individual patients, the families of the patients, and agencies in the communities. The latter are unprepared for the special type of service such paroled or discharged patients should have in order to cope with living in the "outside world," for the community has become just that to most of them.

### *What of the Individual?*

What does aging mean to the individual himself? In the first place, let us keep in mind the most important of all statistics — or the one which has the greatest significance for each of us. One in one of all of us alive today has a better chance than ever before of reaching that fourth and fifth stage of life, and of living those years out with better satisfaction and contentment in them, than was possible for our parents, grandparents, and others who came before us. Beyond this, let us also keep in mind the very important fact that aging is essentially different for each one of us. Each of us is not only unique in his own right as a person, but in the quality of uniqueness with which living experience endows him. Each of us is a human being born into this world with special characteristics peculiar unto himself. As he reaches old age, he is this still, but he is also the "sum of his days."

As an example, one might take the institute in which we are taking part. Each of us bring to it himself or herself; individual reactions to the topic "aging" and to the institute, which presents to everyone the *same* material, will be determined by this self and by the attitudes toward such material that have been developed by life's experiences. And no two can possibly be alike. This should help us understand the extremely individualistic nature of older people. It should help us work through the clichés and the generalities that are so commonly used to describe older people. It should provide the characteristics which make impossible or unsatisfactory a mass classification or categorization of



them as "the old age group." What *can* be described in general terms are the situations and problems which older people are apt to encounter as the years go by. *How* they meet them and *why* they meet them as they do, depend on the special characteristics of each as an individual.

Here it may be well to stress the differences in the rates of aging — physical, emotional, and spiritual — and even the differences in some aspects of physical aging, not only as between different people but often for the same person. The physical evidences of aging which all of us seem to dread, and some to hate or fear — those "outer changes" which somehow "show our age" but which actually show only perhaps that we have lived beyond the years of early youth — are not sound evidence of true age. There is seldom any correlation between one's inner age and these external symptoms of the toll the years have exacted; so that it is never safe to judge age from appearance alone. Yet this is far too common a practice.

To test this, anyone here might ask himself or herself how much older he really feels than he did ten years ago; how much less able to meet the daily routine of living; how much less anxious he is to do so? It is the vitality of spirit and curiosity of mind that determines real age. Maturity of mind and spirit is determined by the way in which the individual accepts the changes which the years are bound to bring in all realms of being — social, emotional, and spiritual, as well as the more earthy one of financial adequacy.

### *Needs of the Individual*

It is often argued that the needs of older people are quite different from those of younger people. There is just enough truth in the statement to give it a specious validity. Basically it is *not* true. As human beings, we have the same needs just so long as life itself lasts. It is certainly not necessary to labor the fact that our needs — the need to love and be loved, to work, to play, and to worship — vary throughout life in their relative importance to us and in the ways in which these needs can best be satisfied.

The need to love and to be loved, for instance, is obviously one which assumes quite different values at different times of life — from infancy through adolescence, through young and middle-aged adulthood to later life. The infant has a much greater need to be loved than to love; while in later life, if there is to be the "sense of belonging" or of "meaningfulness" which all the so-called experts state is a necessity in later life, the need to have someone to love is the more important. It would be simple to continue with examples of the variations in the relative value of all of these as life goes on. It can be recommended as a worthwhile exercise in self-examination to try to discover just what meaning these have for us as aging takes place.

While we cannot generalize about older people, we can generalize about the situations that commonly confront them — or shall we say "*us*." As we grow older and retire, we are very apt to have to deal with reduced income and reduced health. Idleness and loneliness may both be our lot, as it is for so many today. We may also find ourselves with very real difficulties in making desirable living arrangements for

ourselves within the limitations of that reduced or fixed income and reduced health.

However, one observation appears to me to be accurately enough based to justify its acceptance: if older people have faced up to difficult situations earlier in life, if they have coped capably with problems with which all of living is fraught, if they have accepted the fact that old age is not going to be either wholly good or wholly bad, if they have anticipated the necessity of change, and perhaps change that is not too pleasant, there is every chance that these individuals will be those whom we envy because of their ability to surmount difficulties and retain a genuine pleasure in the additional years that science has granted to them. We have even observed that the dreaded failure of mental faculties occurs less often when the individual has come to grips with living in a firm fashion. As adult educators and librarians, we have observed that those persons who pursue educational and cultural interests have a greater capacity for warding off that withdrawal from reality which can characterize the later years.

### *Interrelationship of Individual and Society*

The topic of this presentation is "Aging as It Affects the Individual and Society." I commented earlier on the distinct interrelationship between the two. First of all, there is the individual who, while distinctly individualistic in all his instincts for personal satisfaction, must still, to be contented, conform to the mores of the community in which he finds himself. This is true whether that community be his family, his fellow workers, his fellow church members, his neighborhood, or even his ethnic group. One of the most usual adaptations he makes is that of accepting *as his own* the value the community most important to him places on the older person as a member of that community. If old people are highly regarded, he can cling to his opinion of himself as a person who counts for something to himself and to others. If, on the other hand, old people are second- or third-class citizens (and the attitude toward them reflects this status for most of them), then the individual finds himself taking on the coloration of the community thinking. He loses personal value in his own sight and thereby helps to justify the general opinion which he resents but endorses by his own behavior.

In our country we are only just beginning to assign any status to older people. It is my fear that this is due not to real conviction as to their worth as people but, rather, is due to their presence in our communities in great numbers. The new respect being given them seems to stem more directly from their power as voters. Be that as it may, there is a faint beginning of understanding of the strengths as well as of the weaknesses of older people as persons. There is little more than lip service in efforts to consider their dignity as human beings, although it may be through no fault of their own that the indignities of living have robbed them of their personal dignity.

So far as the community is concerned, it is a matter of record that some of the difficulties of older people do not derive from their own disabilities or inabilities. Rather they derive from the lack of opportunities in the community to realize their abilities. We talk much of the

"rich" experience of older people, of the "reservoir of wisdom" and of "skills" which this new and growing group in society affords. But, as yet, the efforts to make use of these riches are feeble and halfhearted and in very few instances rewarding.

The resistance and reluctance of society to grapple with this problem of keeping older people functioning as first-class citizens are grounded in old habits of thought about old people and old age and in the increasing complexity of social solutions to this problem. For this reason, efforts of those engaged in adult education and in library service to individuals of all ages, while desirable for people who have already "crossed the bar" of 65, are even more important for that group of adults who are now in the lower middle-age groups. The latter need to be prepared mentally, emotionally, socially, and financially for some of the adaptations that will be required if their survival is to mean enjoying rather than enduring this new dimension of living. Only in this manner will people be ready and eager to find some of the very rewarding compensations that can come only at this "time of life" so often dreaded but toward which all of us strenuously strive.

## SESSION II

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### EMPLOYMENT, RETIREMENT, AND BUDGETING IN THE LATER YEARS

#### *Chairman*

MRS. DOROTHY KUHN OKO

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Chairman of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor  
Groups of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial  
Organizations and the American Library Association

#### *Purpose of session*

To discuss what the librarian needs to be aware of in regard to income, pensions, insurance, employment, retraining, job counseling, productivity, and budgeting in order to respond to the community's needs in these subject areas

A group of three speakers developed the topic by answering the questions: What are the problems and issues in these areas as they relate to later years? What are the approaches to solving them? and What is the library's role?

### Employment, retirement, and budgeting in the later years

MARGARET L. PLUNKETT

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What to do about the aging in a population is not a new problem in spite of all that has been discussed and written about it in recent years. In fact, it is a problem as old as the human race. Many primitive societies handled it through the practice of geriatricide in various forms which, along with infanticide, were accepted methods of reducing the ratio of dependents to those of working age. Nowadays we attempt to deal with the "senior citizens" in our population in a more civilized fashion, but this effort, in itself, creates substantial complications.

Leaving to more general discussion the broad social and psychological aspects of aging, let us turn our attention to the problems that face a worker as he approaches retirement from employment. Many more men live to, and through, the working ages now than was true in 1900. During the first half of this century, life expectancy after retirement increased, due principally to the decline in the importance of agriculture

as a means of livelihood. In earlier times most farmers continued to do some work until they died or became disabled. Now that the majority of men work for wages or salaries in industries other than agriculture, the possibilities of continuing a work career beyond age 65 are diminished. Other factors accounting for the increase in numbers of retired men are age restrictions in hiring practices, compulsory retirement ages in private pension plans, and the widespread availability of social security.

If we turn to women, the work life potential for women has increased 12 years since 1900. Present indications point to a continued increase. The proportion of a woman's normal life expectancy spent at work (outside the home) has increased from 12 per cent to 25 per cent. This increase has resulted from the increased acceptance of women as workers, the increase in number and types of jobs that women can do, and the invention of a great many household appliances that make housekeeping easier and thus release more women for paid employment outside the home.

It is commonplace that women live longer than men, and this expected difference is widening. Of those born in 1900, 7 out of 100 girls and 5 out of 100 boys will reach 85; of those born in 1950, 21 out of 100 girls and 12 out of 100 boys will reach 85; of those born in 1975, 30 out of 100 girls and 17 out of 100 boys will reach 85. Their greater life expectancy, plus the fact that most women marry men older than themselves, means that a high proportion of older women will be widows. The statistics portend a high proportion of women in the older population.

The older worker is plagued with the problems of maintaining an adequate retirement income and increasing inability to go on working after retirement age. Pensions are usually a fixed sum having no provisions for adjustments to allow for increasing costs of living. Many union contracts include cost of living increases for those currently employed, but these contracts do not contain provisions for adjusting pensions to meet loss of purchasing power because of rising living costs.

Retirement benefits under social security have been increased regularly in recent years by a number of measures. No formal provisions, however, are included to increase these payments to offset increased costs of living although some consideration is being given to this matter. Social security legislation provides that retirement is permitted any time after the 62nd birthday for women and after the 65th birthday for men. As an incentive to keep older men at work, at least on a part-time basis, provision is made that full benefits can be drawn after retirement age is reached even if the employee earns up to \$1200 annually. He can earn somewhat more than that amount and still get benefits for part of a year. And, of course, after age 72 he can draw full benefits regardless of his earnings.

The provision that older workers are permitted to do some work, without loss of pension rights under our social security law, is particularly helpful to persons who are unable to keep their regular job after age 65 but who find that they cannot get along on their retirement income alone. Because many private pension plans contain compulsory retirement features which require workers to retire at age 65, the decision to

continue working at their regular jobs is often not in the hands of the workers. Many older workers have to seek other jobs, probably at lower pay, to supplement their old-age and survivors insurance and other pension benefits.

Information from the U. S. Bureau of the Census shows that even for those who worked the year round on full-time jobs during 1956, income dropped sharply with advancing age from \$4700 for men 45 to 54 years of age to \$4200 for men 55 to 64 years of age and to a low of \$3500 for men over 65. Obviously, for those who did not work, the drop in income is even sharper. While no direct data are available on retirees, the median income of men over 65 who received income but who did not work was only about \$1000. Thus, despite the rise in pension coverage and recent increases in benefits, our older population still has to get along on sharply reduced income.

The psychological preparation for retirement is important also because many people find it difficult to feel useful and "alive" after they stop working for pay. One answer is the concept of "flexible retirement," which permits a worker to adjust gradually to the termination of his full-time employment by: (1) a gradual reduction of the work schedule, for a worker anticipating retirement, to four days a week for one year and one day less per week for each succeeding year, until at the end of five years he reaches full retirement; and (2) working alternate months, or other variants of a full work schedule. Under such schemes workers learn gradually how to use their added leisure.

A major problem, however, remains. This is health. In spite of all the attempts to deal with the problems of advancing years, the real specter is declining health. We all know that nobody dies healthy. It costs a lot of money to pay for illness, particularly of the catastrophic type. While it is true that catastrophic illness is not inevitable in old age, it is highly probable. Most people simply do not have the resources to meet such a situation. A recent Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey of Pension Plans which included hospital, surgical, and medical benefits under collective bargaining agreements showed that over two thirds of the workers covered would lose their benefits after retirement (see Appendix III). Large numbers of workers are not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

In spite of these problems of the older worker (the difficulty of keeping a job, maintaining income, and paying the costs of adequate health care), there are some hopeful signs. First of all, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics studies of occupational change and manpower needs indicate, the jobs that require physical strength per se are steadily declining. This means that the threat to the employment of older workers that comes from the need for physical strength will not be nearly so great. One barrier to their employment will be reduced, if not eliminated. At the same time the educational level is constantly rising with the result that, in the years ahead, older workers will not suffer from the comparative disadvantage that many of them do now: competing, in spite of only an 8th-grade education, with better educated younger people. If basically equipped to hold clerical jobs, older workers may be more readily able to shift from more to less strenuous work.

Perhaps the most hopeful consideration of all is that the solution of these many-faceted problems is now recognized as a major matter of public policy. Government, however, cannot and should not do everything. The private, voluntary agencies, like the American Library Association, have a vital function to perform in the preparation for leisure, use of leisure, and maintenance of mental health.

## How persons receiving social security benefits get along

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In 1957 the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance conducted a survey to find out what financial resources people have besides their social security benefits and what they do when their retirement income is inadequate.

About 70 per cent of all persons aged 65 and over are getting old-age and survivors insurance benefits or will be able to qualify for them when they stop work. A cross-section sample of retired workers and widows aged 65 and over receiving survivor benefits who were on the rolls in December, 1956, were questioned. Men and women aged 65 to 93 were included; among them were persons who came on the rolls in 1940. Those surveyed included people awarded minimum benefits of \$30 a month who had little, if any, other retirement resources, and persons awarded the maximum benefits of \$108.50 who talked about their "portfolios" and who could have lived most comfortably without benefits. Parenthetically, social security benefits are paid as insurance against loss of earned income when the worker retires or dies; millionaires as well as the penniless are eligible for benefits when they retire. No needs test is imposed.

During the 1957 survey year, social security benefits ranged from \$30 to \$108.50 for single retired workers and from \$45 to \$163 for couples with the wife entitled. Widows entitled to survivor benefits received from \$30 to \$81.40.

A majority of the aged couples and single persons receiving social security benefits relied almost entirely on their benefits for their independent retirement income. It was obvious in the 1957 study, and it is certainly true today, that most old people cannot live on their social security benefits alone. When their other independent income — such as employer, union, and veterans' pensions, net rental income, interest, dividends, and private annuities — was added to their social security benefits, the majority still did not have enough to live on. Not more than one fifth of the couples had as much as \$200 a month in independent retirement income; only 1 in every 10 of the single beneficiaries had \$150 a month or more.

The better-off beneficiaries usually received pensions from their former employers or had rental income or income from investments; a few received veterans' payments. Four fifths of all the retired workers, however, had not worked for companies that had pension plans, or they had not worked long enough to qualify for the pensions, or they had been self-employed. Most of the beneficiaries, of course, did not have veteran status and were not eligible for veterans' payments. Relatively few had substantial income from investments in addition to their social security benefits.

Persons with low retirement incomes got along either because they had some earnings during the survey year, or because they received help from their children or from public assistance; only a few of those with low retirement incomes had enough in liquid assets to draw on them at a regular rate — \$50 or even \$25 a month — over a span of 10 years. Married workers, particularly, had put most of their savings into the purchase of a house.

During the survey year, over one third (36 per cent) of both the men and women retired workers reported some earnings from employment. The annual earnings of many were low, however, because most of the employed beneficiaries worked only a part of the survey year. Half of the employed men earned less than \$900 and half of the employed women less than \$600.

The kind of work a person was engaged in before he came on the old-age and survivors insurance rolls affected his ability to return to work. Workers engaged in heavy physical labor or in tending machines had less chance of finding jobs than those who sat at a desk, were salesmen, or were self-employed. Not only did the proportion having employment in the survey year go down as the physical demands of the job increased, but those who got jobs worked a shorter period of time; farm laborers were the one exception. When interviewed, one fourth of the men and women beneficiaries were working; one fifth considered themselves well enough to work but only half of these, about 10 per cent, said they wanted a job, most of them specifying part-time or lighter work than their last regular job. Over half (54 per cent) said they did not feel well enough to work, even at part-time or light work.

Retired people continue to live in their own homes as long as possible. In the 1957 survey, three fourths of the married couples lived by themselves, usually in a home they owned; when they shared a home with their adult children or other relatives, the relatives generally lived in the beneficiary's home. Home ownership is a very important factor in the security of older people. Seventy per cent of the couples owned their homes; the proportion was smaller, though still significant, for the single beneficiaries — close to two fifths were homeowners. Most of the homes (86 per cent) were held clear of mortgages.

Because of the rapid increase in coverage of employer pension plans, the proportion of beneficiaries who receive both employer pensions and social security benefits will gradually increase. Veterans' compensation and pensions represent a substantial source of income for those receiving pensions. Seventy per cent of the men with veterans' payments received \$900 to \$1200 from this source during 1957. The



proportion of beneficiaries receiving veterans' payments has increased from 3 to 6 per cent between 1951 and 1957; this proportion will continue to increase for several decades.

Social security (old-age survivors insurance) payments, however, will continue to constitute the principal source of retirement income. It is important, therefore, that benefits be kept in line with the general level of the economy, whether through periodic review and adjustment by the Congress or through some kind of automatic device.

The other major problem is that of how to provide adequate hospital and medical care for our older people — whether existing voluntary arrangements can do the job or whether governmental action will be necessary. Almost all the beneficiaries incurred some medical costs during the survey year; 12 per cent incurred costs of \$500 or more; 5 per cent, \$1000 or more. The large costs were usually in connection with a period of hospitalization. Although hospital insurance was fairly common among the beneficiaries, two thirds of those hospitalized had none or less than 25 per cent of their total medical costs paid by health insurance. The large medical costs bore little if any relationship to size of income. Catastrophic illness is no respecter of a person's resources.

To summarize: We find that benefits paid were not large. Many beneficiaries had no independent retirement income other than benefits. About half of the beneficiaries either supplemented their benefits with earnings of at least \$600, or received public assistance or contributions from relatives. Not many with low retirement incomes had liquid assets that could be drawn on regularly. Investment in a home had been the principal method of saving.

## The library's role

ELIZABETH FERGUSON

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People depend upon libraries to furnish information about retirement in all its phases — economic, physical, and social. It is essential that librarians be in touch with and make use of the *primary sources* of such information. For instance, the Social Security Administration maintains 584 district offices with qualified staffs to explain the complexities of the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Program.

Perhaps a further avenue of library service can be found by remembering a few everyday facts. Beneficiaries are people — all kinds of people — librarians as well as library patrons. Retirement almost invariably involves a reduced income. Retirement spending patterns are very different from those of a young family. Careful budgeting is a must. Librarians have, and can easily get, good books and pamphlets on budgeting and should publicize them.

But budgeting to meet a present fixed situation is only part of the long-term problem that is here to stay. Financial planning *before* age 65 is one of the best hopes of meeting it. To find out what is involved

in this preparation, we can actually do pretty well by checking our own plans. Aren't we all thinking: "My pension and/or social security will be — ? How much will I earn if I retire at 65 or earlier and get another job? What other bits of income (rents, dividends, and the like) will I have? How will I be protected against medical bills? Can I manage to add to my income resources during my last years on the job? Can I make use of my life insurance?"

If we librarians are thinking like this, so are a lot of other people — rich as well as poor. Anyone who isn't working at the problem ought to be. Our generation has accepted the philosophy that each individual must take responsibility for financing his own old age retirement. This is a drastic change from the thinking of our grandparents who planned to accumulate a "nest egg" to leave to their children but expected the children to take care of them in old age. Librarians have a real mission in making their readers aware of these facts of life.

Lifelong money management has become a necessity. And, increasingly, people from age 45 on are going to make an effort to provide themselves with the "plus income" that will make their retirement more enjoyable. Librarians can speed the cause with good informational materials.

This service can be accomplished by pointing up services and activities librarians are already familiar with. In recent years many libraries have joined in with forums and classes on *finance* and *consumer problems* conducted by churches, banks, unions, clubs, and so on. Money management for retirement involves the same subjects, the same books and pamphlets — well up to date, of course. These materials with alert practical library information service can make a great contribution to the problems of the aging. They should be publicized by exhibits and all other means, not just once but continuously. The need is going to go on.

# HEALTH AND HOUSING PROBLEMS IN THE LATER YEARS

*Chairman*

MRS. WINIFRED E. STONE

Librarian, National Committee on the Aging

*Purpose of session*

To discuss what the librarian needs to be aware of in regard to physiological and psychological adjustments, nutrition, living conditions and arrangements, trends in housing, home care, hospitals, nursing homes, and health education in order to respond to the community's needs in these areas

## Health and housing needs of older people

OLLIE A. RANDALL<sup>1</sup>

As one considers the health needs of older people, it is easy to understand how these in turn affect the housing needs. There is a direct interdependence between the two: housing may create health needs, and health needs may be responsible for housing needs. This is, of course, true at any age. For younger people there is usually someone who can help make the right arrangements, and even someone who is willing to do so. For many older people, there is often no ready help from anyone who is close enough to care very much. Therefore, much of the planning to meet the needs of the elderly falls upon organized community agencies. The Topsy-like growth of the commercially operated nursing home is one tragic example of the way undirected private enterprise takes over when communities do not meet the need for nursing care outside the individual's own home. The residential hotels, now becoming more numerous, present another similar development.

### *Health Needs*

Some but not all people in the older age group are ill or so afflicted with disease as to be dependent on others for care. Old age and chronic disease are *not* synonymous. However, few people survive to the later years without some chronic ailment or some failure of faculty which may limit activity. Eyesight becomes less acute; hearing is not so good as in earlier years; teeth do not last as we would wish them to do; pains

<sup>1</sup> See footnote 2, p.61.

in the joints cripple or make ambulation more difficult. But, fortunately, these ailments do not necessarily put one to bed for good. What can be accepted is, to quote Dr. Frederic Zeman, that the "diseases of old age are characterized by multiplicity and chronicity."

In other words, when there is an illness or disease, there are apt to be several. They are also apt to be the kind that last a long time, or else they are the consequences of acute illness which may be long lasting. This means that, in considering the health needs of older people, it is necessary to plan for such treatment and care as will help them to "do as much as they can as well as they can as long as they can." And thanks to the new dimension of medicine — rehabilitation — one can now approach health needs positively in diagnosis, treatment, and restorative care.

The U.S. Public Health Service is constantly studying how the health needs of older people are changing. Current research into cardiac problems and cancer, as well as into the causes of arteriosclerosis and the crippling tendencies of arthritis, is bringing results that should reduce the toll of invalidism in the people included among the "elderly."

Most older people receive their medical care from private physicians, albeit, a growing number receive their hospital and nursing care in institutions outside their homes. With a long-term illness which deprives the individual of ability to function adequately, the cost of medical, hospital, and nursing care becomes a major item in the retirement budget. This often creates a problem which cannot be met without assistance from an outside source. Hence the whole question of ways and means of financing these costs challenges members of the medical and other health professions, the private insurance companies, and the government.

Financing the costs of such care is a question, however, that cannot be discussed here with any authority or accuracy. It is one of the basic "health needs" that is engaging the attention of practically everyone in the field of health care. Its solution is important to the right use of personnel — doctors, nurses, and others in health work — and to the provision of good facilities and service. The problem of giving care in acute illness is not so acute as the problem of giving care to the chronic invalid, especially when that invalid is an older person.

### *Housing*

How do these problems affect the matter of proper housing for older people?

The largest number of older people continue to live in their own homes, or at least in homes other than institutions. This condition is a matter of preference. With the growing soundness and more universal coverage of the social security programs, of industrial and other pensions, and of annuities, the preference is one which can be more readily satisfied than it once could be. People have regular income — inadequate though it may be — for all purposes. They *can* and *do* pay rent, often for inadequate housing. But poor as it may be, it is their own! The usual percentage of persons so living is given as between 94 and 96 per cent. When this is applied to some 16 million persons, it

means that where and how these people live is an important consideration in plans for housing all of us.

Despite the trek to Florida, the Southwest, and the Northwest, the preference generally expressed by the elderly is for remaining in the familiar *home* in the familiar *neighborhood*. This home may become very inappropriate because the house may be too large or may fall into disrepair, or the neighborhood may cease to be the "familiar neighborhood" of earlier days.

Planning new housing that is appropriate for older people is an activity now engaging the attention of community planners, real estate brokers, bankers, contractors and builders, government, and church and fraternal groups. There are many suggestions for architectural design, for location, for arrangement of accommodations, and for the physical requirements of such specially designed housing if it is to be safe and useful. The usual cliché of "housers" is that *all* people need good, safe housing. The problem of housing older people is just one part of the total housing situation with which every community is faced. Nevertheless, *unless* housing is safe, it cannot be used by older people for independent living. Younger people can overcome some of the factors that make housing unsafe. Also, it is vital to keep in mind that most older people need housing that is inexpensive to maintain and to rent.

It is encouraging to find that the federal government, in its special program of housing the elderly, has *prescribed* some of the architectural features and financial arrangements. It has also specified the requirements of a site for such housing. These include the accessibility and availability of resources such as churches, hospitals, doctors, nursing services, recreational facilities, educational services in the schools and universities, and libraries.

The question of whether it is better for older people to be housed together, or whether it is better to have them live with younger people, is one for which there is no formula. The topic of households of three or more generations is a topic in its own right, one that is fraught with all the emotions that enter in when family relationships are under scrutiny. There is no single answer; and the one which is reached will depend upon the community, upon the needs of the older people, and upon their expressed wishes, as well as upon those of the younger people.

### *Living Arrangements*

It is interesting to use the phrase, "living arrangements," to describe the place and the manner in which older people live. It means that to the basic ingredient — the home — something new has been added to make the plan of living suitable. What is more, it is important for all who look ahead, to realize that no single living arrangement can remain suitable unless built into it are those elements that provide for the changing needs of the individual. For later life is dynamic, not static, and the same arrangement may not serve the individual continuously.

For instance, as we now plan in many communities, we introduce into the individual's own home some service which will enable him or her to continue to live there with a greater degree of independence than

could be obtained by placement in some substitute home. These services include visits by the doctor, the social worker, the nurse with her assistants, the practical nurse and her aide, the friendly visitor, and relatives or friends. However, the time may come when the individual's needs for service are such that they should be given around the clock. Then moving to some substitute living arrangement is probably indicated.

Such substitutes include the so-called foster family home, for the individual who needs the feeling of belonging to a family and whose physical or social needs can be met in this kind of arrangement. Next there is the boarding home which, in distinction from the foster family arrangement, may be a family home in which several persons are living, with board and room and some attendant care provided. Following this, in sequence, is the nursing home in which nursing care under medical supervision is provided for short or long periods of time. Then there are the philanthropic and the public homes for the aged, organized for the purpose of providing a home to older persons, with other services given as needed. The hospitals for the chronically ill and the hospitals for the mentally ill also receive many older people for long stays.

What is happening, however, to make these living arrangements more acceptable is that the nursing homes are giving a good deal better nursing care and a more homelike atmosphere. There is a new realization that good care is care that helps the individual patient return to the maximum degree of self-care, which *may* mean his return home. This new thinking is reflected in some of the changes apparent in homes for the aged. The demand for their living arrangement is increasingly sought by persons who are 80 or over for the security it provides when illness strikes. Hence, homes for the aged are finding themselves shifting from places for the "well aged" to homes in which the infirm and feeble are cared for not on a life-care contract, but on a month-to-month basis.

Hospitals for the chronically and mentally ill are finding that they, too, do not have to keep older people indefinitely. They can be helped to return to their own homes or some substitute arrangement that is not hospital-like in its service or general atmosphere. It is doubtful if anyone wants to live in a hospital!

If people can be helped to anticipate the possibility of change, and if people keep themselves interested and active, the worst may *not* come true. The place of adult education and library service is very real and passing clear. These services are needed in any one of the living arrangements outlined. There is even greater need that those in their middle years and those living in their own homes be prepared for the eventualities of living. The element of crisis can be largely removed if there is preparation through the library's resources and services and the understanding use of them.

# Co-operating with groups and agencies

GERTRUDE R. THUROW

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Since the library is one of the community's most horizontal agencies, the resources for serving the elderly are limitless. Libraries have been serving the aged individually since their inception, but a new type of service and a new emphasis present themselves today. The greatest charge given us concerning our own resources is "your understanding use of them." In service to the aged, the library's role is a multifarious one—the co-operator, the co-ordinator, and the fertile innovator.

This is a most propitious time for libraries, since some state governors and the President have called and are calling for special conferences on aging. Libraries can make a great contribution by offering their assistance and their many facilities. In some states the state library personnel have helped in the initial program planning. For example, in Wisconsin the secretary of the Free Library Commission has been appointed as the chairman of the Wisconsin Interdepartmental Committee on Aging Population to plan the state White House Conference Preparatory Conference. The state library association and the state agency co-operated in the first state governor's conference. The state library association appointed a special Committee on Aging to plan participation on the programs, prepare special exhibits, and provide a bibliography. Libraries thus became active, interested agencies from the outset.

Co-operation with other agencies can be even more effective on the local level if library personnel are willing to leave their four walls to learn the community needs and to assist actively as community resource agencies. One important role is the referral by the library to the agencies which can be of help to the aging. To do this, it is essential for the library to *know* the health and housing agencies. Librarians must not refuse the opportunity to work on boards and committees, or to attend the open meetings of the social agencies. Among those agencies in which the librarian can learn and assist are the boards of health, nurse and mental health associations, and county homes. The library must be a horizontal agency in deed and not in name only.

The co-operation carries over to the actual services given by the library to agencies which house and care for the aged. Book deposits, program aids, program planning, and special programs in these institutions are important means. The library's own adult programs on nutrition, health, safety, and mental health include all ages but are also useful to the aging.

Libraries can serve as co-ordinators on the local scene; this is especially true for those who have had the advantage of attending conferences and workshops and whose communities have not taken up the challenge. Some libraries have offered public programs on the aging population; others have had a series of discussion groups. In other instances, the library has held a forum of community agency heads prior to the state governor's conference to discuss the local *status quo*,

to serve as a clearinghouse for these agencies' special fields of emphasis, and to plan for local unmet needs. Outside resource persons were invited as a special inducement.

As a co-ordinator, working with other community agencies, the library often becomes the indirect benefactor to the old and sick. Organizations and clubs have given the library special "project gifts" because the most good can be derived by placing them where the entire population can use them — ceiling projectors, Libraphone machines, Audio Books, magnifying equipment, and other articles of equipment for the disabled and infirm.

Today libraries play a dynamic role and rightfully serve as fertile innovators if they see opportunities for greater service to the community. It then becomes their obligation to lead.

A state library association committee sent letters and sample bibliographies to over sixty organizations and state agencies working with the aged. In addition, the committee provided copies for distribution as well as news releases concerning the bibliographies. The response was amazing — and amazing to the libraries as well. Most of the organizations had no idea that libraries could be so helpful in the fields of health, diet, housekeeping service, housing suggestions, general advances in health, and so on. In some instances libraries have co-operated with local historical societies by having some of the pioneers tape-record their reminiscences — a source of invaluable historical data.

There is no limit to co-operation with agencies and groups in the field of aging for those libraries whose staffs have vision. It is the "understanding use" of these resources that makes for a real community contribution. Dr. Gunnar Gundersen, immediate past president of the American Medical Association, said in his talk to one conference on the aging population: "We have added years to their lives; now we must add life to these years." The library is the organization possessing this wealth of resources — books, current data, audio-visual materials, and services — that can help to add life to these years.

In a recent tribute to May Massee, well-known juvenile book editor, it was said that her guidance had always been an inspiration to those who worked with her. Would that the same could be said of the guidance which libraries can give in this important field!



# AGING SUCCESSFULLY

*Chairman*

ROSE VAINSTEIN

Public Library Specialist, Library Services Branch, Office of Education,  
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

*Purpose of session*

To discuss what the librarian needs to be aware of in regard to education for aging, social contributions of the aging, the older person and political action, and recreation and use of leisure time in order to respond to the community's needs in these areas

Each of three panel members gave his answer to one of the questions: What are the problems and issues in these areas? What are some of the approaches to solving them? What is the library's role? A short discussion period followed.

## Issues and problems of aging

DR. JOHN WALKER POWELL<sup>1</sup>

Consultant, Fund for Adult Education

The current emphasis is on social and economic problems of the aging, but the real source of issues and problems of the old is in our own social attitudes and expectations. Economic problems are secondary, in that they could be solved if the attitudes were changed; and this is the work of education. Its target population is those of middle age, because then for the first time a really personal vision of the older years is emotionally possible.

Economic problems are not peculiar to the old. Vocational obsolescence may set in as early as age 19; it tends to become acute after retirement because of the high rate of technical innovation and obsolescence, the increasing speed required in reading dials and reacting to them. The impact of social mobility — the fractioning of families, the lack of a home base, the pressure on the old to live in other people's

<sup>1</sup> Assistant editor *Aging in Today's Society*, ed. by Clark Tibbitts and Wilma Donahue (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960); consultant to the Fund for Adult Education; and author of *Education for Maturity: An Empirical Essay on Adult Group Study* (New York: Hermitage House, 1949), *Learning Comes of Age* (New York: Association Pr., 1956), and other books and articles in adult education, including the chapter, "Philosophies of Adult Education," in the 1960 *Handbook of Adult Education in the United States*, ed. by Malcolm S. Knowles (Chicago: Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., 1960).

houses, the loss of a spouse, the lack of a firm membership in a basic group — all these press the old into *impersonal* dependence, such as social security, with its attendant alienation of identity, social segregation of the old, and loss of secure horizons for individual life. These are what education can and should deal with.

Ours is a "type-casting" society; people are driven to behave according to our national stereotypes of them. Of the old, these are mostly pretty dreadful, from Whistler's "Mother" to the "Perfect Fool" of Ed Wynn. Our stereotype of retirement is negative: poverty, dependence, ill-health, unwantedness, death. We lack sure understanding of the *norms of change* in maturity — a Gesell for older people. We lack confidence in the continuation of life; and we lack communication with those who continue living. We have lost our belief in the great powers of age: its maturity of judgment, its creative freedom, its leadership potential; above all, in the unique courage that age confers, the courage to stand up and be counted. We are asking ourselves how they can stand it, when we should be asking them what they will *stand for*.

The American image of man is that of the producer, the provider, rather than that of the artist and sage. Seeing him as a biological organism, we interpret his values in terms of satisfactions and adjustments measured in terms of tension and release. Thus the ultimate accolade goes to survival rather than *significance in living*, to performance in the job rather than the *achievement of a person*; we stress making things go, and forget that the summit of wisdom includes the stillness at the vortex of events. The highest gifts that age can bring are thus denied reality and value, in the very society that achieved man's first massive breakthrough into longevity. Let education help revise our image of man and reclaim the values of maturity; then age will enrich our culture rather than enfeeble our economy.

## Approaches to aging problems

PAUL A. WAGNER<sup>2</sup>

Educational Representative, Region 8, United Automobile, Aircraft, and Agriculture Implement Workers of America, AFL-CIO, Baltimore, Maryland

Retirement education is becoming more necessary for persons who just a short time ago had as a main concern the day-to-day problem of keeping a job or having a current income. Retirement means, to too many people, living on an inadequate social security pension. Through the process of collective bargaining and various union-company agreements,

<sup>2</sup> Educational Representative, Region 8 (includes Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and Pennsylvania), United Automobile, Aircraft, and Agriculture Implement Workers of America, AFL-CIO; member, Governor's Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped (Md.), the Maryland Employment Security Committee on Problems of Older Workers, and Advisory Committee on Young Workers, U.S. Department of Labor.

more and more hourly rated workers have received the assurance of adequate income after retirement. The United Auto Workers and the workers in aircraft and agriculture implement concerns are now sharing to a greater degree than ever before the benefits of retirement at ages 65-68. The primary goal of the union has been the assurance of an adequate income for retired members. We will have to shore up the retirement program from time to time to take care of the changes in the economic picture.

The glow of anticipation that marks the worker of 45 years of age dissipates somewhat as the fateful day of retirement approaches. This matter of stopping work after a lifetime in the shop is no laughing matter. Yes, the income might be there. He can get along. The house is paid for. The children are all grown and on their own. But still there remains the question — what about health? Will medical and surgical insurance be adequate? And housing is a problem. The old family house is quite large. It might be cut up into apartments, but then what will the problems be as landlords? If only there were a place close to the center of attractions, perhaps downtown or not too far away — a 15-minute streetcar ride. A change to that kind of home would be most helpful for the two of them.

But what is there to be had? Would it have been smart twenty years ago to study some of the problems to be faced in retirement? Twenty years ago, there were no pensions outside of social security, and we looked forward to public assistance rather than an adequate pension that meant more independence and dignity. These might be the random thoughts of the oldster as he waits in the company personnel office, checking out of the plant for the last time.

The problem of preparing workers for retirement is one of growing importance. Now that retirement is a certainty and not a joke, the workers are asking through their union, "What can you do to help me?" At this point, I'm sure that the librarians can see the possibilities of selected materials that would be helpful to the preretiree — selections dealing with the kind of housing one might choose after the family leaves home, or the kind of health plans that offer the best protection.

But to return to the activities of our organization, we have had to establish drop-in centers at convenient locations — a union hall, a community center, or other public facilities. Here, organized programs of education and recreation are offered in a systematic attempt to acquaint the retired worker with the facilities and resources of the community. How important is it for the preretiree to know about these facilities? Could not the library bring together a listing of the services available in a community, the annual reports that are published, the other stories telling of a particular community agency? This would be a service for retirees and for preretirees.

As we see it, there must be a broadening of community services. Within our local union structure we have established retired workers committees — standing committees which are financed by a 1¢ per month payment from the dues of each member. Several locals within the same community may combine their committees on older workers in order to offer better co-ordinated programs.

There has been a natural movement toward seeking closer cooperation with community chest agencies and welfare councils. We would like to see a joint labor-management approach based upon contract language. As it is now, management goes off and arranges for preretirement and postretirement programs for its workers. The union does the same. Both parties are too bashful to state that they are privately competing for the workers' loyalties. To minimize the competition and produce a more useful program, a contract clause should be mutually arrived at, and then, on the basis of this agreement, both parties approach the community chest agencies and/or the libraries to assist the older worker and the retired worker in a much more satisfactory manner.

Under such an approach we could develop a program which links hands with community agencies in retirement preparation programs. The libraries seem to be a natural center and, if labor and management are involved, a neutral center, where opportunities may be opened to explore the full range of the retirement problems that individuals will have to meet and master. When working with adult groups, you know that this could not be a "canned" program — a dictated or a compulsory program. Rather, it would be a phased-out, informative program that encourages a worker to think through his problems and to work out his own plans with whatever expert assistance he thinks he needs. The unions through their committees could be the motivators, the recruiters for such a preretirement program; the librarians could furnish the sources of information and arrange the presentation; the community could provide specific personnel in the areas of interest.

In order to increase our own understanding of how to serve better the preretiree, we have organized training workshops in a limited number of areas so far. We have reached 300 to 500 union leaders who now have a basic concept of what preretirement education is all about. In turn, we anticipate that these union leaders will return to their home communities and conduct additional voluntary programs for preretirement members as well as retired members of our union. At this point, we would like to draw upon the expert advice and assistance of local schools, colleges, libraries, and other agencies to provide instructors, materials, and resource persons and evaluate service in order to measure the effectiveness of the programs and to offer suggestions as to how their content might be improved.

Typically, the programs that we sponsor are divided into six sessions with discussion periods of 2-2½ hours. The guidelines contain selected readings and a further listing of additional readings. For example, we begin a program by taking a look at work and retirement in a changing world. Recommended readings are *Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy, *Older People* by Robert Havighurst and Ruth Albrecht, *Should I Retire?* by George H. Preston, and *Aging in the Modern World*, edited by Clark Tibbitts and Wilma T. Donahue. These few selections have probably stimulated you to think of an equal number that you might suggest at your own library when approached by one of our committees seeking help for their own local program.

Another session considers the subject of money and retirement.

In addition to a presentation by someone in the field of consumer research, perhaps, there would be a great deal of discussion and certainly strong emphasis on further selected readings such as: *Stretching Your Family Income* by Warren Bilkley, *Ways and Means to Successful Retirement* by Evelyn Colby and John G. Forrest, *The Consumer Reports, The Consumer Bulletin, How To Earn an Income When Retired, Jobs after Retirement* by Maxwell Lehman and Morton Yarmon, *How To Invest, Income Planning and Management*. In a third session we consider health and happiness in retirement. Here, too, we strongly suggest the use of additional readings helpful in preparing the preretiree for retirement.

Then, family, friends, and living arrangements are studied with emphasis on suggested readings. Another session deals with the union, the community, and the retired worker. In every instance we will need to have many community agencies assisting in a program as broad as our preretirement workshops. We realize that the union alone cannot find the answers to all the problems that will arise in the preretirement and retiree stages of a worker's life. We think that we should co-operate with all agencies, both public and private, that have an interest in this field, so as to create a climate that will be most helpful to the worker as he moves from an active work life into a useful and productive stage of life called, for the lack of a better word, retirement.

Without presuming to tell the next speaker what the library's role should be, we believe that somehow the worker who has lost his reading habit must be recaptured if the library is to fulfill its role. The reading habit can be recultivated. We have received co-operation from the Maryland Library Extension Service and from Enoch Pratt Free Library. We started in a small way to help our union members recapture the reading habit. From this slight experience I know that considerable effort will have to be expended to convince workers that now in the days of their youth, ten or twenty years before retirement, they should renew the excellent friendship they once had with the institution we call Our Library.

## The library's role

DOROTHY N. LYNCH<sup>3</sup>

Audio-Visual Consultant, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, New York

Librarians are well aware of the traditional role of the library with its services to people of all ages. We know about the importance of libraries in helping individuals develop and pursue vocational, avocational,

<sup>3</sup> Formerly co-ordinator of adult services in the Queens Borough Public Library; her responsibilities included library services to the aging. As reader's consultant she organized and conducted a four-year series of library programs on preparation for retirement.

and recreational interests; learn new skills; and maintain independence of spirit. But the big question is — do enough adults in our communities know this? How many of the people over 45 in our communities use the countless resources of our libraries in making their personal adjustment to the necessary and inevitable changes that come as they grow older — the changes in the kinds of activity they want to undertake; the changes in living arrangements that come about when the children grow up; the changes in personal relationships with friends and family; and, above all, the challenge of increased leisure time? How many read both the discursive and the directly practical books in our libraries that might help them adjust to these changes?

For that matter, how many older adults are there in our communities? Recently, I made a quick analysis of the age groups in Westchester County. The percentage of people from 45 to 60 years is nearly equal to that of youngsters between 5 and 20 years of age. Furthermore, I found that there are a good many more adults of 60 and over than there are adolescents. One may need to undertake a study of library use to discover the exact percentage of all of these age groups who actually use the library, but it seems a safe assumption that a great many more young people frequent our libraries than adults who have passed their 45th year.

Librarians at all levels of responsibility are making some headway and have even taken leadership in helping to meet the needs of the older adults in our communities. Lists are being published of good books for older readers — books on understanding the process of aging, books on leisure-time activities, and so on. We occasionally offer special programs for older people in our libraries and provide shut-in service to those confined by illness; we give book talks and supply films and recordings at programs for senior citizens. Perhaps most important are the materials — the handbooks, directories, reports, and other printed aids — that we make available to professional and volunteer workers with older adults.

A good many librarians are taking an active part in community planning for older people as members of citizens' committees or councils on aging. Some are organizing such councils when none already exists. Librarians are reaching out into the community in other ways to make the library useful. For instance, a member of our staff who belongs to a local service club was able to suggest a program of library films for older shut-ins as a project for the club. This program is now being undertaken by it. Furthermore, the club is giving to the library the new projector it bought to use in the program!

The greatest challenge to librarians lies in making the library a more dynamic force in enriching people's lives during the middle years. For, after all, interests developed in the middle years are preparation for the later years. This is the time of full maturity when the job and the family are usually under control and when there is likely to be fertile ground for broadening and deepening one's reading and one's community relationships.

Librarians need to discover new ways to make known the many and diversified resources in our collections for both education and enjoyment

of adults that will help to prevent the great desperation and sense of loss felt by so many people when they meet retirement. Can we persuade advisers or consultants in business and industry to refer their employees to the library? Can we give to the personnel director in our local department store pertinent reading lists and announcements from the library to distribute at strategic moments? Can we enlist clergymen and union officials in our cause? I like Mr. Wagner's suggestion that the library actively co-operate with other organizations in planning programs on preparation for retirement.

It is an increasingly important, even pressing, problem — this one of how to communicate to adults the services of the library. We need to tackle it with new vigor, because most people, including ourselves, need and want all the help their libraries can offer in their efforts to make for themselves satisfying and successful later years. As Bennett Cerf said at the A.L.A. Washington Conference, "Think big, and have a dream," even though that dream may bring into our libraries a flood tide of adults over 45.

## Discussion period

A question and discussion period, in which the members of the panel and the audience participated, followed the formal presentation of the three talks given above. A summary of the comments follows:

Aging successfully means attaining a balance in life. America must recognize its youth complex and realize that the athlete and the Hollywood idol are not the only ideals; we do not have to be youthful all our lives. Adult educators have made people feel anxious and guilty if they are not educated. Likewise, we are anxious about getting old and feel guilty toward those who have. We will have aged successfully when we can look one another in the eye without feeling anxious or guilty. We should seek to convert the American from the search for cosmetic "youthemisms" for growing old such as "Golden Agers" to acceptance of old age's vicissitudes, inevitability, and pleasures.

The union program for the laborer begins with the pension plans in the basic industries. Its drop-in centers have several purposes, among them to keep the ex-worker informed of union activities and problems and to dispel growing political illiteracy. Book-based discussions and TV programs with discussion help attain these objectives. Other agencies in the community, including the library, can co-operate in these programs. The library can also provide evaluative services for other agencies.

When the library tries to communicate with the community, it does so through leadership groups in the community, those who have influence with others. Part of the difficulty arises because the "lost populations" are out of the mainstream and out of touch with the world. There is scientific, political, and vocational illiteracy. The library has a greater task than merely that of a Paul Revere, galloping through the countryside shouting "Old Age Is Coming."

The library must do more than hand books to individuals because its responsibility is to the total community. This responsibility is met

indirectly by making the community a good community. By reaching out to all segments of society, the library becomes a social as well as an educational institution. The library should not attempt to take the place of agencies better prepared to make certain contributions; at the same time, it should inform those agencies of the services it can give.

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# THE TASK AHEAD — THE LIBRARY'S ROLE

### *Chairman*

MRS. ORRILLA T. BLACKSHEAR

Assistant Director, Madison (Wisconsin) Public Library, and  
Chairman, Library Service to an Aging Population Committee,  
Adult Services Division

### *Purpose of session*

To summarize the Institute and to amplify the library's role

### *Panel Moderator*

MARIE A. DAVIS

Co-ordinator of Work with Adults, Free Library, Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania

### *Panel*

Margaretta J. Barr, Librarian, Public Library, Princeton, New Jersey  
John T. Cheney, Acting Personnel Officer, District of Columbia Public  
Library, Washington, D. C.

Fern Long, Supervisor, Adult Education Department, Public Library,  
Cleveland, Ohio

Henry J. Michniewski, First Assistant, General Reading Department,  
Public Library, Flint, Michigan

Hannah Severns, Director, Free Library, Moorestown, New Jersey

Elaine von Oesen, Librarian, Extension Services Division, State Library,  
Raleigh, North Carolina

As an introduction, Miss Davis presented a résumé of the main points covered in the first four sessions and, at the end, a summary of the fifth session. The panel selected questions from those turned in after each session and used them as a basis for a general discussion period. Rather than being a verbatim report of the meeting, this account combines selected related remarks only, in order to eliminate unnecessary repetition and promote readability.

## Introduction

One of the first principles presented at the sessions was that older people should not be segregated, either in programing, informational services, or expanding library facilities. Rather, the Institute has focused its particular attention upon the group because of the increasing number of older people and the impact which this has upon our society.

The individualistic nature of the older person was pointed out in describing in general the situations and the problems these people are

likely to encounter. The situations and the problems might be similar; but the way they are approached, and the way they are met by the older person, depend on the personal, special characteristics of the individual and the way the individual has met problems throughout his life.

Librarians, in attempting to focus library services properly, should project themselves into this situation, looking toward reduced income, health, idleness, loneliness, and the difficulties in housing which older people do encounter. It was emphasized again and again that it is more important today for adults in the middle-aged group to prepare mentally, emotionally, socially, and financially for the later years. The balanced life will produce a well-adjusted old age. The library's role is to prepare all people for enriching life in the middle years so that aging can be faced more gracefully.

Annually, some 400,000 persons reach the age of 65. In 1970, it is anticipated that there will be about 19 million over 65 who will compete in numbers with the war baby boom which will be reaching college age about that time. In 1975, women will outnumber men in the older group by 3 million. Although families sometimes comprise three, four, or five generations, there is a concentration of only two generations living under one roof. Older people usually live in the one- and two-person family situation.

When we consider the numbers of older people, their family relations, and their housing, we begin to see significant influences upon the economic and social picture of the future. Because of compulsory education, as the aged increase in number they are going to be better and better educated. This gives us a definite challenge in reaching their needs and meeting them through advances in adult education. The stable income which they will have may adequately take care of housing, food, and clothing; but it is quite unlikely that it will ever take care of the medical and nursing needs. This, again, thrusts a great responsibility upon society. Home ownership seems ideal but presents the problems of repairs, which the older people themselves find very difficult to make.

The library should be an innovator and a stimulus for activity when other agencies have not come together to face the problem of the aging in a particular community. It is frequently necessary that librarians take their services to these people and involve them in the planning of adequate programs; the libraries then become referral centers or central information centers. The library staff should be oriented toward giving attention to the aging, and plans should be made to use volunteers. The librarian can turn to the Social Security Administration, the U.S. Employment Service, and the U.S. Office of Education as primary sources of information.

There is a fear of retirement because our society is geared to the wage earner and his productive place in society. It is not the artist librarians are concerned with, rather the working man or the wage-earner. There is not a great deal of confidence in the contribution these old people can make. The library should assist these people to attain a richer life.

## Discussion period

*What criteria can be used by libraries in determining priorities for establishment of new services and strengthening present services?*

In establishing criteria for priorities, regardless of the size of the library, the reasonable goals should first be considered. They should be looked at in terms of the rest of the community, what other agencies can or should do, and what the library's role should be in the total picture. Then it should be ascertained what can be done immediately, taking into consideration the library staff, the book budget, and everything else concerned, and a start made from there.

In these days of rapidly changing communities, and the rapidly changing picture of the aging particularly, a projection of the library's objectives (how they are to be reached and what is needed in the way of staff, facilities, and budget) is absolutely necessary.

This survey might also be the problem of the community agencies or the community council, and not be settled by the library alone; the community council could help decide whose job is what.

*Are there any guidelines in approaching the development of an effective public library program for the aging? Are these guidelines different for small, medium, and large libraries?*

The development of an effective program for the aging falls into three general areas: knowledge of the problem, the provision of materials, and the co-ordination of various agencies. The general knowledge of the problem should be communicated to the staff members. This is the first concern.

The next concern is the specific community. The size and characteristics of the elderly population must be known fairly intimately before moving on to the second major area, the provision of materials — books, pamphlets, periodicals, and so forth. Materials for the old, the older, and the pre-old must be provided. Consideration must be given to format, size of type, and subject. For example, material which is ordinarily looked upon as of interest to the retired often is not. Books on retirement and hobbies, which may be thought sure fire with older people, are sometimes regarded with boredom, while books on emotional problems are frequently asked for. The book *Questions Older People Ask*, by Henriette Kish, covers some of the most acute interests of this age group. By the same token, older people are often more concerned with a novel about emotional problems which may resemble their own.

The library also must provide materials for the pre-old and the 65-year age group so that they may prepare themselves for aging. It must provide basic research materials for those who work with the old — materials about aging, the population characteristics, the various resultant problems and how they have been solved in various communities. These materials are for the social worker. In addition, the library must provide less technical information for the other people who work with the aged.

The third general area is co-ordination. The librarian should note

what community services are available to the aging and know them well enough to refer his patrons to the appropriate agencies. This may develop, in some communities, into stimulation of a social agency directory or a card file. The librarian may even make suggestions regarding overlapping functions.

Moving horizontally, the library can develop specific programs similar to those in the literature on the aging.

*What kinds of skills, knowledge, training, and education does the librarian have to obtain in order to work effectively in this area of service?*

Miss Severns was of the opinion that the characteristics of the librarian working with older people should be no different from those required in library service, that is, qualities such as patience and appreciation. One of the first essentials is perception of all their needs, or empathy. A second essential is the realization that there is a human dignity which sustains everyone through adversity. Librarians should already have the qualities which are needed. Perhaps the training required is no other than that demanded of regular staff members. The difficulty is that library schools do not emphasize the importance of human relations. It is the librarian's responsibility to learn more. One very important book is *The Dynamics of Aging*, by Ethel Sabin Smith. Parenthetically, this is excellent for younger people to read because it gives them an appreciation of older people.

Miss Long expressed the large library's point of view. The general characteristics possessed by librarians may equip them for work with older people, but they also need some very special training. At the time Cleveland received one of the grant awards, the public library could not find a librarian who was equipped to direct a special project with older people. Whether training is provided in the library school, by librarians as self-starting people who follow their own precepts of adult education, in an in-service training session in the libraries, or in some other way, special training should come. Librarians not only need to read the book materials about work with the aged, but also to see some of the very instructive films in the area.

There should be stress on the human aspect of the problems faced by older persons — the fears, the feelings of insecurity, the need to be needed, the need not only to be loved but the need to have something to love. It is essential to know the psychology of the older person. In addition, any special training should stress the need to know the conditions in the place in which a particular librarian serves.

Specifically, staff meetings, with their sharing of experiences among the staff members, can be used to emphasize this particular phase of library operation. A staff member who has given book talks before a number of different types of older people can discuss and evaluate them at a staff meeting. Another librarian may report that older people were in the majority at a gardening program not planned with older people in mind. Such attendance may affect the library's promotion for the next program. It is also important to bring to the staff meeting people from the community from other professions — ministers and others who have

had particular success in dealing with older people. Librarians can gain from people who give them ideas from their own fields which can be applied to the library. The staff meeting is a wonderful opportunity to bring in these experts. They can often give the staff a profile of the aging in the community. Mental health departments are particularly helpful in this respect.

In giving book talks the librarian must bear in mind that visual and aural acuity tend to deteriorate with added years. Mental health specialists say that it takes older people a good portion of time to become adjusted to a speaker. A long introduction helps them to get accustomed to the speaker, gives them time to get settled, and leads them into the subject very carefully, which is more effective than plunging them immediately into a lively talk.

One of the emphases in training of staff needs to be that older people are individuals with personal likes and dislikes. To give good service the librarian must get acquainted with each one and learn his needs. The automobile workers have dealt with their older people as individuals, giving them continuing responsibilities within the union framework.

Miss Clara Luciola of Cleveland Public Library gave as her opinion that the very best in-service training for young, new graduates was participation in the shut-in service: not as friendly visitors, not as adjuncts to social service, but as librarians carrying services to the ultimate conclusion, right into the home. The visits are important when it is realized that the older person dresses or comes out of the bedroom and goes downstairs that day because the librarian is coming. One older person said to a visiting librarian: "Well, I do not care that my neighbor next door passed away yesterday, because that gives me another fifteen minutes with you today." The staff member learns a lot about human nature as well as a great deal about the need for patience and understanding in such visits.

The Live Long and Like It Club of the Cleveland Public Library has grown from 25 to some 1000 members. Part of the success of the program has been not just that the staff knew the background of the community, but also that they stopped and talked to each member as he came into the auditorium, walked up and down the aisles, greeting each one, and had something special to say, making the greeting something extra and a little bit of themselves, a personal warmth, a feeling that the library wanted each member as an individual.

*What is the value of the library's providing shut-in service and home delivery when members of the family could come to the library, and is home delivery a deterrent to the older person's continuing to come to the library as long as he is able?*

Miss Barr spoke from personal experience in Princeton, New Jersey. Any library which has contemplated a home-delivery service has been faced with questions of whether it was something which might be too involved or too expensive in relation to the other services the library wished to offer. Again, it comes back to what the demands of the local community are. Everyone should continue to come to the library for

himself as long as he possibly can. Even after home-delivery service is initiated for that person, he can still enjoy an occasional visit to the library.

There are actually two types of delivery service which have been found successful in New Jersey. One is strictly a delivery service, in which the books are delivered by a commercial firm or volunteers. The other combines a visit with delivery. This has been found most satisfactory in Princeton because the library has a direct referral from the reader and a close tie with the recipients of the books.

The delivery to older people offers advantages not only to the borrower but also to the library. The librarian can plan his work and select the books with much greater care and with much more attention to the individual needs of the borrower when the selection can be done at a convenient time. Older readers often require much more time and attention than the staff is prepared to give when they come unexpectedly.

There are hazards, of course, in initiating such a program. Screening the volunteers is the most important problem to be handled. The Princeton library was over a year in getting started with the delivery service because there was no source for screened volunteers. The librarian wanted to use mature women and men who had something to offer, not those whose doctors recommended some outlet for their own problems, something to do, or who had been recently widowed and were looking for comfort. This is a great danger. The library was fortunate in being able to get the assistance of the Social Welfare Committee of the Council of Community Services. That committee did the original recruiting and screening of the volunteers, with the help of the librarian, and assisted with the training. The results were very satisfactory in that the library obtained excellent volunteers.

Working with volunteers is a continuous retraining process. No volunteer performs service without some expectation of returns in satisfaction, and the library should see that this is provided. It is the responsibility of the library, of course, to see that there are satisfaction and a compatibility between the volunteer and the reader whom he visits. Librarians miss a great opportunity to learn not only about the older people in the community but a cross section of the entire public if they do not visit the shut-ins.

One of the other hazards of shut-in service is getting the acceptance of the older person who really needs the service. He often thinks it is a wonderful service for other old people but not for himself. Older people often do not associate themselves with this older group. The librarians have to be very careful in their own attitudes, and especially in the books selected for these people. Home readers are just the same today as they were in 1940 or 1920; their reading tastes do not radically change. Some of the most discriminating readers receive home-delivery service. The variety of reading ability and reading interests remains the same, whether the reader is 80 or 40. The librarian must recognize this fact.

*Another area of the library's responsibility in service to shut-ins is the provision of special equipment, such as ceiling projectors, prismatic*

*glasses, and some of the other mechanical helps to reading designed for a person lying in bed. What is the extent of the library's responsibility in the provision of mechanical helps?*

It is a question each institution has to answer. When newsprint is reduced to microfilm proportions, does not the library have the obligation to provide a microfilm reader? If, in selecting books, the library gets books which have eight-point type, shouldn't the library provide a reading glass? On the other hand, should the library provide page turners for those who are too lazy to turn the pages themselves?

Miss Davis added that patrons present special problems which require an individualistic approach. She told of one patron who was not eligible for service to the blind but needed large type. The patron could get to a library, but a stroke had rendered her arms almost useless — she was unable to carry the books home. In this particular instance, it took three departments to serve this one person. But she left the library happy because of some special arrangements made for her.

*It has been stated that most of the older people want only travel movies of the type sponsored by airlines and steamship lines, rather than other programs. Is this wrong? Should librarians insist that these films be centers of discussion? How does the use of films fit into the library's program for older people?*

In answer to the question Miss Long said that libraries should not present programs which are purely recreational and not educational unless there were some special circumstances. That is, if no other agency in the community was doing anything of the kind, such a program was not wrong. The library needs to start where the people are and progress from that to something else. There are excellent films which are a sort of travel film but which, at the same time, give a picture of the economy, the geography, and so on of the country, e.g., the Louis de Rochemont films.

Airline travel films do not lend themselves to discussion unless they lead into an exchange of travel experiences; some groups have done this very successfully. At the same time the library does not need to feel driven to discussion every single time a film is shown, any more than it feels driven to discuss every book read or every book given readers to read. Films can perform as many functions as books. They are not only discussion stimuli; they are also a way of passing on information and a way of entertaining, too.

Librarians should keep their constituency in mind. A group of people retired to Florida would not be of the same frame of mind as a group of retirees in Cleveland, for example. The group Memory, Incorporated is made up of people who are older citizens of Cincinnati. They get together to pool their memories, to tape-record them, and to provide the library with a very valuable source of historical information. It is also well to remember that the majority of the people in the age group of 65 and older have not finished the eighth grade.

When the Philadelphia Free Library investigated, it found no

studies or resource material on the interests of older citizens other than local studies. The Health and Welfare Council Committee on Education for Older People, which has a subcommittee on the Educational Interests of the Aging, is now considering the possibilities of approaching a foundation for some sort of special study. Programing brings in the whole issue of the recreational versus the educational; any skillful librarian should be able to bring these two together.

If the library follows the traditional pattern of supplying materials and basic information and services, the response to the materials will suggest specialized programs. The best programs grow out of special needs and are more or less spontaneously started.

The minimum the library should provide would be, first of all, adequate information on community resources so that the librarian would know where to send people for help — a normal library responsibility; secondly, a book collection which includes at least a sampling of the volumes which deal with the problems which become more acute in older age.

Miss Severns brought out the point that little mention had been made of what the older people can do for the libraries. There are a great many older people who have skills which should be used and encouraged. In Moorestown, New Jersey, for example, there are three homes for the aged. The library is discovering the contributions those who come to the library can make. A retired secretary who had had some library experience takes care of all the discards. A librarian discards the books; the helper carries out the routine and clerical processes necessary to discarding from the records. Her reports are just as finished as though she were a graduate of the Rutgers Library School.

Volunteers among the older people can do such things as sorting local-history scrapbook material and pictures, typing, mounting pictures, and clipping. One retired child guidance teacher conducts a discussion group for mothers at the same time as the weekly story hour. As a result, she is now a member of some community committees such as the Family Service Committee. So, in dealing with older people, it is important to develop perception, empathy, and interest in what they can do for the library.

Not all retired people are idle. Retired professors and ministers are always being called upon in their communities. At one time Miss Barr thought it would be nice to use all these retired specialists to do a book-review service for the library, which would provide reviews signed by people who commanded a great deal of respect in the community for their scholarship. But when she approached the professor emeritus in the English department, he said: "Oh, don't ask me to review books. Hardly a mail comes in that I don't get a book from one of my former students who wants me to read it and comment. I never get a chance to do my own reading." There are a lot of areas where the librarian can draw the retired in, but some of them remain busy in their own fields as long as they live.

*How do librarians in larger cities serve the aging who are in need of information regarding retraining opportunities or new occupations?*



This is one of the questions to be referred to other agencies. The library might have a directory of such services, or a card file. Frequently, announcements of retraining opportunities, such as adult education classes in a local college or high school, appear in the papers. It would be possible to have a volunteer alerted to clip the paper. Queries on retraining opportunities would be referred, probably, to the adult education agencies in the area. Occupation and testing information is available from the U.S. Employment Service. The library will do better to give referral information rather than try to answer this particular question. The employment offices in many towns offer free aptitude tests. This might enable a lot of people who are forced to retire at 65, yet are young in spirit and health, to find new occupations.

*What tests are given by the Employment Security Division to people 65 and older?*

These are written vocational tests supervised by an interviewer. They are given not only to older people, but to anyone who is interested in taking them. They are prepared by the Bureau of Employment Security and administered through branches of the U.S. Employment Service which co-operates with the Bureau of Employment Security.

*What needs of the aging population should be taken into consideration in making building plans?*

Good planning for any library building includes sidewalk-level entrances, level floors, ample space to get around the chairs and tables in the reading room, and doors which one person can open. Older people need better lighting than the average person.

*Shall there be separate library rooms for older people, just as there are for children and young adults? Is there a danger the library will become a flophouse for older people?*

The panel, as a group, was definitely opposed to separate rooms for older people. The question goes back to the original thesis of the Institute that the library does not obviously segregate these people but carefully considers their problems because of their increasing numbers. Some larger libraries have assistants in charge of work with the aging in their adult education departments or co-ordinator's offices. The panel agreed that service to the aged is an adjunct of the adult department.

The downtown branch, geared to business services, has often been a haven for the older men of the community. Library periodical and newspaper rooms are a natural place for some of the summer habitués of parks to come to and rest in in the cold weather. In Cleveland a number of the older men who have spent a great deal of time in these reading rooms have taken to coming to the weekly program; a couple of them have really done the library a service. Citizens in Ohio have the privilege of redeeming sales-tax stamps for a certain percentage of their value. The older men collected these and received a rather sizable

amount for the Live Long and Like It Club treasury from their redemption. Two of the older men have done a tremendous job by going about the city, picking up the stamps from shops, and bringing them to the club regularly. These people cannot be ejected from any public room of the library.

The people who habitually read the newspapers and periodicals may be tapped in various ways. If the librarians get to know them individually, their interests can be focused on programing or some other phase of library activity. For example, in the Mercantile Library in Philadelphia, which is geared to business services, many of the readers are retired show people. Their interest might be directed toward leading some sort of program for their own group.

The panel made the point clear that separate areas are not desirable for the aging or even the middle-aged. However, a couple of libraries have found it helpful to reserve a table or a small corner for out-of-school adults because of the descent of high school students after school. This is not a separate area; the library just wants to make sure that older adults have a place to sit when they do come in.

On the other hand, Mr. Michniewski added, if the phraseology is changed and, instead of saying these people are visiting the library and making it a clubroom, it is stated more realistically and the library is termed a flophouse, the attitude of the librarian toward it changes. The library never should become a place which is visited merely because it is warm and comfortable. The library has educational and recreational objectives which must be observed with great rigidity of purpose.

*How can publishers be influenced to put out books in good print and format, particularly current ones?*

Mr. Cheney stated that the publishers will provide what libraries will buy since libraries are so large a part of their clientele. But sometimes it seems the commercial firms do lack imagination. How many libraries replace standard titles with less adequate ones at \$3 or \$3.50 instead of with Heritage Press editions at \$5 or \$6? The publishers are becoming increasingly aware of the need for good print and format, but their first response has always been to remind librarians of the increased cost of large type and easier-to-handle books. Through the Adult Services Division of the American Library Association, particularly the Committee on Relations with Publishers, librarians can make publishers aware of this growing market and the salability of these books.

## Summary

The library must mobilize its book selection, services, physical facilities, and programing toward the interests of the older patron. The books should be integrated with the programs and the services. The library really needs to tackle the social ills of the community. It is the social system with its stress on youth and the importance of the wage earner which has created an unfavorable emotional climate, causing many psychological problems which the aging face. The library programs can help to alleviate some of these social ills and to inform the community.

In approaching the social scene the library should project its services five years hence. At the same time it must bear in mind its objectives and the changes which are occurring in its community. The library is not a social agency, but it is the center of information. The library cannot always answer the questions concerning problems of aging, but it can act as a referral agency, provided it has sufficient community contacts and know-how and maintains relationships with all the other organizations and agencies which are working in the same direction.

Programs, lectures, and discussions are not necessary if the older people do not want them. Services to older people can be quite direct. If the librarian's attitudes are properly focused toward the aging and their particular needs, book selection will reflect this, and the floor work, which is the key to real library service, will also reflect it. Thus the library will be doing a real adult education job with the older people as individuals.

The problems of the aging have been emphasized in the Institute not because they should be thought of separately but because there is an increasing number in the population and they have made an impact on society. Some of the problems are held in common by all as they approach old age.

The library has many resources for information, materials, and ideas. The National Committee on the Aging and its library issue bibliographies and furnish resource materials. Mrs. Winifred E. Stone, librarian, will be very happy to help with any special book selection or informational needs. The American Library Association's Adult Services Division Committee on Library Service to an Aging Population, the U. S. Office of Education, the Social Security Administration, and the U. S. Employment Service are additional sources.

# Appendix I

## Evaluation of the Institute: A report by the planning committee

*Summary of replies to the evaluation sheet provided in the participants' workbook*

Note: Although about 300 people attended the final session at which these forms were collected, only 41 forms were turned in. They were filled out with varying degrees of completeness and thoroughness. Some of the 41 were turned in by mail.

1. a. *Which sessions of the Institute did you attend?*  
 Monday, June 22                      Reported by 36  
 Tuesday, June 23                      Reported by 37  
 Wednesday, June 24                      Reported by 36  
 Thursday, June 25                      Reported by 38  
 Friday, June 26                      Reported by 34  
 Of the 41 respondents, 21 attended all five sessions; 15 attended 4; and 5 attended only 3.
- b. *Did you attend the film showing on Wednesday, June 24?*  
 (For information on the film showing, see the Introduction, page 2) yes 10; no 31
2. *Do the following ideas seem more important, as important, or less important to you than before you came to the Institute?*

The library has a responsibility to:	MORE IMPORTANT	AS IMPORTANT	LESS IMPORTANT	No Reply
a. serve as a source of information on all aspects of the aging process	15	25	0	1
b. make people of all ages aware of the problems and of the availability of materials about these problems	24	15	0	2
c. co-operate with, stimulate, and supplement the work of community agencies responsible for working with and planning for older people	22	18	1	0
d. meet directly the special educational needs of the older individual either singly or in groups	8	29	3	1
e. aid those working with older people either as volunteers or as professionals	17	21	2	1
f. help the individual adult to prepare for his later years	24	16	0	1

3. *Please indicate by a check how helpful this Institute was to you in:*

	NOT HELPFUL	HELPFUL	VERY HELPFUL	No Reply
a. increasing your understanding of the problems of aging	5	19	16	1
b. suggesting new techniques of working with the aging	8	23	9	1
c. suggesting new resources for working with the aging	8	19	14	0
d. creating awareness of the importance of the library's accessibility and ease of use in serving older adults	10	22	8	1

4. *Please comment on the materials available during the Institute and give us your suggestions for others that would have been more useful (see Introduction, pages 2-3, for materials supplied to participants).*

35 replied; about half said that materials were "helpful," "good," "satisfactory," "excellent," the kit provided a "wealth of materials." Nearly one third commented on other items which might have been included. Among the suggestions were copies of more Institute speeches and items which are not available. Several very good suggestions were made on the need to evaluate the effectiveness of library publicity releases, brochures, and book lists. One person commented negatively on the Swap Table (see Introduction, page 3, for description of this display of materials), and felt that the items should have been included in the kit instead. Many of the suggestions were good and appropriate, while others indicated that the content of the kit had not been examined carefully enough.

5. a. *What were the weak points in this Institute?*

36 replied; almost half of the respondents commented on the seeming repetition of material, overemphasis on background information, and the very general approach of the Institute. About one third commented on the room arrangements and physical conditions, i.e., acoustics, temperature, and the early hour of the Institute. Several regretted the lack of emphasis on and specific delineation of the public library's special role in serving the aging. About the same number commented on the lack of opportunity for discussion and the sameness of program presentation (i.e., each panel consisted of librarians and nonlibrarians). A few suggested other possible panel participants such as a retired librarian and a psychologist or psychiatrist.

b. *What did you particularly like about the Institute?*

37 replied; well over half of the respondents commented on the effective use of authorities outside the library field. Quite a number commented on the over-all presentation — that it was factual, balanced, and broad in scope. One person appreciated

"the daily dose of the same picture from different angles." Several commented on the chairmen, saying that they were capable as well as gracious in the way that they presided over the day's session. About the same number appreciated the opportunity for questions from the floor, and one person spoke of the "strict adherence to the best methods of conducting an adult education workshop." A few felt that the holding of such an Institute was significant in itself, showing that librarians were alert to community needs and current problems. The materials in the kit and at the Swap Table were also mentioned here.

6. a. *What suggestions do you have for ways in which your state library agency might be of help to you in your work in this area?*  
20 replied; a large proportion felt that the state agency should act as a clearinghouse for information on materials, resources, and activities in the field and disseminate this information to local libraries. A similar proportion commented on the kinds of advisory and consultant services the state agency should provide in this area: workshops, institutes, and training sessions; publicity on the role of the public library in service to the aging; demonstrations; releases such as book lists and bibliographies; interlibrary loan of specialized materials. Several suggested that the state library agency assume a more active role in statewide conferences on aging in the way the Wisconsin Free Library Commission has participated in the planning of Wisconsin's Third Governor's Conference on Aging; it was also suggested that the state agency work more closely with state medical, welfare, recreational, and educational (in addition to library) groups.
- b. *What suggestions do you have for ways in which the American Library Association might be of help to you in your work in this area?*  
30 replied; the greatest plea was for current information, with suggestions for articles in the *ALA Bulletin*; preparation of bibliographies, guides, case studies, and special studies of programs-in-action; revision of such tools as *Books for Tired Eyes*. Several suggested additional workshops and institutes, with greater opportunity for discussion, and a few suggested greater co-operation with state and other national professional organizations, state extension agencies, and state library associations. One asked that the opportunity be given at annual conferences to discuss adult education problems in depth, so that the more experienced might exchange ideas and evaluate programs, and another suggested the possibility of a traveling exhibit of available materials.

*Excerpts from comments on the evaluation summary  
by the planning committee*

Miss Vainstein (compiler of the results): Many of the responses were apparently hastily completed, since suggestions were made for items or materials included in the kit or available on the Swap Table. Many of the suggestions made are currently being carried out, or already have been. . . . For an A.L.A. "first," I feel the evaluations indicate that a great many people now have a broader and more comprehensive view of the problem and the role of the public library in relation to it. That more needs to be done is obvious. This Institute laid a good foundation on which to build future A.L.A. programs and activities. The Adult Services Division should do all that it reasonably can to capitalize on the interest aroused. I would strongly urge that any further workshops or institutes sponsored by ASD, no matter in what subject area, be given continuous time in the A.L.A. conference program. This fragmentation, into five daily programs, was not conducive to the creation of a cohesive work group, to the continuity of discussion and attention, or to the best possible use of resource materials.

Miss Ferguson: I'm afraid there is . . . evidence of a vain hope that a foolproof blueprint can be developed to solve all individual library problems. This indicates to me that continuing efforts should be geared to practical specifics -- "how-to-do-it." There will not be much activity until librarians tackle the job enthusiastically, and they aren't likely to generate much enthusiasm unless they feel competent and confident in what they undertake to do. Obviously not many of them feel this confidence yet.

Mrs. Stone: I think it would have been interesting to know how many attended because of a personal interest in the subject and how many because they recognized it as a growing field in relation to their work. I was pleased to note that many librarians expect their state library agencies to show leadership in this field. . . . Also, the desire for more information on ongoing library programs for the aging makes me feel that we (the committee) could do a job in this respect.

Mrs. Blackshear: Generally speaking, the subject matter of the Institute program seems to have been considered basic. The planning committee felt that this was essential, even though it was inevitable that it would not be new for some in attendance. . . . Planners for another institute should be able to direct attention to a specific phase of library service to the aging, and a continuous block of time would certainly be more conducive to the best use of speakers and materials. Question 6 brought out some needs which are especially pertinent as we prepare for the White House Conference on Aging. The suggestions that materials should be furnished by state library agencies and by A.L.A. are very important and never more so than now.

Comment by American Library Association staff: In general, the staff

felt that the evaluation showed that the broad objectives of the Institute as they had been expressed by the planning committee were achieved in varying degrees. It was apparent that the usual difficulty in planning an institute in connection with an A.L.A. annual conference was encountered — that is, the wide range in participants' experiences and expectations. The comments on the physical arrangements and scheduling reinforced the conclusion already reached by the staff — that the disadvantages of the early-morning, five-session institute outweigh the value of scheduling it within the framework of the conference. The participants' evaluations and the reactions of the planning committee combine to provide a challenge and a long-range program in the field of library service to an aging population for the Adult Services Division.



## Appendix II

### Bibliography I: In the field of aging

Selected materials for librarians  
as included in the participants' workbook

#### GENERAL WORKS

- Aging: A Community Responsibility and Opportunity.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare. Special Staff on Aging, 1957. 20p.
- Arthur, Juliette K. *How To Help Older People.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1954. 500p.
- Buckley, Joseph C. *The Retirement Handbook: A Complete Guide for Future Planning.* Rev. ed. New York: Harper, 1956. 329p.
- Council of State Governments. *The States and Their Older Citizens: A Report to the Governors' Conference.* Chicago: The Council, 1955. 176p.
- Current Developments in Preparation for Retirement.* New York: National Social Welfare Assembly, 1958. 31p.
- Pollak, Otto. *Social Aspects of Retirement.* (Pension Research Council, Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, Univ. of Pennsylvania.) Homewood, Ill.: Irwin, 1956. 47p.
- Shock, Nathan W. *Trends in Gerontology.* 2nd ed. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Pr., 1957. 214p.
- Stieglitz, Edward L. *The Second Forty Years.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1952. 317p.

#### ECONOMICS

- Bers, Melvin K. *Union Policy and the Older Worker.* Berkeley: Institute of Industrial Relations. Univ. of California, 1957. 87p.
- Corson, John J., and McConnell, John W. *Economic Needs of Older People.* New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1956. 533p.
- Crook, Hamilton G., and Heinstein, Martin. *The Older Worker in Industry.* Berkeley: Institute of Industrial Relations. Univ. of California, 1958. 143p.
- Employment and Economic Status of Older Men and Women.* ("Bulletin," No. 1213, December, 1956.) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1957. 41p.
- Soule, George. *Longer Life.* New York: Viking, 1958. 151p.
- Steiner, Peter O., and Dorfman, Robert. *The Economic Status of the Aged.* Berkeley: Univ. of California Pr., 1957. 296p.

#### HEALTH AND HOUSING

- Cowdry, E. V., ed. *Care of the Geriatric Patient.* St. Louis: Mosby, 1958. 438p.
- Digest of One Hundred Selected Health and Insurance Plans under Collective Bargaining, Early 1958.* ("Bulletin," No. 1236.) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1958.

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*Housing for the Elderly*. Washington, D.C.: Federal Housing Administration, 1957. 16p.

Housing Research Center. New York State Division of Housing. *Housing Requirements of the Aged: A Study of Design Criteria*. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Pr., 1958. 124p.

Kutner, Bernard, and others. *Five Hundred over Sixty: A Community Survey on Aging*. New York: Russell Sage, 1956. 345p.

#### EDUCATION, RECREATION, COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES

*Creative Activities: A Manual for Organizing Activities for Older People*. New York: Welfare and Health Council. Division on Welfare of the Aged, 1955. 42p. Mim.

Gleason, George. *Horizons for Older People*. New York: Macmillan, 1956. 137p.

Kaplan, Jerome. *A Social Program for Older People*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Pr., 1953. 158p.

Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago. *Community Services for Older People: The Chicago Plan*. Chicago: Wilcox & Follett, 1952. 240p.

Williams, Arthur. *Recreation for the Aging*. New York: Association Pr., 1953. 192p.

#### GUIDE TO RESOURCES

##### *Agencies and Organizations*

Federal Council on Aging, Washington 25, D.C. (made up of various U.S. agencies with some responsibility for older adults).

National Committee on the Aging of National Social Welfare Assembly, Inc., 345 E. 46th St., New York 17, N.Y.

Special Staff on Aging of the U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D.C.

##### *Lists of Organizations*

*Aiding Older People: Programs and Resources in the Federal Government*. Washington, D.C.: Federal Council on Aging, 1958. 34p.

*Directory of Official State Agencies on Aging as of November 1, 1958*. Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1958. 12p. Processed.

*Programs of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Affecting Older Persons*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare. Special Staff on Aging, 1958. 30p.

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Washington, D.C.: Federal Council on Aging, 1958. 24p.
- Motion Pictures—Recordings on Aging.* Rev. ed. Washington, D.C.:  
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Downloaded from www.dbraulibrary.org.in

## Appendix III

### Bibliography II: Service to the aging<sup>1</sup>

Prepared by

ROSE VAINSTEIN

Public Library Specialist, Library Services Branch, Office of Education,  
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

"Whether the library is leader or follower, depending upon the type and location of the community it serves, it is important that the library staff join with other groups in planning and carrying out programs for the elderly."

Senator Thomas C. Desmond  
Former chairman New York State  
Joint Legislative Committee  
on Problems of the Aging

Service to older adults is not a recent innovation in the public libraries of our nation. What is new, perhaps, is the increasing emphasis on understanding the problems of aging in order to determine the library's appropriate role within the total community framework. Older people have probably always been served by the public library, although no early studies appear extant. In 1938, the state librarian of Washington "guesstimated" that, in the Far West, approximately 17 per cent of the library's public were 50 years and over. This was in partial answer to a rather thorough research project that year by a student at Peabody Library School which concluded with the indictment that "the absence of such service to the old, whether confined to institutions or at large, reveals a serious gap and deficiency in our patterns of institutional and public library service."

Not until the mid-forties, however, did the library profession appear to become actively concerned with these deficiencies. By then, programs and services for older persons in hospitals, institutions, rest homes, and within their own home setting were becoming somewhat more common. By the late forties and early fifties, a number of libraries, notably Cleveland and Boston, had begun senior citizen clubs and other programs of interest to older adults. Librarians were apparently becoming aware that public libraries might need more than the generally accepted tripartite of children's, young adult, and adult services, and that perhaps the age span from 18 to 80 might be too inclusive a grouping for effective public library service planning.

Today, there is nationwide interest in and concern for the aged who number close to 10 per cent of our total population. There is increasing emphasis on the need to plan as carefully for successful retirement and

<sup>1</sup> American Library Association. Adult Services Division. *ASD Guide to the Literature of Libraries and Service to the Aging* ("ASD Guide," No. 5 [Chicago: A.L.A., June, 1959]).

a postwork career as for the earlier education and a major occupation. For library service and adult education the implications are many and varied. Public libraries have apparently only just begun to show their potential in effectively serving the older adult and the community of which he is an integral part.

### *A Survey of the Literature*

The literature on library and educational services to the aging and the aged fall into three major categories: (1) characteristics of the older adult and implications for education and library service; (2) philosophy of service and programs in action; and (3) research and studies. The literature is not extensive in any of the three categories; the second -- philosophy of service and programs in action -- is probably the best represented and that of research and studies the least. Articles cited in the bibliography cover the years 1946 to date, although the literature search started with 1943. Headings used in *Library Literature* are as follows: from 1943 to 1951, "Old People's Work"; from 1952 through September, 1958, "Public Libraries -- Services to the Aged"; and from December, 1958, to date, "Public Libraries -- Services to Senior Citizens." Not until recent years, possibly the last ten, have articles appeared with any frequency. This is understandable, since general community interest in the field has also been a comparatively recent development.

In review, it would seem that the literature is strongest in factual descriptions of this-is-how-we-do-it-in-our-library. What appear to be lacking are articles on evaluation of existing programs, and library and/or community surveys to determine how best the public library might serve older adults in relation to the total community effort.

Two states -- Illinois and Wisconsin -- are best represented in the literature. Wisconsin holds the unique distinction of being the only state with a special committee, Work with Senior Citizens, as an active section of its library association. In other states, concern for library service to older adults appears to be a responsibility of the Adult Education Committee. This pattern of responsibility is very new, however, and not at all highly developed. With the White House Conference on Aging scheduled for 1961, and individual state governor's conferences now underway preparatory to the 1961 nationwide conference, it is quite likely that state library associations as well as individual public libraries will become increasingly involved in identifying their responsibilities to this special age group.

Through the work of the executive secretary of the Adult Services Division and guidance from the Committee on Library Service to an Aging Population, the American Library Association has been studying existing services and activities of public libraries which are designed to meet the needs of older persons. In addition, the division was responsible for the Institute on Library Service to an Aging Population, held as part of the programs of the 1959 American Library Association Conference. Through activities such as these on the part of professional associations, through local library efforts, and through stimulation provided by reading about existing programs, the public libraries of the

nation can begin to realize their potential in this important area of community service.

There follows a selected list of published materials for the use of public librarians, educators, and community agencies working with the aging and the aged:

*Characteristics of the Older Adult and Implications  
for Education and Library Service*

Albrecht, Ruth. "The Library and Our Older People," *Alabama Librarian*, 9:77-78 (October, 1958).

The head of the department of family life at the University of Florida reviews some of the major problems of aging, discusses the potential of library service, and suggests that the mind, like the body, needs exercising to keep it alert.

Allison, Edna. "Aging Sensibly," *Illinois Libraries*, 37:247-49 (October, 1955).

A retired social worker comments sensibly on what older people want, how they can help themselves, and how the community can be of use.

Brown, Giles T. "Never Too Old To Learn: A Gerontological Experiment in General Adult Education," *School and Society*, 74:279-81 (November 3, 1951).

An educator describes his pioneer effort in teaching an evening class in world affairs for a group of senior citizens, discusses problems, and suggests helpful techniques.

Ellis, James D. "Our Aging Citizens and Their Needs," *Illinois Libraries*, 38:27-28 (February, 1956).

The assistant supervisor of Services for the Aging, Illinois Public Aid Commission, presents a résumé of those at the national, state, and local level who are concerned with the aging, and discusses the role of the library in providing community information on the subject as well as direct services to older adults.

Holden, John B. "A Survey of Participation in Adult Education Classes," *Adult Leadership*, 6:258-60 (April, 1958).

Report of a sample survey made by the Bureau of Census in collaboration with the U.S. Office of Education; data grouped by subject interest and by age categories, including one for those 60 years and over.

Lorge, Irving. "Adult Learning," *Adult Education*, 2:156-59 (June, 1952).

Analysis of how adults learn, with suggestions as to how to make the teaching of them meaningful and satisfying.

McIntyre, Clara F. "Wanting Is...What? In Education: Preparation for Old Age," *Education*, 71:612-16 (June, 1951).

A university professor's plea that adult educators be urged "to avoid two present dangers: the purely utilitarian type of training aimed at earning a living, and the rather vague generalizations which encourage superficial thinking."

Rabe, Henrietta F., and Randall, Ollie A. "Public School Educational Programs," *Adult Education*, 1:56-60 (December, 1950).

The authors (an adult educator and a community worker) suggest that adult education courses for older persons should be built around their specific needs and interests: vocational training for supplemental income, enriched living, maintenance and improvement of mental and physical health, family and society adjustment, and community involvement.

Richards, Benjamin B. "Needs of Older People and the Library's Place in Meeting the Needs," *Illinois Libraries*, 37:243-47 (October, 1955). A college librarian reviews the common as well as the distinct needs of older adults and highlights library programs and techniques designed to meet these needs.

Rogers, Helen C. "Librarian's Working Knowledge of the Aged," *Special Libraries*, 37:183-88 (July-August, 1946).

The librarian of the Indiana Department of Public Welfare reviews the changing role of the aged in our society and discusses how infirmities of older persons might affect library programs and services.

#### *Philosophy of Service and Programs in Action*

Blackshear, Mrs. Orrilla T. "Public Library Serves the Aging," *Wisconsin Library Bulletin*, 52:60-65 (March-April, 1956).

A former director of the Wisconsin Traveling Library suggests three major responsibilities in public library services to the aging: to serve as a community source of information on all aspects of aging; to publicize the availability of such resources; and to provide direct library service to older persons and those who work with them.

— "The Work with the Senior Citizens Committee," *Wisconsin Library Bulletin*, 54:474-76 (November-December, 1958).

Summary and assessment of the activities of this special committee of the Wisconsin Library Association and its recommendations for future action.

Desmond, Thomas C. "Libraries and Our Senior Citizens," *Bookmark*, 13:177-78 (May, 1954).

The former chairman of the New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging discusses the values of a senior citizens month in acquainting the community with existing resources and services; suggests that public libraries serve older people as effectively as they do other age groups; and stresses importance of intra-agency co-operation.

Haggerty, Charles E. "Our Responsibility to Older People," *Minnesota Libraries*, 18:313-17 (June, 1957).

The librarian of the Danville (Illinois) Public Library identifies the major needs of older persons and discusses specific programs, particularly those suitable for the smaller public library, which help meet these needs.

Hirson, Mrs. Helen F. " 'Never Too Late' Group," *Library Journal*, 78:1883-87 (November 1, 1953).

Description, by a staff member, of Boston Public Library's senior citizens group and its program of activities which range from travelogues to book discussions, music programs, and forums.

Hoffman, Wallace B. "Libraries and the Aged," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 25:445 (February, 1951).

An intern at Colorado State College of Education Library stresses the importance of providing library services to older people who, as a group, may be more dependent than other age groups on the public library for their recreation and information.

King, Joyce. "Library Service for Shut-Ins," *Ontario Library Review*, 39:175 (August, 1955).

A Canadian librarian describes a book service program to shut-ins, started initially with volunteer assistance and subsequently budgeted for after a year's successful demonstration of need and interest.

Logasa, Hannah. " 'Grow Old Along with Me,' " *Library Journal*, 78: 1887-88 (November 1, 1953).

General suggestions on the role of the public library in its services to older adults; author stresses the need for books with large print and mentions interest in how-to-do-it books, books on religion, and self help.

Long, Fern, and Luciola, Clara E. "Live Long and Like It Club: A Project in Adult Education for Older People," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 23:301-5 (December, 1948).

Description of the first senior citizens club sponsored by an American public library; the authors, both on the staff of the Cleveland Public Library, describe the genesis of the club, its purposes and typical activities, and the composition of its membership.

Luciola, Clara E. "The Library Enters the Home," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 21:293-95 (December, 1946).

The head of Cleveland Public Library's hospital and institutions department describes the history and program of the Judd Fund which provided the beginning of specialized library service to four types of shut-in readers -- the aged, the chronically ill, the physically handicapped, and the convalescent.

McLaughlin, Bernadine. "Chicago Public Library Program with Older People," *Illinois Libraries*, 37:249-51 (October, 1955).

A regional branch librarian of Chicago discusses the program and activities of the "Mature Minds Discussion Group" and of a local historical society organized by a group of branch librarians, which resulted in active participation by older adults who assisted in the collection and preservation of neighborhood historical data.

Phinney, Eleanor. "Library and the Aging," *Library Journal*, 78:1875-79 (November 1, 1953).

The author, formerly librarian of the Hamden (Connecticut) Public Library and now executive secretary of the Adult Services Division of the American Library Association, stresses aging as a community-wide responsibility, with the library serving as a focal point of information on all aspects and problems; important publications in the field are highlighted.

St. John, Francis R. "Service for Senior Citizens," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 27:531-33 (March, 1953).

The chief librarian of the Brooklyn Public Library discusses a senior citizens group formed at the Flatbush Branch, eventually



housed in a basement room of the branch for a varied daily afternoon program of discussion, reading, checkers, and chess.

Sullivan, Margaret R. "Lonely Lady and the Red Basket," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 23:780-81 (June, 1959).

A bookmobile librarian describes the shut-in service organized in Bristol (Connecticut) with initial referrals from the visiting nurse; stresses importance of careful book selection and reading guidance.

Tews, Mrs. Opal. "Problems of the Aging," *Minnesota Libraries*, 18:3-4 (March, 1955).

A staff member of the St. Louis County Welfare Board emphasizes the role of adult education and of libraries in alerting the community to needs and problems of the aging, and their potential in extending horizons, improving skills, and stimulating activity among older persons.

### *Research and Studies*

Long, Fern. "Cracking the Age Barrier," *ALA Bulletin*, 49:129-31 (March, 1955).

Description of an experimental project at the Cleveland Public Library, made possible by a \$5225 Ford Foundation grant; purpose was to discover special interests of older people and plan a discussion and active participation program to meet these needs.

Phinney, Eleanor. "Library Service to an Aging Population," *ALA Bulletin*, 51:607-9 (September, 1957).

Description and summary of findings of a 1957 American Library Association survey of public library services to the aging.

Potts, Esther. "Senior Citizens Read and Talk," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 33:42-43 (September, 1958).

The author, a library school student at Western Reserve, describes her experimental reading program for older adults and suggests how such a group could become a regular operational activity of a public library.

Warncke, Ruth. "Informal Report on Library-Community Study in Ottawa Public Library," *Kansas Library Bulletin*, 26:2-4 (September, 1957).

The director of the American Library Association's Library-Community Project describes a library and community study narrowed to investigate needs caused by the presence of an unusually large percentage of older people in a town of 10,000 (for total United States, 8.7 per cent are 65 years and over; for Kansas, 10.8 per cent; and for Ottawa, 14 per cent).

### *General Aids and Background Reading*

Donahue, Wilma, comp. *Education for Later Maturity: A Handbook*. Compiled under the auspices of the Committee on Education for Aging, Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. New York: Whiteside and Morrow, 1955. 338p.

Donahue, Wilma; Hunter, Woodrow W.; and others, eds. *Free Time: Challenge to Later Maturity*. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Pr., 1958. 172p.

- Havighurst, Robert J., and Albrecht, Ruth. *Older People*. New York: Longmans, 1953.
- Kempfer, Homer. *Education for a Long and Useful Life*. ("U.S. Office of Education Bulletin 1950," No. 6.) Washington, D.C.: Gov. Print. Off., 1950. 32p.
- Sheldon, Henry D. *The Older Population of the United States: The Characteristics and Contributions of the Nation's Older People*. ("Census Monograph Series.") New York: Wiley, 1958.
- U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Library. *Selected References on Aging: An Annotated Bibliography*. Compiled for the Special Staff on Aging. Washington, D.C.: Gov. Print. Off., 1959. 109p.
- Ward, Betty Arnett. *Education on the Aging: A Selected Annotated Bibliography*. ("U.S. Office of Education Bulletin 1958," No. 11.) Washington, D.C.: Gov. Print. Off., 1958. 145p.

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