Behind The Library Desk

Betsy Nichols
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation
Nichols, Betsy (1947) "Behind The Library Desk," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 27 : No. 5 , Article 5.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol27/iss5/5

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
A SEA and air blockade plus rigid border censorship failed to stop the flow of scientific information to the United States and the Iowa State College Library. Enemy periodicals traveling by way of Siberia, some using microfilm and photostat reproductions, reached Iowa State during the war.

It's no wonder that our library ranks among the top five research libraries in the country. It owes the rating to the completeness of its periodical collection in fields covered by the program of the Graduate College judged by the Association of Research Libraries.

The shelves and stacks are packed with 375,000 bound volumes. The addition of 15,000 volumes each year keeps the library up to date in scientific and chemical subjects. Two thousand different periodicals are received annually.

If it's information you need on the latest discoveries on riboflavin deficiency or the cleansing power of detergents, you probably appreciate the library keeping abreast of scientific advances. It exchanges Iowa State technical publications with all of the major countries of the world. Books funnel into Ames from Asia, the Latin American countries and Europe.

Contacts with Russia are a current headache, according to Robert W. Orr, director of the library. The Soviet government certifies a magazine for exchange but refuses to allow certain issues of it to cross the border. This prevents the library from having a complete bound copy.

Fluorescent Lights

To many undergraduates the library offers tomorrow's assignment in the reserve room and a study hall. Its newest contribution to grade point this fall will be installation of fluorescent lights in the reading room.

But behind these ordinary uses stands a broader purpose. Back of the three main programs of the college, teaching, research and extension, is the library. Without information from this hub of learning, all functions of the college would be crippled.

The microfilm and photostat service is a modern development. Photo-duplications of magazine articles and theses are supplied by these new methods for research and teaching. Microfilms of articles were shipped recently to Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China and Scotland.

War Devastated Areas

The library goes international even further in its aid to libraries of war devastated areas. Magazines, references and textbooks have been sent to China, Czechoslovakia and the Philippines where the people are crying for scientific material of any kind.

If you're home Monday, Wednesday or Friday morning at 11:15, you've probably heard a WOI program of book and magazine reviews when the library takes to the air. The series is planned, prepared and voiced by the staff.

A full-time staff of 52 comprise the organization that enables the staffs behind the public service desks to put the answer to a technical problem in your hands. Part-time help, some student, expands the ranks needed for receiving, cataloging and providing information. The classification system devised by the Library of Congress is used to keep track on every volume.

The Periodical Room changed its face this year. The magazines which formerly rested on open shelves are now grouped behind the desk. Although this requires more time for both students and the staff, it has proved to be the only answer to the problem of postwar thievery. On the open shelf system 40 magazines disappeared from the room each month last year.

The Rental Book Club is the spot to find recent fiction, popular non-fiction and mystery stories for an evening's entertainment. The service is financed on a fee basis and open to students. Annual membership may be bought or books rented on an individual basis.

It's a good idea to take a few minutes to know your library and its services. It exists to help you in your search for information while you are in college.