

Alice Marion Moulton



Alice M. Moulton at retirement recognition, 1977.

b. Sept. 23, 1911, Carbonear, NL; d. Jan. 25, 2012, Toronto, ON

Education:

High school, Sydney, NS
BA, 1933 (University of Toronto)
BLS 1964 (University of Toronto)

Positions:

1942-1964 Library clerk, University of Toronto Library
1964-1976 Head of Circulation, University of Toronto Library

Honours:

1977 Awarded the University of Toronto's Sesquicentennial medal commemorating the University's 150th anniversary.
A room in the Sigmund Samuel Library (later the Gerstein Science Information Centre) is named the Alice Moulton Reading Room as a reminder of her contribution to the University of Toronto.

Comments:

Alice was the epitome of librarianship in a time "when lady librarians always wore skirts`" Alice's career spanned many years of momentous change in libraries at U of T and indeed elsewhere. Judy Stoffman's splendid article in the Globe and Mail chronicles some of the changes in which Alice, as

head of circulation in the largest library in Canada, was involved. Books began to be bar-coded the card catalogue gave way to the electronic ones, librarians could wear pants “(though Moulton never did) and the chief could make no decision without consulting a myriad of internal committees.” In 1973, after the Robarts Library was completed, Alice, who was a superbly organized person, managed the transfer of more than a million books from the old Sigmund Samuel undergraduate library to the mammoth modern one on Toronto’s St. George Street. It was “a considerable feat, which involved measuring, layout, assembling, reshelving and took several weeks during which the library stayed open.” A major challenge of the circulation department was simultaneous demand by large numbers of students for the same book being read by whole classes. Barry Griffiths, who worked in the the circulation department for 26 years, said “we eventually ended up doing three-day loans, one-day loans, over-night loans, we created a short-term loan even shorter than that – just hours – enough time just to afford a chance to go to the photocopier and copy a portion of the book.” Another problem was failure to return books and Moulton worked out a system with the colleges “not to award degrees unless fines`were paid in full.”

Sources:

Stoffman, Judy. “When lady librarians always wore skirts.” The Globe and Mail, April 21, 2012.

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