
STAFF ORGANIZATIONS

More than ever, librarians are moving with the changing world these days. Duties in the library are becoming increasingly strenuous as smaller staffs must continue to meet all demands and are constantly challenged by inquiries reflecting new public interests. To meet these exigencies, staffs must of necessity be closely cooperative, not only to insure staff welfare, but in broadening their interests to work with outside organizations in meeting the needs of a war time society.

A library staff organization, formal or informal, should have a definite professional purpose. Staff association activities in the past and present cover a wide range. The very setting-up of an organization makes possible greater participation in discussion and formation of policies for all staff members. They can be safety-valves by providing a mechanism for getting dissatisfactions or misunderstandings out into the open where they can be calmly discussed and answered rather than having them circulate with whisperings, thus ruining morale.

From a staff member's own point of view, an organization lends solidarity and official sanction to any requests the staff may wish to make to the administrator in matters of working conditions, salaries, hours and professional standards. A staff association makes it possible to discover majority opinion and to formulate dignified plans for presenting requests or recommendations to the executive. It can be a valuable aid to the librarian by carrying on publicity and good-will campaigns among people whose taxes support the library. Of course, always an important function of staff organizations is the exchange of ideas, which could be done through printed reports but not as quickly nor as convincingly as in a well organized group.

Some administrators are quick to recognize the value of regular meetings as aids to morale and *esprit de corps*; as a clearing house for ideas and suggestions for general staff welfare; as the official mouthpiece of the staff on vital questions; and as an organ which allows the independent thinking on the part of individual staff members.

The staff of the Charlotte Public Library has recently organized an association for the purpose of working together in a "program which shall promote the library as a reliable and efficient organ of public service and which shall work for the mutual understanding and welfare of the staff as a whole."

We invite librarians and staff members to meet with the Staff Organizations Round Table at 1:30 on Wednesday, October 20th, during the North Carolina Library Association meeting at Hotel Charlotte, to talk over staff organization as a working solution in discussing problems facing librarians of North Carolina in a post war world.

EULA CARPENTER