

After 23 years at Augsburg, Margaret Anderson retired as head librarian in 1990. She had just spent several years studying and documenting the need for a new library building, and then convincing the College to build it. Now, 16 years later, she continues to work in Lindell Library one day a week as a volunteer—in the new building she labored to justify.

In the first two years following her retirement, she took time off. But then, she couldn't turn down a phone call asking her to help troubleshoot problems the librarians were facing in creating barcodes for all materials.

There were lots of problems—"books without barcodes, and barcodes not connected to books," Anderson says. Once that process was straightened out, she began working on a series of long-term special projects that, without additional staff and a meticulous eye, probably never would have seen the light of day.

For one project, Anderson classified videotapes from many years of College events that had been turned over to the library—which meant that she first had to view each tape for content and date, and then write a short description.

Another similar project involved classifying a collection of sound recordings, for which her music minor in college proved extremely helpful.

With history and knowledge of the Dewey Decimal System, Anderson has also aided in classifying and cataloging fiction, the only books in the library to use the Dewey system.

Her current project tops all others. In 1994, writer and activist Meridel LeSueur donated her personal library of more than 4,500 items to Augsburg College.

## A change in REFERENCE— from LIBRARIAN to volunteer

BY BETSEY NORGARD

It's housed in the library's Special Collections Room, but has not been easily searchable. After working for more than two years, literally from book to book, Anderson hopes next year to complete an extensive spreadsheet index that will enable the collection to be searched by title, author, and subject.

In reflecting on her 40 years of library work, Anderson says that the heart of the work has not changed. "It still means connecting readers and scholars with sources," she says, "but now, both in print and online." What has changed dramatically is the way librarians fulfill that role, and the different tools they use.

One of the tools that made a huge difference in students' (and librarians') lives was the development of the CLIC (Cooperating Libraries in Consortium) system, making materials from more than a dozen college libraries available on loan.

In the 1960s, Anderson was a cataloguer, and she tells of how librarians phoned each other to check on availability by looking at catalog cards for all the books. She recalls that Karlis Ozolins, her predecessor as head librarian, often would track down students with cars to pick up the materials from other locations.

Two decades later, catalog

cards became relics and library collections became housed on a database, introducing new physical requirements for technology in libraries. Already Anderson had fought for improvements to the aging Sverdrup Library, including carpeting to replace the loose asbestos tiles she continually removed. Upstairs, it was so cold that the case for a new building became obvious when students were seen studying in mittens.

In 1982 the new Weekend College increased the College's enrollment and brought new demands on the librarians. At the time, Anderson recalls, the library staff was 4.75 full-time equivalents.

Over the next few years, Anderson detailed and documented what would be required to meet College needs and help it remain competitive. In the process, she studied and visited many libraries. She made her case before retiring, and then—as a volunteer—helped supervise the move into the new building.

While it's rewarding to work in the new library, it's really the people, she says, who keep her coming back each week. "The people I worked with have been among my best friends and they were a big reason why I wanted to stay in touch."



Since her retirement 16 years ago, Margaret Anderson has continued to volunteer in the library to stay connected with the staff she enjoyed during her career.

"We just think of her as one of us," current library director Jane Ann Nelson says about Anderson. Current cataloging coordinator Betty Joyce talks about what a wonderful mentor Anderson has been to her.

Anderson's career at Augsburg has been part of an Augsburg family affair, dating back to 1949, when her husband, Ray, was appointed to teach speech and theatre. He retired in 1990, the same year as his wife.

All three of the Andersons' sons graduated from Augsburg—Dean '77, Stuart '78, and Brian '82. Stuart teaches in the Department of Physics, but also worked in the new library for several years in information technology. He still spends some time there as assistant director for instructional course design in the Center for Teaching and Learning. ■