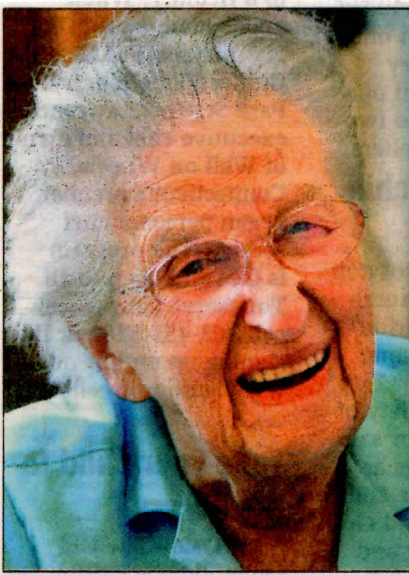


Beloved Guilford librarian Edith Nettleton dies at 105

1-31-14



GUILFORD - Sometime around her 105th birthday celebration last summer, attended by roughly 225 well-wishers, Edith B. Nettleton, who served the Guilford Free Library continuously for 80 years, recounted a recurring incident through her 44-year tenure there, starting in 1933. A patron would wander

into the old, one-room library on Whitfield Street and suppose that because she was the librarian she knew everything.

Nettleton, who died this past Sunday, swiftly dispelled that notion with the unflappable patience and grace that made her a treasured presence — and vital resource — to generations

Peter Casolino/Register

The late Edith Nettleton smiles during her 105th birthday party at the Guilford Free Library at 67 Park St. (its "new" location since 1934) on July 22, 2013, where she was still volunteering up until this past December. The library announced her death on Monday.

of Guilfordites. "All I know is where to find it," she recalled saying over and over again.

As for finding an answer to how she had lived so long, the granddaughter of a Civil War veteran was less searching, in spite of the mind that remained razor-sharp at 105. It wasn't a question that particularly interested her, the same way the fact that she was born the same year as Henry Ford produced his first Model T automobile and the Chicago Cubs last won

See **NETTLETON**, Page 3

Nettleton: Guilford's oldest resident dies at 105

From page 1

the World Series didn't seem terribly impressive to her — rather trivial, in fact.

She did what she did. She read widely. She worked on crossword puzzles and pictograms. She played cards with members of the Dinky Doos, a group formed 73 years ago or so. Sometimes she sampled Big Y peanut butter from the jar she kept on her kitchen counter in the modest Clapboard Hill home that she inhabited since her father, postmaster of Guilford, delivered mail to North Guilford in a horse and buggy. Sometimes she visited with her sister-in-law Ruth Nettleton down the road.

She was, as she said in her feathery soft voice around the time of her 105th birthday, content with her lot.



Above, Jan. 23, 1934, Guilford First Selectman S. Leslie Spencer hands the keys to the "new library" at 67 Park St. to Rev. William C. H. Moe, president of the Guilford Library Association. Looking on, from left to right, are Lena A. Shelley, from the library board of directors, Edith B. Nettleton, librarian, and Martha G. Cornell, library board of directors. Photo courtesy Guilford Free Library.

Which, perhaps, is the answer.

Edith Nettleton never stopped doing what she loved to do, never stopped showing up at the Guilford Keeping Society, where she volunteered; or at the First Congregational Church, at which she was co-historian with Ruth; or, above all, at the library, where for the last 36 years she acted two or three days a week as indispensable volunteer, the one, according to current director Sandy Ruoff, who "could look at an old photograph and identify who was in it and if she couldn't, would research it until she could."

Nothing fancy; nothing glamorous. Just a life well-lived. A life, you could even say, lived to the fullest.

— Lisa Reisman