



FOREWORD

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Palo Alto Library

Spring 2014

In Memoriam

Tom Wyman, 1927-2014

Tom Wyman, long-time Palo Alto resident, civic activist, and passionate supporter of the Palo Alto Libraries, died on March 17 at age 86. Palo Alto, its Libraries and FOPAL have lost a good friend.



Tom and Ellen Wyman

Tom was born in a mining town in Tennessee in 1927 and moved to Palo Alto with his mother and brother in 1936. He attended Walter Hays Elementary, was in the first class to graduate from Jordan Junior High School and graduated from Palo Alto High School. After serving in the Navy in the Pacific during World War II, Tom returned to Palo Alto, where he majored in mining engineering and geology at Stanford.

He met his wife Ellen early in his career at Chevron, and the two were to form a remarkable partnership dedicated to social and civic causes. After stints in Bakersfield, Alaska, and San Francisco, Tom and Ellen moved back to Palo Alto in 1964 to raise their two children. They were drawn immediately into the local political scene, and supported a number of residentialist movements. The Wymans were largely responsible for defeating the Palo Alto Clinic's (now PAMF) plan to build an 18 story hospital in downtown Palo Alto.

In the 1980's, Tom and Ellen became active in FOPAL, which Tom's mother had helped to found. In 1999, the two were instrumental in establishing the Library Advisory Committee, and Tom became its first chairman. Tom and Ellen were long-time members of FOPAL and both served terms as FOPAL board president. During their tenure with FOPAL, net book sale revenue increased nearly 10 fold, to over \$10,000/month. Those of us who

FOPAL NEWS

FOPAL's upcoming book sales are May 10th and 11th, June 14th and 15th, and July 12th and 13th.

FOPAL sells many of its high-value books on Amazon, at competitive prices. You can find a listing of the books at <http://www.amazon.com/shops/grand-mabetsybooks.com>.

Want to become a member or renew your membership? Go to our **NEW** website www.fopal.org for details!

Althea Andersen, Volunteer Extraordinaire

FOPAL has a legion of volunteers whose hard work throughout the years has made FOPAL the successful Friends group it is today. But few volunteers have become as familiar and steady a presence at FOPAL as Althea Andersen.

Althea's roots are in Palo Alto, where her family moved shortly after she was born. She attended Walter Hays Grade School, Jordan Junior High School, Palo Alto High School, and completed a two-year

Tom Wyman *(continued from pg 1)*

had the privilege of working with Tom and Ellen at FOPAL, whether on the board or as volunteers, remember their tireless work in supporting FOPAL book sales and their advocacy for the Libraries.

In 1999, Tom authored a booklet entitled "Palo Alto and Its Libraries, a Long Time Love Affair.". The booklet is an affectionate account of Palo Alto's long love affair with its libraries, but what also shines through is Tom's personal love affair with the Palo Alto Libraries. Tom and Ellen were awarded the City of Palo Alto Community Star Award, and more recently were honored with the Avenidas Lifetime of Achievement Award for their many years of community service. We will miss you, Tom.

Althea *(continued from pg 1)*

librarian degree from San Mateo Junior College. She married a Stanford grad and the two moved to Boston, where Althea completed a bachelor's degree in Library Science at Simmons College.



Libraries, it seems, have always called to Althea. She was a familiar presence at the Palo Alto library as a youngster. Palo Alto's Carnegie Library in the early 1940's had a children's book room, which she loved, and a librarian who kept a watchful eye on the children's reading habits. Althea recalls, as a sixth grader, being unable to check out the then-popular "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter."

Althea spent most of her professional life as a librarian. After several moves in the Northeast, she and her husband settled in Clearwater, Florida where, as the local librarian, Althea got to know the local Friends of the Library group. This, she thought, could be her calling in retirement. And when she retired to

Mountain View 16 years ago, she immediately joined the Friends of the library group there. A move to Palo Alto a few years later brought her to FOPAL.

Althea manages the Sports and Transportation Sections, and the academic year books. But her first love is the Ephemera section. Originally intended as a catch-all for various loose printed materials such as pamphlets, magazines, and maps, Ephemera expanded to handle the many personal odds and ends that came in as donations. Framed art, bric-a-brac of all sorts, and novelties are always part of the Ephemera scene, but once in a while a big ticket item shows up. The most memorable of these for Althea was a motorcycle and a player piano.

The Ephemera section is sold outside the Main Room, weather permitting, and there Althea can be found presiding over many treasures. She has a loyal following of buyers, some of whom shop the Ephemera section outside while they are waiting for entry into the main room on book sale days. There are also buyers from professional ephemera groups that like to hunt through Althea's section in search of the unusual bargain. Does Althea herself ever buy items from her section? "Only rarely," she says, "Being a librarian for many years, my house is overflowing with books."

What advice does Althea have for young volunteers who are starting at FOPAL? "Look around and find something that interests you. Whether it's aeronautics or dancing or book pricing, there will be a position that allows you to explore your interests and to work with nice people." It's the nice people that make the work worthwhile for Althea—the good friends she has among the volunteers and the regular buyers.

Thank you, Althea. You are one of the reasons we volunteers enjoy working at FOPAL.