

Library Memories: Store Front Library Volunteer

FL: We got the library, finally. It was a store-front library, up by where Pop-eye's is now. I worked there, by the way, for a couple of months. Interesting thing. The library was very limited in books. We had to limit the books. The easy books were the most popular. I don't know if you know 'easy' books—they were the ones little kids read, the picture books. We had to limit those to two per person. We had what we called the 'red dot' books, which are in back of the counter. You had to get the parents' permission, an older person had to get it. If a youngster wanted it, high school or something, well, you kind of use it by age, they could get it. Just a couple of books. Nowadays, they are just regular books but back then they were considered almost pornographic. They were risqué, I'll put it that way.

VH: Could you give an example of some of the books that were back there?

FL: Let's see. Forever Amber. I'm trying to think of another one. It'll come to me a little later.

VH: Was John Steinbeck back there?

MC: He's Grapes of Wrath.

VH: Yeah, I know my mom wasn't allowed to read stuff.

MC: I was ten years old in '64. Grapes of Wrath, we wanted to get that.

CG: They wouldn't let you get Grapes of Wrath.

FL: There were some. But now it's open shelf. I don't know how they consider some of this stuff now. I consider it pornographic.

Anyway, I went to work at six o'clock. I'd get off my regular job, and I worked there part-time, two or three days a week. The train would come through Vienna. Our carpool would come through. The train, it seemed like, would come through everyday when we were trying to get home to Cherry Street. Several times, I'd get out of the car and go on to the Library because I couldn't get home to change. Although, I still had a suit and everything on. Then I'd get to the Little Library.

Another thing about the Little Library, and I do remember this. We didn't have too many schools in the area. We had at that time the Black school, what was the name...

VH: Louise Archer?

FL: Louise Archer, yep. Wolftrap hadn't been built, but there were several other schools that used our library. What happened—the teachers would all give the same assignments to the students. Say, a book on Indians. All of a sudden, everybody

would come in and want the book on Indians. The good students, they'd get a jump on it. Finally, I think the schools worked it out. They'd say, 'Okay, Wolftrap, you take the Indians this week...' You know, splitting it up so that there would be enough books to go around. Sounds funny now. You just didn't have that many books to go around. I remember them starting all new libraries, and all this on a budget, it was just limited. That's the reason I say Ms. Walker, the librarian, said we can't get the Nancy Drew books. We all had a limited budget, trying to get "good" literature.