



Editor's Note Pages of Our Past

By Sharon Verbeten

Take a good look at the photo on this issue's cover. Does it look anything like your storytime? If your library is anything like mine, it

doesn't. OK, to be fair, there are probably still librarians wearing high heels and skirts and sitting in rocking chairs. (And that's perfectly fine!) But chances are your children aren't sitting quite so, well, rapt and quiet—carefully in their rows.

But I love this throwback photo for the window it provides into the history of library service to children—the special focus of this issue, which celebrates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Division of Libraries for Children and Young People (a predecessor of ALSC), approved by the American Library Association (ALA) Council in 1941. The division was then made up of the American Association of School Librarians (formerly the School Libraries Section, which had its first meeting in 1915), the Children's Library Association (formerly the Section for Library Work with Children, which had its first meeting in 1901), and the Young People's Reading Round Table (which first met in 1930).

Further evolution, restructuring, and name changes took place in the ensuing years, and finally at the 1977 ALA Annual Conference, the name "Association for Library Service to Children" was approved.

So ALSC has a rather verbose history in the way groups and organizations were named. But its mission likely was the same as it was way back in the early twentieth century—providing quality library services and materials to all children.

Sure, over the years the books and their contents have changed. The world and, thankfully, too, our books have become more diverse. Controversies continue to ebb and flow. But we're all still proud to do what we do best. And it's still the greatest feeling of all to have a child look up at storytime, engaged in a story, bound by a book—taking away the delight that only libraries can bring.

Whether you're a long-timer or newcomer to children's services, you know just what that feeling is—especially when you're the one delivering it. And chances are you, like most of us, got that feeling the first time you remember being at a library as a child.

After I received my Master's in Library Science had worked in the "trenches" for a few years, I returned to my first love—journalism. But I'm so glad I returned to my roots as a children's librarian seven years ago.

My storytimes don't look anything like the idyllic cover image, and I wouldn't have it any other way. No matter what your library, storytime, or clientele looks like, thank you for what you do. Let's hope we have many more successes to report seventy-five more years from now. ✂

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