

Local



New city-county librarian Anne Turner.

Libraries 1980-1989

New librarian felt this was the job

By CANDACE ATKINS

Anne Turner "had high hopes from the beginning" that she would be chosen as the new library director for the Santa Cruz City-County Library System.

Her hopes were realized earlier this fall, and after 10 days on the job, Mrs. Turner has determined that "this job is perfect."

Mrs. Turner comes to Santa Cruz from Lowell, Mass., where she was also a library director. Her husband and son still live in the East, and will join her at Christmas.

"My husband is a free-lance journalist," she said. "For him, it's 'have typewriter, will travel.' I'm the employed spouse."

A California native, Mrs. Turner said she and her husband have wanted to move to the West Coast for a long time. When the library director vacancy was announced, she said, it was not only "a job, it was the job."

There were a number of excellent candidates for the position, but Mrs. Turner's proven leadership ability and her "love of doing what I do" moved the two interviewing committees to nominate her. Library board trustees approved the appointment this fall.

"My best talent is in management," Mrs. Turner said. "I can do a whole bunch of different things; there is no job in the library I haven't done, including shelving books. As a leader I feel I enable others to do what they're trained to do."

She said she has "an absolute commitment to meeting people's informational needs." Because Santa Cruz is a university town, Mrs. Turner said,

"our constituents are not afraid to pound their fist on the table when they're unhappy." In addition, she believes patrons are more sophisticated and specific in their needs, which presents an added challenge to serving Santa Cruz County library users.

But regardless of clientele, Mrs. Turner feels a library's responsibility is first and always to dispense information.

"I believe in people's right to know," she said. "That is our task here."

One of her goals is to "turn the system of a central library and eight branches into a library system," and "to equalize the level of services."

She has visited each of the branch libraries and says she is very impressed with the competence of the staffs. "There is an enormous amount of people here who know what they are doing," she said.

In addition, Mrs. Turner said, the 130 volunteers throughout the system "are a measure of achievement, a pat on the back for the staff. It says that people believe in the system."

Mrs. Turner is hopeful that the next city and county budgets will include funds for system automation, to "enable us to give better service. It is (becoming) impossible to do that manually."

As the head of what she considers a progressive library system, Mrs. Turner said she is "annoyed with the (traditional) image of a librarian." On the other hand, though, she is not overly concerned about changing that erroneous notion.

"In the immortal words of Popeye," she said, "I can only be who I am."