

Clara Elizabeth Wendel

Photo:



Date of Birth:
June 1 1904

Clara Elizabeth Wendel, Orlando Public Library's first head librarian in its current building, died December 19, 1995 in Harvey, Illinois.

Clara served as head librarian in Orlando for 28 years. When she retired in 1970, Mayor Carl T. Langford proclaimed a Clara Wendel Day in her honor.

Clara was born in Harvey, Illinois on June 1, 1904, and moved to Florida with her parents in 1916. She graduated from Rollins College, attended Florida State College for Women and received her master's in library science at University of Chicago. When Clara started her career with the Orlando library, it was housed in a 20-year-old, cramped building with 10 employees. In 1966, she oversaw the move to the current library building in downtown Orlando. By the time she left, she had 120 full-time staff members, 10 library branches and two traveling bookmobiles.

Funeral services were held at Cathedral Church and Clara was buried in the Greenwood Cemetery in Orlando alongside her parents and sister, Edna Buckman. The obituary stated Clara was 94 when she died but the Social Security Death Index, indicates she was born on June 1, 1904, making her 91 when she died.

Clara Wendel was also a member of the Third Friday Book Club - the longest running book club in the history of Central Florida, joining upon her retirement from her position as Director of the Orlando library in 1970. She was last mentioned as a member of the club on the 1991-1992 member list. Club minutes from March 1996 address her passing: "Sent \$130 to Orlando Public Library in memory of Clara Wendel." Read more about the Third Friday Book Club at OrlandoMemory.info Search for her name at OrlandoMemory.info

Media data:



Date of Death:
 December 19 1995
 Place of Birth:
 Harvey, Illinois, United States
 Place of Death:
 Harvey, Illinois, United States
 Primary State of Residence:
 Orlando, Florida, United States

