

# Maryland Independent

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## Library patrons visit Glymont branch to say goodbyes

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All the pages of petitions, signatures and sentimental pleas could not save the Glymont library, which closed its doors Friday for the last time, leaving behind loyal patrons and a painful message that the recession is real.

"The public has been very depressed and very sad that it's going," said Janet Garvey, acting branch head at the Bryans Road branch, where the Glymont branch is moving. Both libraries will be closed through Sept. 27, and will reopen at Bryans Road Sept. 30.

Glymont fostered the strong sense of community felt in Indian Head and Potomac Heights, which was evidenced when the residents rallied to fight its impending closure. The battle was lost to the county's economic woes — a shortfall in revenues stopped plans for a new library which created problems for Glymont.

This coming January, the new library was to open.

Its design was completed, but plans to bid the project were halted due to the economy. The two libraries were to be merged in the new building, and because the move was imminent, automation equipment was purchased only for Bryans Road, leaving Glymont library without this service. Further, it would have cost nearly \$50,000 to keep Glymont open.

The brick storefront library, once home to Welch's Hardware, was within walking distance for many seniors and schoolchildren. It was also a haven where literacy teachers met their pupils without interruption and tots romped safely in a special nook devoted to children's books and activities.

A worn "Curious George" stuffed monkey and "Pink Panther" hand puppet sat in the rear of the building on a table stacked with packed boxes awaiting moving day. Garvey said the youngsters noticed immediately that certain toys were missing. "I've told them Paddington Bear went already and Corduroy will be going to Bryans Road," she said.

During the last day, adults wandered in to say farewell, make last-minute photocopies and ask, "Is today really the last day?" A couple of patrons

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checked out books to hold them over until the Sept. 30 Bryans Road opening. One patron came through the door toting champagne and plastic cups.

Art Lee, 48, of Indian Head did not want the occasion to be sad. On his last visit, he brought the ladies a bottle of Tott's Extra Dry Champagne which they stored for later. "I've been treated well here, so I thought I'd bring a bottle of champagne," he said, sharing small talk with the employees.

Lee, who ran for county com-

missioner during the past elections, said the closing of Glymont Library was not a good sign for Indian Head. He said at one time the incorporated town, one of two in the county, had a movie theater, a bowling alley and a teen center.

"All those things are gone, plus now we are losing the library and a department store, and rumor has it we are going to lose our drug store," Lee said. "My question is what are our leaders doing for us?"

"I thought I'd come in here one

more time to bring back the memories," said Gus Lufriu, 70, of Potomac Heights. Garvey asked Lufriu if he wanted his aquarium back. He said no. Lufriu took care of the tank and fish for the library.

Ruthe Wilt, 73, of Indian Head, said she will always remember the staff's helpfulness. Once she needed a picture of a partridge so she could copy the bird's likeness onto a ceramic project. "They had it within an hour after I called," she said. "I certainly am going to miss this library. I know the ladies here are going to Bryans Road, but they're so cooperative. I just feel real close to them."

Wilt said that her mother was also fond of the Glymont Library. Her May 1964, she died and as part

of her memorial, she requested that books be given to the facility "so that other people could enjoy books as much as she did."

Brian, 9, Devon, 7, and Hilary Lindsay, 6, all of Indian Head, were frequent visitors to the Glymont Library. Friday they made a goodbye appearance with their mother, Anne Lindsay, 33. The children were told they were checking out their last book from the library located along Route 210. Hilary chose "Spot on the Farm."

As the family left, their books balanced in their arms, Lindsay said, "We are going to miss the library. We came here quite a bit. The kids usually go out with armfuls of books."

Garvey bid them farewell, watched them pull away from the building and said, "I hope all the patrons who have used this library come to Bryans Road."

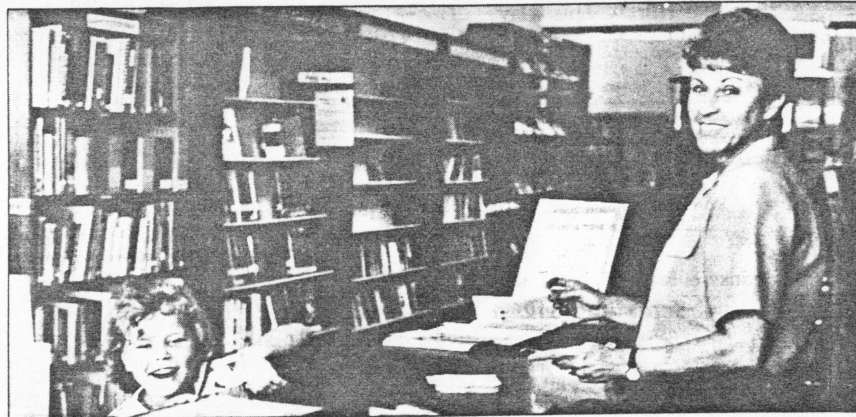


Photo by Suzanne White

Hilary Lindsay, 6, of Indian Head, checks out a last book from the Glymont Library, which closed its doors Friday. Assisting her is Janet Garvey, acting branch head at the Bryans Road Library.

Tuda Sprague, 77, of Potomac Heights, said the library will be missed by many in the community situated in the western section of the county. "We're broken-hearted," she said. "One of the things we liked about the area is we could have walked here when we no longer could have drove. I think it's a shame we're giving this up. The area is growing, and I'm just surprised there wasn't enough money to keep it going."

The new library was going to be built on county-owned land adjacent to Ruth B. Swann Park. But lately new options have surfaced.

County Commissioner Dale Speake wants to study where the growth is heaviest in the western county. He said sewer lines would have to be extended for the Swann Park site and has suggested that the two consolidated branches move temporarily into a larger space at the Bryans Road Shopping Center.

In addition, Indian Head officials are considering the idea of locating the new library in town along the Village Green.

Dr. Frank Susan, who had his family practice in Indian Head 43 years, said he wrote a letter to library officials about the closing. "I don't like it but there is nothing I can do about it. I understand the reasons for it, but it just seems so strange. ... We're doing so wonderful and then one year you find out things are bad."

Susan also said he was disappointed that plans for the proposed new library for the western county have been put on hold. "I'd like to have seen the new library. I would not have minded closing this one if I thought the new one would be here. Anyway, I'm sorry to see it go."

Much of Glymont's book and magazine collection will be sent to the Bryans Road branch. Other branches in the county will be able to choose from selections not taken to Bryans Road, before the stock is opened to libraries in Calvert and St. Mary's counties.

Glymont will hold a public sale for unclaimed books, odd furniture, equipment and shelving. The sale will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 26 and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (if any items are left) on Sept. 27.