

## ALDA BLOUNT NETTLESHIP: COUNCILLOR & ALDERMAN

Among her many contributions to the town, Alda Nettleship opened Market Rasen's current public library back in 1971. In its first ten weeks of service, the number of books issued at the new library increased by 70% to nearly 2,000 a week

Mrs Nettleship was born in Woodville, Leicestershire, on 18 June 1898. In the 1901 census she is listed as living with her mother and six brothers and sisters at an inn on the High Street of Woodville. Her mother, Elizabeth A Betteridge, was listed as the 'head of the household' and with the occupation of 'inn keeper'. Alda is believed to have made Market Rasen her home following her marriage in 1937 to James H Nettleship, a well-known auctioneer in the town, at the firm of Nettleship and Lucas. They lived at 'The Manor' in Market Rasen.

### MAKING HER MARK - FROM DE ASTON TO THE LIBRARY

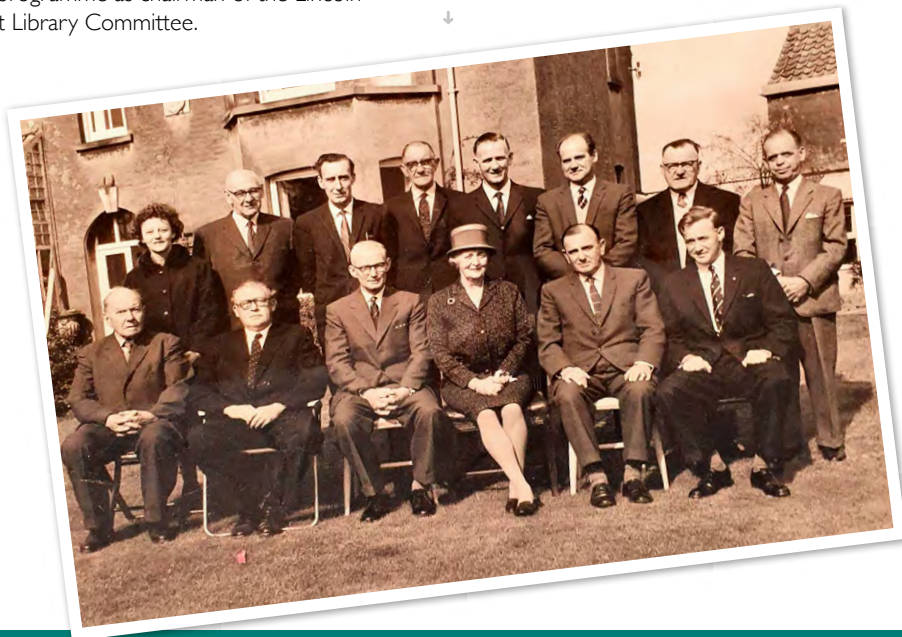
Alda is known to have been a town councillor and alderman. In recognition of her work, it is understood that a staircase was named after her in the mid-20th century extension to De Aston School. But perhaps one of her most visible links to today's Market Rasen landscape is the library on Mill Road, which she officially opened on the 21st April 1971. At the opening, Alda was listed in the programme as chairman of the Lincoln District Library Committee.

### A LIBRARY THROGGED WITH VISITORS

The following excerpt is taken from the Market Rasen Mail's report on the opening of the new library in March 1971:

*The new £11,000 area library which has been provided in Mill Road, Market Rasen, by Lindsey and Holland Library Service, was throgged with market day visitors when it was opened to the public for the first time yesterday... Improvement in the library services is being carried out at selected centres in Lindsey, and Market Rasen was chosen not only because one in every three people living in the urban district are library readers, but also because Market Rasen serves what is regarded as an important catchment area in mid-Lindsey. In February, Mrs Thatcher, Minister of Education, is to open another new library being built at Humberston.*

Market Rasen UDC (Urban District Council)  
1964-5. Alderman Mrs A B Nettleship (chairman)  
pictured centre front row (8)



Mrs Nettleship (standing) at an event (1)



The current Market Rasen Library at Mill Road (2)



Market Rasen Mail, March 1971 (7)



# MARKET RASEN

GATEWAY TO THE WOLDS

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### PROVISION FOR 'CARS, BICYCLES AND PERAMBULATORS'

The following extracts are taken from the 1971 opening ceremony programme, revealing how much the town needed its new library building:

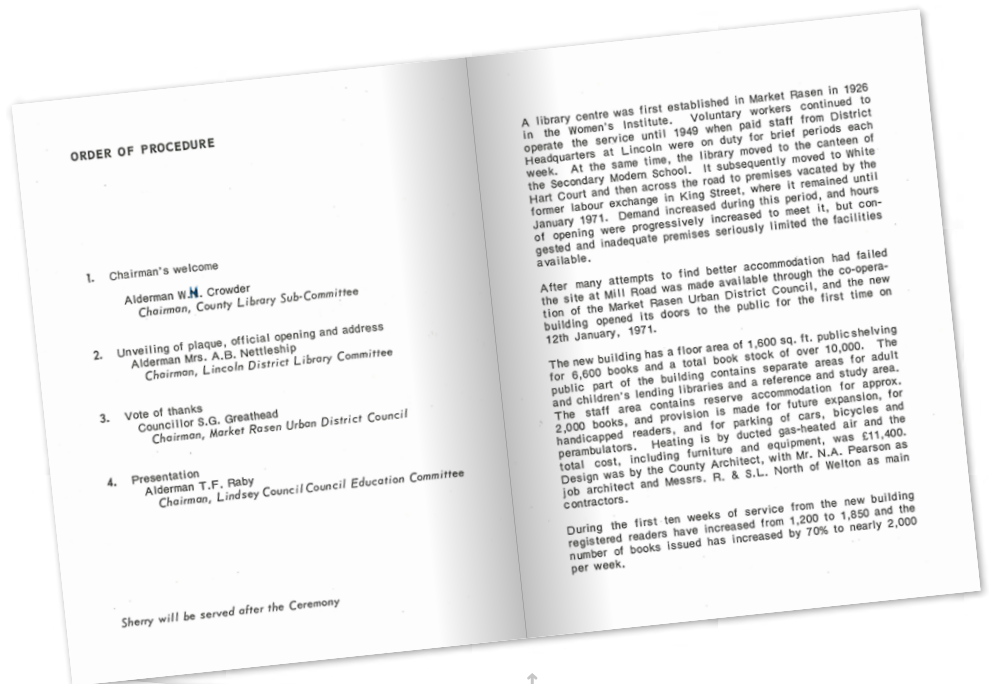
*A library centre was first established in Market Rasen in 1926 in the Women's Institute. Voluntary workers continued to operate the service until 1949 when paid staff from District Headquarters at Lincoln were on duty for brief periods each week. At the same time, the library moved to the canteen of the Secondary Modern School [now Market Rasen's primary school]. It subsequently moved to White Hart Court and then across the road to premises vacated by the former labour exchange in King Street, where it remained until January 1971. 'Demand increased during this period, and hours of opening were progressively increased to meet it, but congested and inadequate premises seriously limited the facilities available.*

*After many attempts to find better accommodation had failed, the site at Mill Road was made available through the co-operation of the Market Rasen Urban District Council, and the new building opened its doors to the public for the first time on 12th January 1971.*

*The new building has a floor area of 1,600 sq. ft. public shelving for 6,600 books and a total book stock of over 10,000. The public part of the building contains separate areas for adult and children's lending libraries and a reference and study area. The staff area contains reserve accommodation for approx. 2,000 books, and provision is made for future expansion, for handicapped readers, and for parking of cars, bicycles and perambulators.*

*During the first ten weeks of service from the new building, registered readers have increased from 1,200 to 1,850 and the number of books issued has increased by 70% to nearly 2,000 per week.*

Market Rasen Library →  
was officially opened  
by alderman Mrs A B  
Nettleship on the 21st  
April 1971 (3)



↑ Programme of the official opening (4, 5 & 6)  
←

### References

- Original story created for the Wolds Women of Influence Exhibition, 2018.
- Rase Heritage Society.  
[www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) (1939 Register; 1911 Census, civil registration records).
- The Market Rasen Mail.
- Market Rasen Library Local History Collection.
- With thanks to Market Rasen Library and staff.

### Photography credits

1. Photograph: Market Rasen Mail Plate 16 <http://www.raseheritage.org.uk/galleries/glass-negatives/>
2. Ashley Taylor; Push Creativity
3. Ashley Taylor; Push Creativity
- 4, 5 & 6. Market Rasen Library / Lincolnshire Library Service
7. Market Rasen Mail, March 1971
8. Market Rasen Town Council

