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West Virginia Libraries 1947 Vol.1 No.1

Madalyn M. Bradford

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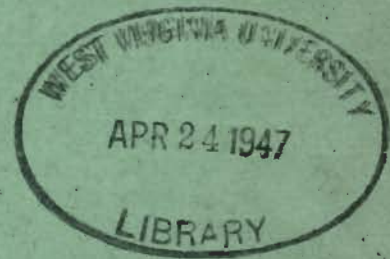
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WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARIES

VOL. I. NO. I.

APRIL 1947

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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Huntington, W. Va.

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W. Va. University Library
Morgantown, W. Va.

EDITORIALS

It is hoped by those who have prepared this first issue of West Virginia Libraries that it will be the beginning of a journal for the West Virginia Library Association of which its members may be proud; that it may serve as a means of strengthening our organization and keeping its members informed not only as to what is happening in our own state but in other states as well.

The Executive Committee of the Association plans to get out three issues this year, the next one to come out about July and the third in late September or October.

West Virginia during the past year has raised her rank in libraries one place. That is a feat to be proud of, but we can do better. Elsewhere in this issue will be found an article telling of the plan to organize Friends groups across the state.

One of the members of the recent Legislature gave as a reason for the failure of the Board of Public Works and the Legislature to provide state aid for libraries, "Well, you know, it's the wheel that squeaks the loudest that gets the grease, and you library folks just don't make enough noise." He was right. It's our fault that West Virginia doesn't have enough good libraries.

Let's squeak louder by strengthening the Association and by helping to organize Friends groups in every county in the state. We have less than two years to do this.

Let's get busy.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE

LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION BILL

Fleming Bennett

Plans for the Regional Library Conference to be held in Baltimore on October 9th, 10th, and 11th at the Lord Baltimore Hotel have been made. The hotel offers the entire ballroom free for exhibits and the Baltimore Chamber of Commerce will be responsible for information, personnel and services.

Committee chairmen for the meeting are: Arrangements, Miss Eleanor W. Falley, Goucher College; Program, Miss Amy Winslow, Enoch Pratt Free Library; Publicity, Miss Kate M. Coplan, Enoch Pratt Free Library; Hotels, Mr. Emerson Greenaway, Enoch Pratt Free Library; Exhibits, Mr. Carl W. Brown, Warren Library Association of Warren, Pennsylvania.

It is hoped that a number of librarians from West Virginia will plan to attend, especially since distance will make it impossible for many to attend the ALA meeting in San Francisco.

It is recommended that those planning to attend write Miss Falley immediately for reservations.

An old librarian's manual has the following admonition to the librarian.

"So far as your authority will permit of it, exercise great discrimination as to which person shall be admitted to the use of the library. For the treasure house of literature is no more to be thrown open to the ravages of the unreasoning mob than is a fair garden to be laid unprotected at the mercy of a swarm of beasts."

ALA Bulletin.

The latest development in the program for securing federal legislation for libraries is indicated in this telegram from Paul Howard, director of the ALA National Relations Office: "LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION BILL INTRODUCED IN HOUSE MARCH 10, BY CONGRESSMAN THOMAS A. JENKINS OF OHIO AS H.R.2465. OTHER SPONSORS MAY BE ADDED LATER."

H.R.2465 is the congressional twin of S.48, which was introduced very early in the 80th Congress by Senators Lister Hill of Alabama and George D. Aiken of Vermont. Both bills are substantially the same as the one introduced last year, but incorporating two important changes which were recommended by last year's Senate committee.

The present bills (S.48 and H.R.2465) provide for a demonstration period of five years, instead of four, during which all states may receive a basic annual grant of \$25,000 for the staging of library demonstrations. They provide also for an increased ceiling on matching funds to be made available to states. The older version provided a maximum of \$50,000 annually, whereas the present bill provides that each state may qualify for as much as \$75,000 a year if that amount of state aid is available for matching purposes.

WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS for passage? Perhaps it's too early to draw any valid conclusions. The Senate Committee on Labor and Education has been swamped with

(Continued on Page 3)

considerations of labor legislation, and "straws in the wind" tell little about congressional opinions of the proposed library legislation. But now that the bill has been introduced in the House, it would seem that the way for early action has been cleared.

The aid and support of all librarians and friends of library service is urgently needed. Letters and telegrams should be sent to our West Virginia Senators and Congressmen, acquainting them with substantial, valid reasons for their voting favorably upon the bill when it comes up for consideration. Letters and telegrams should be sent to members of the Senate and House committees who will study the bill and make their recommendations to the legislative bodies.

A nodding approval on the part of librarians is not enough. We are all agreed on that. There needs to be a concentrated and zealous program of action. Librarians can be the "sparkplugs" in their own communities, stirring library-minded folks (and those who aren't) to constructive, positive action. Only by demonstrating the needs for library service, and giving vocal expression where it will do the most good, can favorable action be assured in the 80th Congress.

In West Virginia, where the needs are perhaps greater than in any other state, the "shouting and the tumult" for favorable action should be very great indeed.

CHARLESTON'S PUPPET SHOW A SUCCESS

Two years ago the Library Club of the Boy's and Girls' Department voted to work with puppets as a Vacation Reading Club project. The children planned to present a simple puppet show for the final program of the summer. One of the local high schools gave us some puppets, and several boys in the club began working on a simple stage; a committee of the Vacation Reading Club began to read stories and plays which could be adapted for puppet show presentation.

Our first program was a modest one---a simple adaption of "Red Riding Hood." The stage was purely make-shift; a low section of shelving formed the back-drop and two poster boards supplied the wings. The stage did not conceal the operators from the audience, but the children were simply fascinated by the performance notwithstanding.

We learned many things from that first little show. Chief among them was the fact that puppet plays pay big dividends. We found that children who had not visited the library for several months were coming back to see the shows and were staying to select books to take home.

A Vacation Reading Club project which was to last for only eight weeks has become a permanent part of our program for children. Now we have a portable stage, provided by the Charleston Junior League, and a cabinet full of puppets, and the Library Club is constantly planning and rehearsing new shows, painting scenery, and designing costumes. The next one, an adaptation of "Beauty and the Beast," will be given sometime during the week of the Spring Book Festival. If you're nearby, come in!

LIBRARY PERSONNEL STANDARDS

The word "standard" is certainly no strange term to librarians. We have all vexed our minds with figures of income in dollars per capita, circulation per capita, reading room space in square feet per assistant per volumes circulated and with other more unmanageable mathematical conceptions until it seemed that a library administrator need only have a calculating machine and a penchant for tabulating and charting to have the secrets of superior service laid open before him. Since 1939, the pursuit and creation of personnel standards has taken an interesting and rather novel turn. The opinions and ideas of persons who have rejected the profession have become a strong force in shaping its standards.

Librarians realize again, what they already knew, that library standards do not have the validity and authority of those in the physical sciences. We participate in a social science and our measurements are relative to the dynamics of the society of which we are only a small part. Consequent to our relative position, people not in library work have exerted the major pressures for a revision of library personnel standards. Despite the library world's talk of leadership, it is the library profession, in this case, which is being led.

It was always expected that an employing library would set minimum qualifications relating to such things as education and experience for admission to the library staff. An employer's requirements and compensation

offered for their fulfillment express the personnel standards of the library. But these requirements do not have the ring of strength and permanency they had ten years ago. This is so because personnel standards relate to working people, and the working people possess some standards of their own regarding pay, hours, education, working conditions, and vocational advancements. These they unabashedly compare with the standards of the library world. In general, the results have not been wholly flattering to the library profession. Libraries have been guilty of expecting too much and of offering too little. To a large portion of young men and young women, personnel standards calling for years of training, uncommon alertness or abilities, or years of experience have been utterly unrealistic in terms of the compensation, quality of work to be done, and channels of vocational advancement which they as new wage earners are seeking. Our professional standards and the working world's standards are too far apart.

The most unsatisfactory answer to the problem would be to demolish those respectable standards already established by the profession. Not many, for example, would like to see the requirement of four years of training in a properly accredited college or university including one year in an accredited library school or a vocational and educational experience calling forth at least an equivalent display of mental ability and vocational talent go overboard as one of the minimum essential qualifications for entry into a professional position.

THE BETTER ANSWERS to the question are the moves forced on the library world by the pace of the much greater economic and social world. New attention has been given job analysis, salary scales, and increased salary to match that very active force in today's world, the cost of living. Opportunities in service for advancement, on-the-job-training, recognition of a staff member's ideas and opinions of the work in which he is engaged have become procedures by which prospective employees measure the library, and by which standard conscientious libraries measure themselves.

What can the individual library administrator do to raise personnel standards in his library? Get out the American Library Association Salary Policy Statement of June 21, 1946. Read it and note its remarks on cost of living changes. Set to work to build a job classification scheme remembering that such a scheme depends on an analysis of work to be done in the library and is finally expressed on job specifications and job classes. When the classification scheme is finished, match it with a respectable salary schedule. Include non-professional workers in the job specifications and in the salary scales. They are people too, and a vitally important part of the staff. Remember that because a library is small is no reason for it to offer a small salary. When the small library enters the market for a librarian, or clerk, or driver, or janitor, it is entering the same market as the Detroit Public Library and the largest business enterprise in your area. It will get quality if

its standards attract quality. Make use of tests, interviews and probationary periods. As far as you can, from the facts revealed to you in the job analysis assign professional workers tasks fitting their training and let the clerical work go to the clerks. Orient people before they undertake full responsibility on a job. See to it that each employee has an opportunity to improve in his job. Let each know the possibilities of advancement in the library's service.

These policies will begin to establish personnel standards of selection, training, and performance. They will be library staff standards which will be more nearly comparable to the wage earner's and the working world's standards of good pay, accomplishment according to ability, and a sense of self respect and worthiness on the job.

MEMBERSHIP PLEA

Of the pleas for membership there is no end, but members of the West Virginia Library Association and their dues are essential if the libraries of the state are to move forward. Those of us engaged in a common task should stand together for the advancement of that task, which is, simply, the improvement of library facilities in West Virginia.

Not enough of the librarians in West Virginia have enrolled themselves as members of the West Virginia Library Association, both in the past and in the present, and as a result of this failure the Association has not been able to exert the influence it should.

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WE NEED FRIENDS

The West Virginia Library Commission meets in Morgantown on April 12th and 13th. It will be the first meeting of the Commission after the 1947 session of the legislature.

The budget of the Commission was raised by this legislature just enough so that the Commission may be able to operate one bookmobile. The money to purchase the bookmobile will not come out of the regular Commission budget. This money was given to the Commission through contributions of persons interested in state wide public library service, and from organizations that want better library service in West Virginia.

Owing to scarcity of materials and inflationary prices, it may take six months or longer to put a bookmobile into operation. It will belong to the whole state and can go to any part of the state. One bookmobile sounds very small for a whole state, but it may be the beginning of better public library education, and it can be used for demonstration purposes. Books on wheels can travel through sections of the state difficult to reach; many people in this state have never seen a public library, never visited one, and do not know what public library service can do for them. We need the help of every intelligent citizen to secure such service for this state.

What can you do to help in the development of state wide library service? Talk libraries wherever you go and help in the formation of Friends groups in your community and your county.

Recently there met in Huntington a committee of people interested in library development in West Virginia. This committee consisted of Mrs. O. G. Wilson, of the Commission; Mrs. Madalyn M. Bradford, of the Association; and Mrs. E. S. Maclin of the Federation of Farm Women's Clubs and former president of the Better Library Movement and Mrs. R. I. Roudebush, Vice-President of the Better Library Movement and member of the Board of Directors of the Cabell County Friends group.

This group planned for the organization of Friends groups in every county of the State. They are counting on the help of every person interested in libraries in the state. You'll hear more of this later.

Anyone in need of information and help in connection with Friends groups may write any member of this committee.

HUNTINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY RECEIVES ENDOWMENT

The Huntington Public Library was named one of the beneficiaries in the will of the late Rufus Switzer, former Mayor of Huntington. The fund is in two parts, the first consists of an income of \$1,000 a year for rural library service and the other which consists of approximately \$12,000 a year which will be shared with an arts and crafts school for Cabell County. Exact details of the bequest are not known at this time.

This is the second gift of
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Mr. Rufus Switzer. The first consisted of an outright gift of \$5,000 last fall for a bookmobile which the library hopes to have in operation soon.

Mr. Switzer who died in March at the age of ninety-one was a life-long resident of Cabell County. He was one of Huntington's best known and beloved citizens, having served in many civic capacities, as Mayor of Huntington Twice, as a member of the Legislature and as a member of the City Council several times.

Mr. Switzer's estate was estimated at \$400,000, which amount will be set up as a trust, the greater part of the income from which will go to educational organizations in the County; the Huntington Galleries, Inc., the Huntington Clinical Foundation, Inc., and the Huntington Public Library.

A further provision of Mr. Switzer's will sets up qualifications to be met by some of the beneficiaries, and stipulates that in case they cannot qualify within a year their part of the income from the estate will go to the Huntington Public Library.

Let's have something about your library and its plans for the future in the next issue of "West Virginia Libraries." Send material to Mrs. Madalyn M. Bradford, the Huntington Public Library, Huntington, W. Va.

COMMISSION RECORDS SHOW PROGRESS

While progress of the Commission has not "sky-rocketed" there has been consistent growth. In 1941 the first appropriation was made available to the Commission \$10,000 for each year of the biennium. By March of 1942 Gordon Bennett had been employed as the Commission's first executive secretary and he was busy with the organization of a headquarters office. There were two staff members. In 1945 the appropriation was increased to \$16,350 for each year of the biennium, there were three full time staff members, and the Legislature passed the new public library law. The new appropriation for the approaching biennium permits one more staff member and ~~bring~~ the total to four.

Developments in the public libraries have paralleled the progress of the Commission.

In 1943 expenditure per capita for public library service in West Virginia was .07¢. In 1946 it was slightly more than .10¢. In 1943-45 the average number of books mailed by the Commission to public libraries and communities was about 500 per month. In 1946 the average had risen to approximately 1,200. New town libraries were started in New Martinsville and Paden City in 1946. Each is supported by the municipality. New Martinsville also received some rather generous gifts from local industries for the initiation of the service. In 1946 Wheeling acquired a record collection and a

music room was equipped for listening. In October 1946 Cabell County was given \$5,000 for the purchase of a book-mobile. Last summer Buckhannon again voted its special levy for its public library's operation.

In 1947 plans are under way for expansion or new buildings in Charleston, Fairmont, and Moundsville. Radio story hours have been or are being conducted by the libraries of Charleston, Clarksburg, Wheeling, Bluefield, Fairmont, and Huntington. Most of the programs have been jointly sponsored by some other community group. Clarksburg is doing a radio "great books" program at 5 P.M. each Saturday.

March was the fifth anniversary of the Commission's operation from a headquarters office and by a professional staff. A tabulation of results over a five year period is a good technique for encouragement in any project. This technique applies to public library development in West Virginia, but this is no time to lose sight of the goals yet to be accomplished. These are numerous.

LEGISLATIVE GAINS

Attendance at sessions of the legislature is a worthwhile experience. Librarians who attend from time to time will likely agree that through such an experience one's perspective gains depth in the matter of the relationship of the public library to other state interests and needs.

The appropriation for the Commission as finally approved by the Legislature was \$20,700 for each year of the biennium beginning July 1947. The appropriation for 1945-46 and 1946-47 was \$16,350 per year.

An amendment to the 1945 public library law was introduced by Senator Harmer of Harrison County and passed by the Legislature. It provides that a donor may specify use of his gift to a public library, and that the title for property or other gifts may be vested in a trustee or trustees of the donor's choice. Trustee in this case does not mean a library board member. This amendment is encouragement for endowments and gifts for public library purposes.

MEMBERSHIP -----

Its influence, as yet, has been only potential. Hence this plea, in order that a solid program for the improvement of the state's libraries may be undertaken. Dues are \$1.00 a year, and should be sent to the treasurer, Miss Carrie L. Brittain, Librarian, Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, West Virginia.

As librarians, we know that our libraries will benefit from the legislation on salaries of teachers enacted at the recent session. Perhaps not directly in all cases, as yet, but eventually the benefits will be inescapable, and it is admitted that the strong and unified support and encouragement of the legislation by the SEA was highly influential. The lesson.

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should be obvious.

Your state library association deserves your dues and membership, as does the American Library Association.

PUBLICITY

The one factor which can do more than anything else to bring a library out of the doldrums is publicity, and until libraries learn to make use of it, progress will be slow.

There are many different kinds of publicity which are available to libraries and all of them are free, that is, except for the hard work necessary to keep them going.

The value of Friends groups is discussed elsewhere in this issue, but there is still newspaper and radio publicity to say nothing of a planned program of public relations to inform every organized group and every individual in the community of the need for library services.

Spot announcements may be obtained from the American Library Association. These come each month and may be adapted to suit each library.

Newspaper publicity may be planned upon consultation with the local newspaper editor, most of whom are glad to help such a worthy cause as a library. Before newspaper publicity can be carried on for any length of time, however, the librarian must know what good newspaper material

is and how it should be prepared for the paper. A handbook of journalism will give valuable pointers on this.

Librarians should be on their toes to cooperate with all organized groups in the community when the occasion arises. There will be little need to ask for occasions to speak about the library and its plans, for as soon as it is known that the library has someone who can speak, invitations will come in faster than they can be taken care of.

Perhaps the most effective form of publicity is that of pleasant librarians who make each visitor feel that he is welcome and that his return is much desired. A library should never be a place where "Shuh!" is heard, but one where the borrower is made to feel at home and where he feels he has a part.

INCREASED POSTAL RATES

Librarians, friends of libraries and book lovers should be very much interested in H.R. 2408 introduced in Congress on March 6th, by Congressman Rees of Kansas.

If this bill passes, post cards and postals will cost two cents each instead of one.

Books will cost eight cents for the first pound plus four cents for each added pound under ten. Above ten pounds fourth class zone rates apply which start at fourteen cents for the first pound plus one and three-fourth cents for each additional pound.

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Someone has figured that a package of books sent from New York to California costing two dollars under the present rates will cost more than seven dollars if H.R.2408 passes.

It's easy to imagine what will happen to meager book funds of West Virginia libraries.

The House committee is now holding hearings on this bill. West Virginia has one member on the House Committee

on Post Office and Civil Service, Francis J. Love. Write him today insisting that this bill be stopped. Letters should be addressed to:

The Honorable Francis J. Love
House of Representatives
House Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.

People who contributed articles to this issue of "West Virginia Libraries" are: Robert Symonds; Charles E. Butler; Wilma Brown; Fleming Bennett; Madalyn M. Bradford; Mrs. O. G. Wilson; and Dora Ruth Parks.

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