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LIBRARY

LOOKOUT

## LIBRARY LOOKOUT

Issued Quarterly by the West Virginia  
Library Commission  
Clara B. Johnson, Executive Secretary

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### W. Va. L. A. MEETING

The West Virginia Library Association will hold its annual meeting in Clarksburg on Friday and Saturday, October 6 and 7th, at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel.

Invitations sent out to members by the president, Mr. W. P. Kellam, includes this conference program:

Friday, October 6, 1:30 P. M.  
Registration, 1:30-2:30

Reading of the minutes of the first meeting of the Association and the presentation of charter members. The first meeting was held thirty years ago, on October 21, 1914.

"The College Library's Job." Dr. John VanMale, Librarian, Madison College, Harrisonburg, Va.

4:30 P. M. Tea at the Clarksburg Public Library given by the staff for members and visitors.

8:00 P. M. "Report of the Activities of the West Virginia Library Commission." Miss Clara B. Johnson, Executive-Secretary, West Virginia Library Commission.

"The Citizen's Responsibility in Promoting and Supporting Public Libraries." Dr. Thomas D. Clark, Professor of History, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Saturday, October 7, 10:00 A. M.

"What a Good County Library Can Do for the Rural School." Mrs. Vivian Reynolds Boughter, Librarian, West Liberty State College.

"Ways in Which the Public Library and the Schools Can Cooperate." Dr. Ralph Munn, Director, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

12:30 P. M. Luncheon to be followed by business meeting.

The president points out that the program has been designed to interest college, public, and school librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries generally. When you make your plans to attend invite others in your community to come with you.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The library business remaining before West Virginians is:

1. To see that the bill to revise the present public library law is passed in the next session of the legislature.
2. To make sure that an amount for state aid for public library development is written into the state budget bill. And
3. To secure an increase in the appropriation for the work of the state Library Commission.

This is business which friends of libraries in West Virginia have supported before. The groundwork has been laid in previous sessions but a thorough information campaign needs to be conducted this fall and winter to make sure the objectives will be accomplished by the Board of Public Works meeting in December and by the Legislature after it convenes in January.

Campaign literature will be mailed to Lookout readers as soon as it is prepared. You will want to put these information materials to work immediately. Understand the legislative program well yourself and convey the facts to individual leaders and heads of organizations in your community. Then follow through with some definite steps which will help to get the library legislation enacted.

### LIBRARY EXTENSION INSTITUTE

Six West Virginians attended the Institute at the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago in August and brought back reports of the lectures and discussions. The theme this year was, "Library Extension, Problems and Solutions," a very timely one for consideration by librarians here.

Mr. W. P. Kellam, Librarian at W. Va. University, and chairman of the W. Va. Library Commission, who attended the meeting said a very comprehensive lecture was given by Miss Julia Wright Merrill of the A. L. A. headquarters staff, on the subject, "State Aid to Libraries." That the whole field of state aid was covered by Miss Merrill's discussion is indicated in this "Summary and Conclusions" quoted from her paper:

Summary

State aid for public libraries began in the 90's in the form of small grants to aid in the establishment or maintenance of small libraries.

The modern movement, emphasizing aid to larger units, dates in general from the 30's with the midwinter meeting of December 1935 giving official A. L. A. backing and impetus.

In 1944, 19 states, 1 territory and 5 Canadian provinces are making state aid appropriations ranging from \$2,800 a year in Saskatchewan and \$5,300 in Delaware to \$281,240 in Hawaii and \$300,000 in Michigan. Many other states have made efforts to secure state aid.

State aid patterns can be classified as follows:

- Type 1. State supported and administered local public library service.
  - a. Organized as a single unit for the state or province
  - b. Regional branches or centers and bookmobile services
  - c. State demonstrations
- Type 2. State grants-in-aid to county or local authorities.
  - a. For a minimum program
  - b. To supplement local appropriations

Laws and administrative rulings and practices vary widely even within this classification, as to extensive or intensive distribution, emphasis on establishment of large unit libraries vs. continuing aid, standards for eligibility, and limitations of use of grants.

## Conclusions

State aid for public libraries is based on two tenets; that public libraries are educational agencies; and that the state has a concern for the education of all its citizens.

State aid has demonstrated its value in spreading library service widely, particularly in rural areas, and in raising the quality of library service.

Very much larger appropriations are, however, needed to avoid the danger that state agencies may promise more than they can perform.

Permanent, continuing appropriations are desirable, based on constitutional or other recognition of state responsibility.

The state aid plan must be adapted to the particular state situation. Variations in pattern, particularly in this stage of development, are desirable.

Further experimentation in state branches and in state aid for a minimum program is desirable.

A strong state library agency is essential for successful administration of state aid.

Grants should be so allocated as to develop effective library units. Every aid and encouragement should be given the very small library now in existence to develop with its neighbors some type of cooperative service that would give the added strength needed and would qualify for state aid.

Grants for books alone seem less desirable than grants to aid in provision of qualified personnel or grants for operating expenses in general, under state minimum standards.

Research and field studies are needed while state aid is still in an early stage, as a guide to future development."

Since one pattern of a state aid program is being sought for public libraries in West Virginia the report of what a few of our neighbor states are doing is significant. Each of these states has a smaller tax income than West Virginia, yet they have already provided state aid for public library service:

1. Alabama - \$80,000 appropriated for 1943-45 for state aid and for the operation of the state library agency.
2. Arkansas - \$120,000 for 1943-45, of which \$89,800 is for establishment and continuing aid to county and regional libraries.
3. Georgia - \$100,000 allocated for state aid for rural public library service.
4. North Carolina - \$250,000 for 1943-45 for state aid for "promoting, aiding, and equalizing public library service."
5. Tennessee - \$40,000 for 1943-45 for aid in continuing regional library service in 13 counties in the Knoxville area.

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The Kanawha County Public Library was represented at the Chicago Institute by Miss Isobel P. Lynch, librarian, and four of her assistants, Misses Leonore White, Annis Fredrickson, Lucillo Moore and Wilma Brown.

Miss Lynch reports for Lookout readers that the Institute presented the regional library plan as one solution for library extension problems. She says,

"The speakers and lecturers of the Institute were generally of exceptional merit and interest; it would be difficult to select the most outstanding. Miss Helon Harris, Librarian of the Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee, however, would certainly qualify as one of the most popular and stimulating speakers. Her paper, "The Regional Library," combined enthusiasm, vision, and practical realism to such an extent that one felt regional librarianship was as much a product of common sense as of carefully thought out professional techniques.

Miss Harris pointed out that the word "region" is variously defined: there are "natural" regions, areas made distinct by river or mountain boundaries; "metropolitan" regions, economic areas around large cities; "provincial" regions, rural areas around small communities; "administrative" regions, areas in which particular services are given such as health districts; and "political" regions, areas of government such as states. The regional library organization is usually an "administrative" region, an area determined by the convenience and efficiency of providing library service.

Before 1937 there were only 6 regional libraries which were in California and Canada. Since 1937, 14 regional libraries have been organized and these were established in eight states of southeastern United States.

The progress and success of regional library development, according to Miss Harris, has been due to state aid, TVA, WPA, and improvement of school libraries prompted by the associations of colleges and secondary schools.

Pitfalls to be avoided in developing regional libraries, Miss Harris warned, are: inadequate planning with too little knowledge, failure to define objectives, too ambitious a program, failure to secure financial support from all agencies, dependence on too few people, lack of publicity, over-emphasis on professional techniques, and too little recognition of human problems.

The successful regional library must have complete flexibility in organization and variety in administration, priming funds (federal or state aid), the participation of many people, the coordination of all library resources, and continuous publicity."

For West Virginia where there are whole blocks of counties without tax supported public library service, the regional library plan seems feasible. According to the regional system one public library could serve a group of communities, or several counties, and could be supported in whole or in part by public funds from the governmental units served. It is an economical, satisfactory library service plan.

ON THE AIR

The West Virginia Library Association will sponsor a series of four radio broadcasts during October and November over several West Virginia stations. These programs will present to the citizens of West Virginia library facts of local and state government concern as follows:

- First Broadcast: The local library picture.
- Second: The West Virginia public library situation compared with that of other states.
- Third: The bookmobile as a rural library service unit in county and regional libraries.
- Fourth: The W. Va. Library Commission, its functions and service.

Miss Florence K. Reese, of the W. Va. University faculty and secretary of the Library Association, Morgantown, who has directed the plan for the radio series, asks that Lookout readers watch their state papers for definite program announcements and invite their townspeople to hear the broadcasts.

Miss Isobel P. Lynch, librarian of the Kanawha County Public Library, and members of her staff have prepared the scripts for broadcast over WGKV at Charleston. Miss Eleanor Hamilton, librarian of the Ohio County Public Library, has scripts ready for radio programs at Wheeling. Mrs. Mary W. Conway of the Public Library of Marion County has prepared scripts for production at Fairmont. And at Huntington Mrs. Madalyn Bradford, her library staff members and interested patrons are working out suitable radio programs for that listening area.

(Flash! WMMN, Fairmont, will carry one of these programs October 12th at 8 P. M.)

The programs are intended to point out the scope and the limitations of existing library services and the need for library extension. They will serve as a call for action by local and state governing bodies in providing more adequate appropriations for libraries.

### KNOW WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARIES

The library sketched on the cover of this issue of the Library Lookout is the Public Library of Marion County at Fairmont. Mrs. W. H. Conaway, the librarian, sent the picture and wrote this interesting account of their library:

"First steps in the establishment of a free library service for Fairmont were taken in 1890 by members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union who sold non-dividend stock, and with the proceeds purchased a site and erected a building which became the library's first home. For nearly a quarter of a century the library continued without support by taxes or public funds, but during World War I further operation under these circumstances became impossible and the library was closed for a number of years and Fairmont remained without library service.

In 1926 a group of citizens, representing 28 organizations assumed the task of establishment of a library, and the following year a city election authorized its establishment and the levy of an annual tax. The library received about \$5,000 annually from the city until the tax limitation amendment of 1932 put an end to this revenue. However, the library continued to operate with the help of the city board,

various civic organizations and public spirited citizens. Later, this support being inadequate, the library was forced to close for lack of funds.

After a month's time the Women's Friendship Committee, representing all the women's organizations in the city, with Miss Dorcas Prichard, Dean of Women of Fairmont State Teachers College, as Chairman, named a sub-committee to initiate plans for the reopening of the library. Through the aid of the National Youth Administration which supplied girls to serve as assistants, the library was reopened. Later the N. Y. A. girls were replaced by WPA workers who continued to serve until the WPA was liquidated.

The library's financial problems were taken over by a planning committee appointed by Mayor Fred T. Wilson. This committee was composed of members of the county court and the city board, J. J. Straight, county superintendent of schools, Dr. Joseph Rosier, president of the library board, Mrs. Oliver Shurtloff, of the Council of Social Agencies, George R. Parsons of the Business Men's Association, Elinor Carrol of the local press, Miss Emma Parsons of Fairmont State Teachers College and Mrs. W. H. Conaway. This committee with the assistance of an additional citizens committee sponsored legislation which expanded the city library into a county-wide organization.

In 1942, when the new Federal Building was completed the County Court purchased the old post office building for a permanent home for the library. Because of the war it was not possible to add additional equipment or make the necessary changes to meet the needs of an

up-to-date library. With the new location as a permanent home it will be possible after the war to make the changes to meet the already greatly increased demands. The central location of the library makes it much more accessible for research and so far these demands have far exceeded the limited collection of reference books. Plans for the future include adequate reference facilities also space for an historical museum in connection with the library. At present, the Office of Price Administration shares a portion of the building, but this has resulted in many new patrons for the library. A separate room used for a War Information Center serves also as a recruiting office for WACS, WAVES and CAPS.

In February of this year the library observed the fifth anniversary of its bookmobile service to the residents of the county. Fifty one stops are made over two week periods to schools, stores, garage centers and to the five small branch libraries located in the larger communities. An average of 6000 books is circulated each month in addition to the 84 boxes of 42 books each, which are exchanged every six week period among the rural schools. These books are all prepared in the city library, cleaned, repaired and checked during the summer, ready for distribution when the schools open in September. The bookmobile, just an old converted school bus, rolls over the county roads each day and at the honk of the horn county residents run to the stop where they exchange the books they have read for a new supply.

For its blind patrons the library provides a talking machine with records of Biblical material. For otherwise afflicted

patrons there are popular magazines and late books.

Besides the regular staff, which consists of Mrs. Mary Will C. Conaway, librarian; desk librarian, Miss Sarah M. Watson; assistant librarian, Mrs. E. Faye Epperly; and driver of the bookmobile, Charles J. Carpenter; business girls and others volunteer their services every day. These volunteers serve at the desk, mend books, and assist with the general routine work. Great appreciation is due these volunteers who donate their hours after a long busy day.

The library has a collection of 13,239 volumes. Approximately 4000 books are circulated each month from the headquarters library. About 100 new books are purchased each month, far too few for the demands, as this number must include all types, technical, fiction, and non-fiction, and juvenile. New borrowers average 60 per month for the city and only about 15 for county. With more adequate financial support the library could greatly enlarge the scope of its service by visiting industrial plants, having story telling for children and similar activities but at the present time such additional activities are curtailed. We can only hope that the future may provide the means to render the services as they are required."

#### CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

"United Through Books" is the Book Week theme for the annual observance November 12 - 18. Miss Laura Harris, the director, says,

"Book Week has a tremendous job of

community education to do this year. People are seriously concerned about the effect of wartime conditions on our children. They are aware, as never before, of the importance of building toward a better world through the understanding and the moral values we can give our children. One of the most effective means is books. In their distribution, librarians must continue their leadership."

A charming poster by Nedda Walker and a publicity manual are available from:  
Book Week Headquarters  
R. R. Bowker Company  
62 West 45 Street  
New York 19, New York.

MISS DAVIS, STORYTELLER EXTRAORDINARY

This interesting news is from Mrs. Beth Ward Perry of Bluefield:

"The local branch of the American Association of University Women is sponsoring a Story Telling Institute in Bluefield the first week in October. Miss Mary Gould Davis of New York will conduct the course which will be open to the public. The course is expected to attract principally mothers of young children, school teachers, Sunday School teachers, and playground personnel.

Miss Davis, one of the foremost storytellers in America, is supervisor of storytelling in the New York Public Library, teaches storytelling at Columbia University, and is author of several books for children.

The course will be held from October

3 to 7th inclusively. There will be two classes daily - one at 10 A.M. and one at 8 P.M. for the convenience of teachers and those who cannot attend during the day. On Saturday morning, Miss Davis will tell stories to the children of Bluefield. Anyone who has attended the classes may also attend the story hour. Miss Davis' schedule while in Bluefield will include a conference period for any persons having special problems. She will also lecture two afternoons at the State Teachers' College.

The public library will have books on hand which are to be used in connection with Miss Davis' course. Some of these are the property and many have been borrowed from the W. Va. Library Commission. The Jefferies Bookshop has also stocked some of these titles and expects to have a suitable window display honoring Miss Davis' work as an author.

The library committee of the A.A.U.W. in charge of arrangements is composed of Miss Mary Winter, Mesdames James E. Mann, E. J. McQuail, Jr., Connie Bailey McLaughlin, and Robert Lee Perry, Jr. The whole organization, however, is assisting with various duties to make the Institute a success. Mrs. E. W. Harris is general chairman of newspaper and radio publicity. Members have also announced the course at all P.T.A. and club meetings.

Everyone contacted at the time of this writing seems most enthusiastic. Prospects for a successful Institute seem most promising."

Librarians in the Bluefield section of the state may be able to attend Miss Davis' course. Others will be interested in buying a copy of

stories, a list of stories to tell and to read aloud, compiled by Mary Gould Davis and Joan Vatsck. 1943. The New York Public Library. 50¢.

### WHAT OUR BORROWERS SAY

You've oft heard it said that the library's best publicity is that from its satisfied patrons. Those Library Commission borrowers speak:

Letart - "I am 83 years old and about all I can do is read, that keeps me alive. I am a little handicapped in my reading, I do all my reading lying down, and cannot hold a heavy book. So send me a mystery or two, something on astronomy if it is light, some fiction and thank you for all the trouble."

Auburn - "I am returning the books and the proof of the pudding is in the asking for more so please send me another loan."

New Martinsville - "I was very much pleased with the selection you made for my first acquaintance with the work of your Library Commission. I am only too sorry I did not know of this organization before. I assure you I am very grateful to you and to all the people responsible for this fine service to the citizens of our state. This Commission is one of the best things which has happened to some of us for years."

Brandonville - "The youngsters were delighted with the books and a chance for reading material during vacation. They want another package the same size and about the same type of books."

Peterstown - "We are enjoying our books very much and would like to have the time extended another

month in order that more members of the club may read them."

Arbevalo - "Could you give us some advice and help on a library project for our fair exhibit? Our county home agent said you might send book jackets of various subjects enough to make a good showing." (We did.)

Ballard - "Since reading in the July Library Lookout of a woman who had borrowed 24 books in one <sup>year</sup> I am emboldened to ask after lapse of only 2 weeks for another loan. Let me request one or two titles from the "Call to the Colors" list. It may be something of a paradox but the only way I know to show my appreciation for all this free literature is to work for a larger appropriation next winter."

Lewisburg - "The children enjoyed the Vacation Library so much and I noticed that many books were read by at least ten. Where there were several in a family they were read by more than the ones whose names are recorded. It was well worth the trouble in the interest the children now have in good books. Thanks so much for your kindness in sending them."

West Union - "We appreciate very much the opportunity we have had in securing books from the Commission."

Williamson - "I am returning by parcel post the traveling library which we received from the Library Commission in May. These books have circulated very well and our patrons have expressed often their appreciation for this special service."

Parkersburg - "We have shipped back to you the

collection of fifty books that were loaned to the Summer Library Project of the Parkersburg A.A.U.W. branch. The officers and the committee wish to express their thanks to you for your help in the undertaking."

Westmoreland Community - Huntington - "The books loaned to us for the past three months were enjoyed and well suited to our needs. Your library service is appreciated at our center."

#### ANNUAL REPORTS

The attached table of statistics is compiled from "The Public Library Annual Report to the West Virginia Library Commission." The cooperation extended by the librarians in submitting their reports is much appreciated.

You will find these tables worth some study, not only to determine the place your library fills in state-wide library service but also to compare it with the standard scale as given. Use it also in presenting information in connection with the library legislative campaign and in presenting new library budgets before governing authorities.

Many libraries included some very worth while news in the space, "Report of Progress," as shown in the following excerpts:

Beckley - Mrs. Mary A. Reese's report shows that an office room at the public library was made into a periodical reading room. Saturday morning story hours were conducted with local teachers telling the stories.

Bluefield - On July 1, 1943 the city took over

the financing of the Public Library by appropriating about \$3400. For the past ten years the library has been supported by the Woman's Club. Rooms in the municipal building were redecorated and other improvements made during the year. Mrs. F. R. Dow is librarian.

Clarksburg - Miss Ethel Green, librarian, says that progress includes gifts of floor covering from the Rotary Club, mahogany book case and chairs from Mr. John W. Davis and Mrs. Paul West, table from the Tuesday club and the purchase by the library of two maple tables for the main reading room.

Charleston - The Kanawha County Public Library received publicity in the July issues of the Library Journal for its part in a Book and Author Bond Rally at which \$3,441,000 in war bonds was raised.

Elkins - This has been a busy year for Elizabeth Ray, librarian, for the public library became a club room for soldiers serving in the maneuver area there.

Fairmont - A new Americana was bought at the Public Library of Marion County.

Grantsville - The "baby" library in the state established March 26th by the Woman's Club occupies a pleasant room in the Calhoun Co. Court House. Miss Nettie Stump is librarian.

Huntington - As a part of the reorganization program at the Public Library during the past year a complete inventory of books was taken with shelf list cards checked against actual book holdings. Mrs. Madalyn Bradford says the total book stock on June 30 was 30,039.

Roysen - The Public Library sponsored by the Business and Professional Women's Club is now getting the pledges from community groups for the support of the library for the coming year. The new librarian is to be Mrs. L. G. Gleeson.

Lewisburg - Mrs. G. C. Hamilton writes that the Greenbrier County Library is to be the recipient of an alcove of books from the Carnogic Endowment for International Peace and expects to receive the first gift installment by December. This is the fourth library in West Virginia to cooperate in the work of the International Mind Alcoves.

Logan - Under the direction of the librarian, Mrs. R. M. Wilson, and Miss Evelyn Jane Bland, librarian at the High School, the Public Library book collection has been cataloged this summer. A new filing cabinet was purchased and a typist employed to make the catalog cards.

Martinsburg - Miss Mary C. Stribling reports there has been an increased interest in books on phases of World War II, in biography and travel in her library.

Moorefield - That the Public Library extends its service to any rural area in Hardy County by lending a "Book Shelf" of books to small communities and to rural schools is a part of the progress report of Mrs. Randolph Johnson, Chairman.

Morgantown - The Waitman Barbe Public Library has as new equipment a large case for adult biographies and a stack built for children's books. Mrs. Betty Burnside reports that special attention in book selection was given the West Virginia shelf and the reference collection.

Richwood - The summer Bible School used the library window for an interesting display of old and unusual Bibles. Mrs. Hopkins Reeso, librarian, reports, too, that the library is cooperating with the W. Va. War History Commission in collecting war records for the county.

shepherdstown - Mrs. C. F. Lyne, chairman of the library committee, reports that the four regular volunteer librarians were assisted during the summer by a graduate and by a former student of the Carnegie Library School, Pittsburgh.

Weston - Miss Lennel Stutlor sent a clipping telling that the story hour at the Louis Bennett Public Library was resumed in July when Mrs. E. G. Smith told the story of Johnny Tremain, the Newbery medal winner this year written by Esther Forbes.

Wheeling - A paragraph from Miss Eleanor Hamilton's report of the Ohio County Public Library: "Warwood Branch, which celebrated its second birthday in April, is a constant reminder that post-war library plans should include at least two more branches in Ohio County. While the community of Warwood represents less than six per cent of the total county population, the circulation from that Branch is about nine per cent of the whole, proving that accessibility is a big factor in library use."

Williamson - Mrs. Ruth Goodall, librarian, goes to the local hospital three times each week to distribute books and periodicals to patients. The service has been enthusiastically received.

Key to local supporting organizations  
for Class II.

- B&PW - Business and Professional Women
- CC - Community Chest
- ESWC - Eastern Star Woman's Club
- IA - Incorporated Association
- JrWC - Junior Woman's Club
- JtCl - Joint clubs
- M - Moose Lodge
- PS - Public School
- R&C - Recreation and Colonial Club
- Sub - Subscription Library
- WC - Woman's Club