

LIBRARY

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BUILDING ROADS WITH BOOKS by Luke Greene
(Abridged from an article in BETTER ROADS, April 1947)

Bookmobiles nosing their way into the back country of Georgia's mountains and plains, bearing cargoes of knowledge and enlightenment to people who still read by the light of a roaring fire or a kerosene lamp, are leaving another imprint on the red clay hills and the sandy flats-- the imprint of better roads.

In many places hard surfaced roads have replaced rutty, winding trails, because rural people have come to expect regular visits from travelling libraries, bringing them books that open enchanting and pleasurable new worlds.

Life is dreary indeed for those of the back country when they are cut off from their bookmobile by the driving winter rains that beat the roads into thick muddy mire, halting motor traffic for weeks at a time.

A letter written by a secluded Georgia library patron shows how anxious these lonely people are for their books, and how willing they are to help improve the roads so that the bookmobile can continue its regular journeys into the remote rural regions. "There are three families" he wrote, "That live across the creek-back in the woods after you turn off from the main road to Emory school. I asked the bookmobile driver to come back up on this road. She said she had looked at the bridge and found it was not strong enough to hold up the bookmobile. Will you ask the county commissioners to fix the bridge? You can tell them we will build the bridge if they will furnish the material. We will thank you for helping us get some books, for we do not have anything to read but what we get from the library." The librarian went to the county commissioners and told them the old man's story. The commissioners were moved, and they agreed to furnish the necessary materials. Together they and the rural citizens built a new bridge.

There are 26 boomobiles operating in Georgia. The types of roads traversed vary from winding mountain roads, beside fresh streams and waterfalls that crash into pools hundreds of feet below, to flat sandy roads that become quite sticky after protracted rains. In an effort to whip the bad-road problem, one regional library serving two mountain counties acquired a jeep which can go where no other vehicle would dare venture. It even fords the swift mountain streams, splashing icy water around the feet of the "library ladies" who brave wintry elements to get books through to cabins in the hills.

Most of the librarians will tell you that there are some roads in their particular areas that are inaccessible for several months during the year, and that roads very largely determine what communities can be reached regularly. But they will also tell you that improvements are being made slowly, so that the area covered by each bookmobile gradually is being expanded.

If county commissioners could be present when a bookmobile drives up in a country schoolyard and see the happy faces of boys and girls as they come running out to greet the driver and help carry in the books; the commissioners would go away with a firm resolve to make it possible for the bookmobile to reach every hamlet in the county.

MICROFILMING MARITIME NEWSPAPERS

The microfilming of early Maritime newspapers has been under consideration for some time, and it is expected that the project will be carried out in the near future. Miss Dolores Donald of the University of New Brunswick Library staff has had training in this work at Columbia University Library School and has volunteered to help in the project.

It is very important that every available number of the newspapers chosen be included. A list of Maritime newspapers, from which the ones to be photographed will be chosen, follows. You are asked to notify the Microfilm Committee of the Canadian Library Association if you have any numbers of these newspapers that are not listed in the Union List of Newspapers. Your listing of a file does not necessarily mean that it will be requested for microfilming purposes. Please send this information to Miss Donald at the University of New Brunswick Library.

Nova Scotia Newspapers

Acadian Recorder	1813-1930
Colonial Patriot	1828-1936
Nova Scotian	1824-1926
Pearl	
Yarmouth Herald	1833-

New Brunswick Newspapers

New Brunswick Courier	1810?-1865?
Saint John Loyalist	1842?-1848?
New Brunswick Reporter	1844-1904

Fredericton Headquarters	1844-1876
Fredericton Telegraph	1806-1807
Freeman	1850-1884
Globe	1858-1867
St. Andrew's Herald	1819-
Miramichi	1826-1880
Borderer	1856-

Prince Edward Island Papers

Examiner	1850-1919
Guardian	1887-1947
Herald	1866-1912
Islander	1842-1871
Patriot	1871-date
P. E. I. Register	1828-1830
Royal Gazette	1832-1853

BOOKS FOR RURAL CANADA

"Books for country fold all across Canada", the lack of library facilities for rural people in Canada, and the means by which this situation can be overcome, are pointed out in an article in "Saturday Night", by Dorothy Annie MacDonald. The work of the Fraser Valley Union Library is described as an example of regional library organization. "Started in 1930, it was financed for the first five years by \$100,000 from the Carnegie Corporation. At the end of that time it was taken over and financed by the people of the Valley ... on an assessment of 35¢ per capita of the population." The Committee for library development in British Columbia says "that the time has come when the government must step into the breach and accept a major share of the responsibility for public library service" since municipalities lack the resources to provide adequate library service. Saskatchewan's plans for regional libraries with grants from the provincial; "The Tennessee Valley system is cited as one of the fine regional libraries in the U. S. A. T.V.A. contracted with local library organizations for service to their thousands of workers; This gave direct stimulation to library services in the area. The people themselves got behind the movement and were responsible for its growth. The writer closes her article with a summary of the basis of regional libraries. "A small community cannot by itself provide adequate library service ...but it can be provided by several communities pooling their resources and banding themselves into a regional library system."

REGIONAL LIBRARIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Some extracts from the Report of the Public Library Commission 1946, are reprinted to keep Maritime librarians up with developments in the province that seems most progressive with regard to libraries. Ed.)

"One of the responsibilities of the Commission is to 'promote by counsel and encouragement the establishment and extension of public library facilities' and it is with this in view that every opportunity is seized upon to extend existing facilities and to provide new means of library service.

"A further amendment to the Act is being sought in order to enable small

communities in sparsely settled areas, such as the North-Central District, to pool their rather meagre individual book collections and to enter into an agreement for administration of these combined resources by the Commission. It is hoped that in this way much greater use can be made of even the existing book-stocks, to the financial and general advantage of all concerned.

" The Open shelf division, which provides a free library service by mail to adults and children thruout the Province where no city or union library is established, continues steadily to expand. The noteworthy increase in use of the Open Shelf is occasioned principally by the steady increase in juvenile membership. Approximately 39,000 adult books and 25,500 juvenile books were lent to nearly 9,000 readers.

" Since the inauguration of regional library service there has developed a confused idea as to what a travelling library is and does. It is perhaps understandable that, from the general public interest in the book-van as a feature of regional library organization, the union library is frequently spoken of as a "Travelling library". The Travelling Library, however, is just a box of books. The travelling library is a renewable collection of the best classical and modern books to people living in outlying parts of the province--in mines, logging camps, fishing villages, ranching communities, etc.--who would otherwise be starved of good reading, recreational or educational. In 1946 the Travelling Library Division provided an estimated 248,000 book-readings to its patrons. If any phase of this service is to be singled out for special mention, it is the provision of thoroughly useful and readable up-to-date books, in good physical condition, for pupils in little one-room schools in isolated parts of British Columbia. Travelling libraries are also supplied to a number of the public library associations, to augment and freshen their own rather meagre and static collections which form 50 to 200 books that may be exchanged as often as three times a year."

" A start was made on the new building to house the Commission's North Central Branch at Prince George. Construction of this building, at an estimated cost of \$28,000 will remove one of the most serious handicaps with which the Branch has had to contend for many years. One new public library association was incorporated in the district...Prince George Public Library Association took the important step, with financial assistance from its city council and from the Public Library Commission, of establishing itself as a free library. Introduction of regional library co-operation amongst the public library associations of the North-Central district, under Public Library Commission direction, awaits permissive legislation.

" Establishment of the Commission's Peace River Branch, with headquarters at Dawson Creek, is another milestone in library extension services. This organization has the responsibility of providing school and public library service for a rural community of some 18,000 people scattered over an area of 7000 square miles. An important feature is the close co-operation between the Public Library Commission, the School Boards of the Peace River school districts and the Provincial Department of Education. The Peace River Branch is indeed a single combined library for the schools and for the general public. This is an obviously sound and logical arrangement, and the practical execution of the plan to date has fully vindicated the judgment of those responsible for instituting it.

" On the whole, 1946 was a reasonably satisfactory year for the union libraries. The tax rate for library purposes has been raised appreciably in all three of the districts. In the Fraser Valley, the series of progressive increases designed

to bring the rate up to 35¢ per capita was carried one step further, and the end in view should be attained in 1947. Library taxation for the Vancouver Island and Okanagan Union Libraries is assessed at the rate of 50¢ per capita. Real financial stability is unlikely to come to the union libraries until they are buttressed by liberal grants from the Provincial Government, along the lines recommended in the Programme for Library Development in British Columbia (1945)"

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

Women's Institutes sponsor libraries

As one phase of the work of the Women's Institute in planning for community betterment, that organization has always taken an active interest in promoting libraries in rural districts. Two branches of the Quebec Women's Institutes have assumed full responsibility and have done notable work in forming libraries to serve their communities. At Wakefield in Gatineau County, the nucleus of a library was formed by two former pastors several years ago. When funds proved inadequate to carry on, the Women's Institute took it over. They now have an excellent collection of books, and free space has been given in the Wakefield Continuation School. The members each take a month in turn acting as librarian. The other library is at Scotstown in Compton County. This is also housed in the High School and one of the members volunteers her services as librarian. In both instances these libraries are financed entirely by the Women's Institute, with an occasional donation of books by interested friends. Similarly both make use of travelling libraries to bring fresh reading material to the public. (Food for Thought, Oct. 1947)

YARMOUTH Miss Isabel MacDonald writes: " Since opening in our new building, circulation has increased wonderfully particularly among the children. The fact that we are on the same street as the Central School and only one street from the High School accounts for some of the increase. The children have a room of their own in this building, and they are very proud of it. We are kept busy with requests for debating materials, help on school assignments, book reviews, music and history projects. From the time school is out at 3.30 until 4.30, the desk and librarians are practically invisible with so many children clustered around.

We recently had a gift of \$100 for children's books as a memorial to one of our most interested patrons. This is to be added to from time to time.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Yarmouth Public Library. A folder has been issued giving the history of the Library since it was presented to the town by the late Hon. L. E. Baker.

Mrs. Berdia F. Moore reports: "The library hours have been changed so that the library opens at 10.30 a.m. (instead of at noon). The public appreciated the change, especially the morning shoppers. The exterior of the building has been painted white with green trim making it much more attractive.

The Friends of the Library are holding a Book Fair in the library of the Moncton High School, Nov. 6, 7, and 8. Most of the Canadian publishers have been very cooperative in sending splendid collections of books. From here the books are forwarded to Amherst where a Book Fair will be held Nov. 13 in the High School.

The Moncton Rotary Club presented an electric record player to the Story Telling Club. for use on Saturdays during the afternoon Story Telling Hour. The children enjoy " Peter and the Wolf", "The owl and the Pussycat" and other recordings as well as the stories told by volunteer story tellers.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LIBRARIES Librarians from ten branch libraries attended a convention at library headquarters on Oct. 14 and 15, Miss Gracie Campbell writes of the Convention: " We were very much pleased with the attendance and enthusiasm shown, and hope that the librarians who were here derived as much pleasure and profit from the two-day get-together as we did at Headquarters. At the meeting on Tuesday we saw the film "Free Reading for All", which dealt in part with regional libraries in Vermont and stressed the necessity of knowing not only your books and magazines but, even more important, the people who come to you in their search for " a good book".

To get into the mood for a discussion of plans for Book Week, we listened to three records--" The joys of reading" by Frederick Melcher, the story of Book Week told by Mary Gould Davis, and May Lamberton Becker speaking on Children's books. Along with the display of picture books, posters and picture maps, we had a National Film Board display. Mr. Stanley McInnis spoke of his work as Field representative of the National Film Board and asked the cooperation of the librarians in helping to advertise his monthly shows by posters and word of mouth. Mr. John Martin, Film librarian, showed the recently compiled catalog of over 500 films now available on request, and offered his assistance in putting on shows wherever the people are interested."

On Wednesday the librarians saw the film "Library on Wheels" and heard a talk on the Canadian Library Association by Miss Jean Gill, who suggested that all those connected with the P.E.I. Libraries support the association in its coming drive for membership.

HALIFAX 600 children attended the opening of the Halifax Children's Library in its new quarters on Sept. 20, 1947. The official opening marked the climax of months of work on the old ironstone building, once the coach house of the Duke of Kent when he was commander-in-chief of British forces in North America. The children, many of them patrons of the library in its former quarters on Sackville Street, inspected the new building with enthusiasm. The interior walls are painted cream, with the shelves a bright blue. Red and white check curtains at the windows and brackets of ivy and pots of geranium add to the brightness of the room. The green outside shutters are decorated with silver rabbits. The shelves of the library hold 3000 books, 500 of them new, ranging from picture books, fairy tales and fiction to biography and travel. Three volunteer workers from the Junior League handle the library work during the day but the large number of children in attendance have made this work very difficult. It is hoped to obtain the services of a permanent librarian in the near future so that the library may remain open an extra hour each afternoon. (Halifax Mail)

TRURO Miss Lillian Swim sends the following notes: "Truro Public Library was organized in 1906, and operated continuously from that date until March 1946. At that time it appeared that there would be insufficient funds to carry on, and the Library closed. The citizens were roused to the need of doing something about the library and at a meeting held in December they selected a Committee which was later appointed by the Council as a Committee of Management for the Truro Public Library.

The Council was asked to increase the grant sufficiently to permit the engagement of a full-time trained librarian. They agreed to this, and I arrived in Truro near the end of August.

The Library has an excellent collection of about 9000 volumes housed in three rooms on the second floor of the Civic Building. The collection included 3500 children's books, 2300 non-fiction and the rest fiction. We are trying at present to build up our Reference collection, which has many weak points, especially in up-to-date material. A good dictionary and an old edition of Britannica provide us with a beginning; we also have the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, which suffers from lack of use at present, but which, we hope, will become more useful as people become accustomed to bringing their reference problems to us.

The Library was opened to the public on September 30, and is open five afternoons and three evenings a week. The use of the library is free to all permanent residents of Truro, and provision has been made for temporary and non-residents to use the library on payment of a small fee. The Boys' and Girls' Room is open an hour-and-a-half four afternoons a week, and four hours on Saturday. Of course I could not attempt to do all the work alone: I have six volunteer assistants and one paid assistant, who help at the circulation desk. To date we have registered 355 adult borrowers and 225 children. The total circulation for the month of October was slightly over 2000. We consider this a good start, but we are not by any means content with it; and our Publicity Committee is going into action, with renewed vigor, to try to increase membership and circulation"

Canadian Library Association

The Association will hold its 1948 Conference in Ottawa with headquarters at the Chateau Laurier on June 7, 8, and 9th. Plans for this Conference were made in Toronto by the National Executive and Council in meetings presided over by the President, Dr. Wm. Kaye Lamb of the Univ. of British Columbia.

The Association's project for the co-operative publication of the Canadian Index was approved. The Index will make available the contents of over fifty Canadian magazines every month, and will include both French and English magazines. Mrs. Leonard Chatwin of Ottawa was appointed as Editor and Miss Norma Rose as Sub-Editor.

Co-operation with UNESCO projects of Canadian interest was undertaken. The Association's committees on the collection of books for bombed libraries forwarded reports on the receipt of 1500 children's books by the Bethnal Green Public Library in London, England, and the forwarding of Canadian books for the British Museum.

Maritime Library Association

The bi-annual Conference of the Maritime Library Association to have been held in Fredericton in 1947, was postponed, as a date suitable to all members, and not coinciding with that of the the Canadian Library Conference, could not be agreed upon.

It is hoped that we can hold our Conference in Fredericton the end of June 1948, at which Conference we shall be able to hear Reports from the C L A Conference held in Ottawa the earlier part of the month.