

BULLETIN

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THE MARITIME LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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The President's Letter

Spring is in the air. It is a sad spring for Nova Scotia because Miss Bateson is leaving us for a while, to make a survey of library needs and a plan for library service in Jamaica. Our good wishes go with her. If our goal is global thinking and progress we shall encourage ourselves with the thought of developments there. Great things are happening in Jamaica in many fields. There is a wide spread adult education movement, based on the study group technique. Several of their leaders have come to the Maritimes to look over the Saint Francis Xavier discussion group and co-operative program. Recently the British Government has granted £525,000 to aid Jamaica's agricultural development over a five year period, which means that the agricultural authorities will be able to expand their work by about 60 per cent. Jamaica has a new constitution and this year will see its first election by universal suffrage. The British Government has accepted the main proposals of Sir Frank Stockdale, Comptroller for the Development and Welfare of the West Indies. This "Stockdale" Report is a most enlightened and practical document and its proposals include projects for bettering education, housing and sanitation.

Before going away Miss Bateson spoke to many Service Clubs and groups interested in a library for Halifax. At a public forum on "A Library for Post-War Halifax" on March 20 the audience was most enthusiastic about a new library for Halifax which would give streamlined service. Miss Bateson presented the regional library plan to

the Municipal Council of Halifax County in February and they went on record as favoring the establishment of a regional library. They appointed a committee to consult with Halifax and Dartmouth. One of the Councillors commenting on the cost, said "I think it would be the best eight points we ever spent in our lives." Another stated: "I don't need to refer it to my ratepayers -- I know they want it."

Books and libraries must be a vital part of the rehabilitation plans for the post-war world. Books are one of the essentials of adult education, vital for all of us, and of particular use to men and women in the Services who will be training for new jobs or brushing up old skills and techniques when the war is over. Communities without libraries will either have to build them or they will lose their enterprising, intelligent citizens who won't tolerate the mental malnutrition which lack of books implies. It is interesting that the Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking at the first annual lecture of the National Book Council in May of last year, declared:

If the public is to be aware of the great treasure house of literature and all that it has in store for every member of the public, then of course it is necessary that books should be accessible and in this we have made a great development of late through the increase of public libraries and the splendid service rendered by their librarians, to which I am sure this Council would wish to pay a grateful tribute.

I hope we may go a little beyond that and encourage the accumulation of private libraries, however small; and one suggestion that has been made here, which I most heartily endorse, is that we should urge the provision in all new houses of built-in bookshelves so that those who do buy books will not be faced with what may be for them the really vexatious alternative of either buying bookshelves, which for them may be difficult to afford, or leaving the books lying about untidily.

This is a place where architects and builders could further the cause that we have at heart, if only they would take it up.

One of the problems discussed by the Canadian Library Council in its last meeting was the establishment of a National Library for this country. That we shall have one in time there is no question, because it is needed in Canada. But with over half of our population lacking any form of library service, it seems sensible to concentrate for the time being on getting libraries in those large areas where there are none. Before the house goes up the foundation has to be laid. There was an interesting and timely editorial in the Halifax Herald on February 16:

What about a national library? Many countries have, or have had, very fine national libraries. And it is now proposed by the Canadian Library Council (who are preparing a brief on the subject) that Canada too should have a national library as well. National libraries in themselves are doubtless of inestimable value to the people to whom their facilities are readily accessible. But people in this part of the country will be more interested in providing libraries which they will be able to see and use than in supporting the building of one which few of them will ever see and still fewer will be able to use.

While the province of Prince Edward Island has excellent library facilities, the Capital City of Nova Scotia is still without the convenience of a modern library. And the picture could be dup-

licated over and over again in countless Canadian villages and towns.

Let us have a national library by all means -- some time -- but let us first have modern libraries in all our cities, in all our villages and towns, and the countrysides as well.

Marion Gilroy

Progress Report
of the
Canadian Library Council
by
Nora Bateson

The Council held a meeting in Winnipeg in January, with Miss Margaret S. Gill as the new Chairman. The incorporation of the Council, which has been delayed because of technicalities, is now a fact and the constitution with its technical amendments will be sent shortly to all members of the Maritime Library Association for ratification. We must all be appreciative of the work of Mr. Sanderson and the Toronto Public Library's Mr. J.C.M. Macbeth, K.C. for their services in connection with this business of incorporation.

On incorporation the Council received a grant for \$4,000 from the Carnegie Corporation for the current year. It was decided that part of this fund should be used to secure the services of a Secretary as the amount of work to be done is more than any Chairman can undertake.

The Council plans also to put out some publications: a Directory of Librarians in Canada, and a pamphlet "Rural Canada Needs Libraries" are to be issued immediately. The Directory will be mailed to members of all Provincial Associations and the pamphlet can be secured by application to the Chairman, or, in the Maritimes through the Nova Scotia Regional Libraries Commission, 84 Hollis St., Halifax, N.S.

Other publications planned were an attractive bulletin on librarianship as a profession, together with a statement as to the type of library training now available in Canada, for use by rehabilitation agencies. The Council also proposes to issue at an early date a Canadian Library Bulletin.

The question of Books for Britain and for libraries in other countries which have suffered devastation was discussed. There are several bodies making such collections. We thought it advisable to find out what each was doing and if there was any cooperation between them before making any plans ourselves.

The Council has prepared reading lists for the C.B.C. in connection with the programme "Peoples on the March", and plans to do similar lists as the opportunities present themselves.

The question of a National Library was, of course, an important subject of discussion; Members of the Council had all submitted briefs for their areas and Mr. Saunders, retiring Chairman, was still working on the amalgamation of these into a national brief. Marion Gilroy is

preparing some comments on a National Library in this issue of the Bulletin. It seems to many of us that Canada's most urgent national library problem is not a building in Ottawa but some Dominion assistance to those parts of our nation which lack any sort of adequate library service. A National Library in Ottawa would strengthen existing libraries but would do nothing to offset the really appalling lack of libraries in so many of our provinces.

I would like to take this opportunity of saying a temporary farewell to members of the Maritime Library Association. On March 27th I am going to Jamaica on a year's leave of absence to make plans for library development there. I go with the consent of the Regional Libraries Commission and the Halifax Rehabilitation Committee. There is hope of a library for Halifax City and County, but there will be delays owing to the difficulty of building, etc., at this time. In the interval there is a very interesting job to be done in Jamaica and I leave the work of the Regional Libraries Commission in the very capable hands of Marion Gilroy.

Meeting of the M.L.A. Executive Committee

On Monday, May 22, at 2:30 p.m., there will be a meeting of the Executive Committee of the M.L.A. in the Library of Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S. Will the members of the Executive who wish overnight accommodation please write the Acadia Librarian, Mrs. M.K. Ingraham, as early as possible.

Woodstock Ahead!

The L.P. Fisher Library at Woodstock, N.B. was one of the first libraries in the Maritime Provinces to introduce "the story hour" into the week's schedule. Now it is in the van again, this time with a story hour by radio. Miss Starrett, the librarian, has recovered from her recent illness and is ready for work again.

News from Saint John, N.B.

A letter from Miss Hope Jarvis, Secretary of the Saint John Branch of the M.L.A. and Convenor of the Libraries Committee of the Canadian Federation of University Women, arrived just as we were ready to go to press. The letter was full of news and suggestions. We quote the following: "There have been two meetings of the Saint John Branch of the M.L.A. since I last wrote. In January we were invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Wells to see their collection of Labrador craft; - carved walrus tusks and furs. Supplemented with photographs and the tales of Mr. Wells' experiences, it gave us a very graphic picture of life in Labrador. Miss Marguerite Berton reviewed "Made in China" by Cornelia Spencer. The February meeting was held at my home and Miss Gertrude Mullin talked on the book "Regency Roundabout", by D.M. Stewart, which tells of the social customs and conditions in England in the Regency days and was greatly enjoyed by all. Miss Berton also reviewed Maud Hill Beaton's "From Cairo to Khyber to Celebes".

Librarians Attention

Miss Jean C. Gill, Librarian of the Legislative and Public Library, Charlottetown, P.E.I., is looking for copies of the Canadian Patent Office Record prior to 1930. Will any librarian having duplicates of these please write Miss Gill. She will offer exchanges.

Halifax Library Club

The program of the Halifax Library Club for the year 1943-44, has been centered around Canadian Art and related subjects. One paper has been given on early Canadian Art, to be followed by another on The School of Seven..

A very fine film on the Art of A.Y. Jackson was shown at one meeting, also an unusually beautiful and informative one on Handicrafts in the Province of Quebec. Crafts in Quebec have reached a perfection of design and execution unrivalled anywhere on this continent.

Miss Black of the Provincial Department of Handcraft and Industry was the guest speaker at one of the Library Club meetings. She reported that the Department has drawn up a valuable and progressive program, which includes among other things, the fostering of the cultural and economic development of handcrafts in the Province, rehabilitation, provision of teachers, lecturers, bibliographies, equipment and tools, and suitable exhibition and publicity. A workshop has also been established in the city to carry on experiments with native clays and minerals.

The Club members visited two libraries, the Dartmouth Public and the new Mount St. Vincent library for the people of Rockingham. Both libraries are doing excellent work to provide for the ever growing reading interests of the public they serve. It is the sincere hope of the Club that the time is not too far distant, when library facilities will be available to everyone in Nova Scotia

—Evelyn M. Campbell
Secretary

Notes and Personals

From Miss Winifred Snider, Mount Allison Memorial Library, Sackville, N.B.

There is really not a great deal of Mount Allison news to write you. We seem to be going along much as usual. Our circulation goes up and down, with no apparent reason. Last year it decreased, this year it has increased slightly. The students have less time for reading than they have ever had, which might account for a decrease in circulation. (I am speaking of their "outside reading", since we have an open shelf system for their required reading and keep no circulation

record of these books.) On the other hand, in spite - or perhaps because - of their decreased leisure the students are more anxious to read than in pre-war years.

It is interesting to note that the circulation of periodicals and pamphlets has practically doubled during the past year. This probably has a direct connection with the lessened hours of leisure. There is undoubtedly a desire for brief, factual, up-to-the minute information among our readers. The current numbers of magazines are decidedly dog-eared before they even reach the stacks, and the chronic state of disorder in the arrangement of the periodicals on the magazine-rack is due to constant use of the magazines and not to neglect on the part of the library staff.

We have a very keen group of young army lads at the university now. They have practically no spare time, but in their ten-minute breaks between classes they dash to the library for books. One boy has swallowed Davies' "Mission to Moscow" and Hindus' "Mother Russia" in two almost incredibly swift gulps, spiced by everything he could get on Leonardo da Vinci.

From Mrs. B.F. Moore, Librarian, Moncton Public Library:

The Friends of the Library now has a membership of over 400. Mr. A.W. Trueman, Supt. of Schools in Saint John (and a member of the Saint John Library Board) spoke at a well attended meeting on Feb. 7th, under the auspices of the F. L. A., in fact it was their annual meeting. They presented the Library with a cheque for \$150.00 for the purchase of new books. We are trying to buy some useful reference and technical books with some of the money.

When the Board of Trade drew up their post-war development plan for the City, they included an estimate of \$75,000 for a new Library, Municipal and Federal money.

Miss Condon resigned in December and left Jan. 15 to join the W.D. of the R.C.A.F. At present she is doing Library work in the station at Rockcliffe. She was succeeded here by Mrs. C. MacWilliam.

The Moncton Society of Art exhibits one of their original paintings in the Library. The painting is changed about every two weeks. An item regarding it appears in the Press; this is usually followed by interested persons visiting the Library to see the picture.

From Miss Dorothy Cullen, Acting Librarian, Prince Edward Island Libraries:

3400 books added during 1943 bring the bookstock of the Prince Edward Island Libraries to 60,805 volumes. We notice a considerable drop in the number of books published this winter, and in particular a shortage of reprints to replace worn out fiction.

The statistics of library circulation for 1943 show a drop of nearly 4% in books borrowed from branch libraries. However, the branches at Murray River, Crapaud, Summerside, Wellington, Bradalbane and Murray Harbour attained a higher circulation than for 1942. A greater number of schools made use of the library also. 320 schools in all borrowed book-collections for class use, 88 getting them from branch libraries, and 232 from library headquarters.

As the air station at Charlottetown has been changed to an R.C.A.F. station, the members of the R.A.F. have been transferred and with their departure the Charlottetown Public Library has lost many faithful readers. The station library loaned by the Prince Edward

Island Libraries has been returned, but we expect a request for the same service to the new personnel.

Our regular winter series of book reviews is being broadcast by CFCY on Saturday evenings at 6:45. This change of time from the morning period which it used to occupy enables many people to tune in who could not do so before.

From Miss Jean C. Gill, Librarian Legislative and Public Library, Charlottetown, P.E.I.:

We have nothing very startling to report. Our circulation statistics for 1943 show a small decrease which is explicable by the fact that the library was closed for one month for redecoration and the installation of fluorescent lights. This improvement was greatly appreciated by patrons and staff alike. There is a continued demand for technical books by the men in the services. The station in Charlottetown has been changed from R.A.F to R.C.A.F. and although we are glad to welcome the men from the different parts of the Empire we miss the English readers, as they took great advantage of our library facilities.

Last year, as something new, we drew the attention of the public to British Book Week, which as you know was sponsored by the American Library International Relations Board, and is being inaugurated to help develop sympathy and understanding among the countries which will make up the postwar world. During this week we were able to circulate many interesting books which might otherwise be overlooked.

At the beginning of 1943 we felt the need of a new registration, and by December 31st we had registered 4213 borrowers.

Viscount Bennett, former Prime Minister of Canada, in donating more than a million dollars to educational institutions in Canada, has not forgotten Maritime Libraries. There is a special gift for the Silver Jubilee Library at Hopewell Cape, founded some years ago by Mr. and Mrs. John Allan Drummond. The Law Library of Dalhousie University and the Library of Shirreff Hall are also remembered.

A fire in Yarmouth, N.S. on March 14 seriously damaged the Yarmouth Public Library. Out of 26,000 books on the shelves of the Library about 21,000 were damaged. The biography section was practically wiped out, and the history and travel sections suffered great loss. Files of Yarmouth newspapers complete from the first issues were destroyed. A Bible of the 17th century valued at \$500 was also lost. A letter written on March 16 by a Yarmouth lady to the Editor of this Bulletin, contains the following inspiring sentence: "It seems to many of us private citizens that this is the time to make a grand effort to erect a proper building for housing what books we have left and those we may be able to add to our library".

(Saint John news cont. from p.4) Miss Jarvis writes that the Saint John Free Public Library Board has recommended to the City Council that after the war a fireproof annex for irreplaceable material be added to the Library. Miss Vaughan, the Librarian, is making a reserve collection of war books by withdrawing from circulation for this purpose duplicate copies of the most notable publications. A new member of the M.L.A. is Miss Frances Machum of Westfield, N.B., formerly on the staff of the Toronto Public Libraries but now teaching Library Science in the Modern Business College at Saint John. The Library Committee of the C.F.U.W., with Miss Jarvis at the head, is getting into swift action. A circular letter supporting an immediate plan for a National Library in Canada has been going the rounds of the Federation Clubs.