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BULLETIN

of the

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Vol. 22

MAY, 1950

No. 1



MAY 28 1950

SPRING MEETING OF THE RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Thursday, May 25, 1950

Lydia Smith Baker Essex Memorial Library
Tiverton, Rhode Island

MORNING SESSION

- 10:15 GREETINGS AND GETTING TOGETHER
- 10:30 BUSINESS MEETING
- 11:15 GEMSTONES, NATURAL, SYNTHETIC AND SIMULATED
Professor Alonzo Quinn, Chairman, Dept. of Geology, Brown University
- 12:00 LUNCHEON—Central Baptist Parish House

AFTERNOON SESSION

- 2:00 STANDARDS FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE LIBRARIES
Mrs. Mildred P. McKay, State Librarian, Concord, New Hampshire
- 2:30 HOW A VERMONT REGIONAL LIBRARY WORKS
Miss Dorothy Randolph, Secretary, Vermont Free Public Library Commission

BULLETIN
of the
RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

R. I. L. A. BULLETIN COMMITTEE

MARY H. FALT Barrington Public Library
EVELYN WATSON Barrington Public Library
MRS. WARDWELL C. LEONARD
 Essex Memorial Library

VOL. 22 MAY, 1950 No. 1

Spring Meeting, May 25, 1950

**Lydia Smith Baker Essex
Memorial Library**

About a century ago, a movement was on foot in Tiverton, R. I., which resulted in the Sunday School Library of Bowen Memorial Chapel, Whitridge Hall. Although not the first librarian, Mrs. Mary Seabury Stimson served faithfully in that capacity for more than fifty years.

"Co-operation between summer and native residents planted the seed that was to grow into a fine new library for the town of Tiverton. When Lydia Essex, a school teacher, called informally at Whitridge Hall during the summer months, she found a friendly and responsive person in the Librarian, Mrs. Stimson. She made generous gifts of books and money during her summers' stay in the locality. Finally, by the terms of her will, Miss Essex proved a lasting 'Friend of the Library.'

"Terms of her bequest stipulated that land of two acres was to be given to Tiverton on condition that it be used for a public library. Residue of her estate of \$42,000 was allotted, provided that the town built and maintained a free public library named for her mother. In 1937 the gift was accepted at the Town Meeting, and soon after, the Board of five Trustees was appointed by the Town Council as Building Committee."

The architect chosen was Charles G. Loring of Boston, who designed

a light, airy and spacious library to fit the contour of the chosen site. On June 20, 1940, the Lydia Smith Baker Essex Memorial Library was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies.

Mrs. Wardwell C. Leonard is the present librarian and the library contains more than 6000 volumes.

Message from the President

Although I find small precedent for it, I believe a brief review of the year's activities may be good BULLETIN material. The fall meeting, at the Historical Society, was devoted almost equally to reports on State Aid and the A. L. A. regional meetings and the talks by Professor Daniel Thomas of Rhode Island State College on European archives in peace and in war, and of Mr. Harve Stein of the Rhode Island School of Design on book illustration.

The immediate result of the request through the State Librarian and the Secretary of State for increased state aid is an addition of \$6,000 to the budget to bring the allocation for free public libraries to \$20,000. As this total is less than half that which we requested, with the approval of the Secretary of State and of the Budget Officer, it should be considered only half enough.

Neither general publicity nor lobbying was employed. Our present improved position was made possible by the persistent and thorough preparation of our past president, Mr. Stuart Sherman, and the cooperation of Miss Sherwood. Your president feels as though he had been playing a chess game, with the opening moves neatly executed by Mr. Sherman and a profitable exchange of pieces carried out with the help of both Mr. Sherman and Miss Sherwood. The checkmate is yet to come, and we shall need the best players in and out of the Association to push the offensive to that decisive victory.

The Association joined with others in protesting rumored changes in the Weaver Memorial Library in East Providence. We were gratified to receive a letter from Senator Coffey to the effect that the rumors seemed without basis and that the management and librarianship of the library are considered inappropriate subjects for political influence. Amen.

On the suggestion of Miss Sherwood to the Executive Board, the president addressed a letter to Senator Perreault of Richmond expressing the desirability of re-establishing the Carolina library, which has been in storage about three years. Our letter was primarily a plea to stimulate action toward the relocation of the library where it will be accessible to the citizens to whom it belongs.

As the Library Demonstration Bill was brought to your attention by letter, and will be a subject of discussion at this meeting, the full report will be postponed. By the time this reaches print there may be new developments in the United States Senate.

To the Executive Board and all the members who have attended meetings, served on committees, and taken part in discussions, the President extends sincere thanks.

H. GLENN BROWN

Anne Ide Fuller Library

The Anne Ide Fuller Library, East Providence, held an Open House in June. This proved so successful that it is to be an annual event. A large number of new books were on display and refreshments were served on the porch.

A Story Hour was started this year. As the library is not large enough to accommodate the children, the librarian, Mrs. Virginia Conner, goes to the Brightridge School to tell the stories. One story is told each time, using

flannelback figures on a large scenic board for illustrations. The children have been enthusiastic about this new medium of the old art.

Barrington Public Library

The Barrington Public Library sponsored three "library nights" this year. The first speaker was Mr. Camilo Rodriguez, East Greenwich, who gave an instructive talk, "Know Your Latin American Neighbors." He also showed movies of some of the countries and had a fine display of native craft work. In January, Mr. W. Allen Traver, President of the Barrington Town Council, showed some three hundred kodachromes taken during a recent trip to Europe. The series closed with Mrs. Ada Holding Miller's delightful talk on the history of music in America and work of the National Federation of Music Clubs.

The Record Library, started in April '49, has proved far more popular than we had anticipated. The collection contains classical, semi-classical and children's albums.

The Exhibition Hall was the scene of three fine shows. The Bristol County Alumni, R. I. S. D., held an exhibit of art work of the members, featuring Mrs. Abby Carroll's pastel portraits of children. An unusual event was the Interpretive Art Show, work of the Barrington school children and arranged by the art teacher, Mrs. Rose F. Burns. Listening to the music of the Peer Gynt Suite after hearing the story, the students were encouraged to draw any incident which appealed to them. Grades I thru Senior High were included and the drawings were all interesting, some highly amusing. During the show, the young folks acted as guides and the Peer Gynt records were played. The third show was a Creative Arts Hobby Show, arranged by the Exhibitors' Club of the Barring-

ton Schools, with Mrs. Burns acting as advisor. Tray painting, making dolls, ceramics and dress designing were some of the hobbies brought to light.

This, the library's seventieth year, has been an intensely active one, and the circulation reached 64,008.

Brown University Library

Dr. Henry B. Van Hoesen, Librarian of Brown University since 1930 and Director for the past year, will resign on June 30, to devote more time to teaching and bibliographical projects. He will retain his position of John Hay Professor of Bibliography, which he has held since 1930. His library duties will be taken over by Mr. David A. Jonah, who was appointed Librarian in July 1949, after serving three years as Acting and then Associate Librarian.

Dr. Van Hoesen is now at work on a new edition of his *Bibliography: Practical, Enumerative, Historical*. He is editor of a leaflet of interest to Lincoln collectors called *The Lincoln Annex*, published quarterly by the Friends of the Library of Brown University. For the past year Dr. Van Hoesen has been collaborating with Professor Otto Neugebauer, Chairman of the History of Mathematics Department, on a study of ancient Greek horoscopes written on papyrus.

A notable gift this winter to the Harris Collection of American Poetry and Plays in Brown University Library was a copy of the first issue of the first edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. It was given by Mr. Leonard Kebler, of Bronxville, N. Y., at the suggestion of Mr. Frederick R. Goff, Brown '37, once a student assistant in the John Hay Library and now Chief of the Rare Books Division of the Library of Congress. Although Brown University Library already had a copy of this issue of *Leaves of Grass*

in its Saunders Collection, its condition and the fact that it had been Whitman's desk copy and so had various papers pasted into it prohibited its use except on rare occasions. This circumstance was explained to Mr. Kebler and the suggestion made that if his copy were given to us, we would then have a copy which could be made available to scholars and at the same time help us preserve a copy which cannot be replaced. Happily, Mr. Kebler decided that two copies of this rare book in one library would not be an extravagance and presented us with his copy.

A new development at the Brown University Library this past year was the appointment of a Personnel Officer, to develop in-service training to supplement the instruction given by heads of departments and broaden the background of semi-professional staff members. Lydia M. Gooding, who has had experience in college libraries and library schools, was transferred from the Pembroke Library for this position.

The orientation of new assistants consisted of two half days of introduction to the University Library, its objectives, functions and organization. The purposes of cataloging and classification were also included, so the presentation was necessarily simple. Later periods were devoted to the Library's special collections and a discussion of professional attitudes. The major feature of the program was a series of informal classes, varying in size from 3 to 8 assistants, and in length from 8 to 12 periods. The primary emphasis was on the systematic use of reference books and bibliographies; actual questions arising at the circulation desk, or in other departments, were used as examples and problems. The use of the card catalog was emphasized for the circulation staff. The content of three series varied slightly with the groups, and was entirely different for the typists in a fourth group. A greatly simpli-

fied form of orientation was adopted for student assistants who form an important auxiliary staff. New student assistants and those with little experience were given two hours of general introduction to the library, so that they might have a broader background for their work.

The objective of the new program may be summed up in this way: to increase interest and add significance to each job by showing its relationship to the whole organization and its contribution to the aims of the Library; to enhance routine and clerical work by suggesting a professional attitude. Its achievement of these objectives can not be measured statistically, but we hope it has accomplished some valuable, intangible results.

Jamestown Philomenian Library

The Jamestown Philomenian Library Board held a meeting on February 6, at which time the resignation of the librarian, Miss Clara E. Clarke, was accepted. Her successor is Mrs. Frank Braman and Miss Catherine Carr was appointed assistant librarian.

The library now has a membership of 996, and 297 new members were taken in during the past year. The circulation was 23,269.

Providence Public Library

The plans for the new addition to the Central Library are now in the final stage. Engineers, stack experts and the architects have been completing last-minute details and are preparing specifications for the receipt of bids. It is anticipated that ground will be broken in July, and that construction will require about fifteen months.

At the completion of nine months' of service in the new building dedicated last June, the circulation of the Mount Pleasant Branch showed an increase of 36,355 volumes over that of the previous year. Even greater proportionate gains in registration for the first few months were reported.

For the first time in seven years the total circulation for the library system exceeded the million mark. It remains to be seen what the effect of television will be on home reading for the current year.

Substantial additions have been made to the Alfred M. Williams Collection on Irish culture. Particularly noteworthy was the Charles J. Fox Collection of pamphlets, a gift of Gerald Donovan, Esq., of New York, and the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, of Providence. In the collection are nearly 400 pamphlets concerning Irish independence and related subjects. It constitutes a unique source of reference for students working on the period from 1740-1880. Numerous important additions were also made to our collection of imprints of the Merrymount Press.

Applications for the next Library Training Class are now being received. Young women who have graduated from high school, or college, who are unmarried and under 30, are invited to apply for admission. The course is conducted only to train future employees of the Providence Public Library.

Redwood Library

Miss Frances Hubbert resigned as librarian of the Redwood Library, Newport, in April 1949, after 22 years of service. The new librarian is Mr. J. Alden Manley, B.A. Columbia '42; M.A. Columbia Teachers' College '46; and M.S. Columbia School of Library Service '49. Mr. Manley worked at the New York Public Library dur-

ing 1948. Mr. Donald T. Gibbs, Williams '41, Simmons Library School '47, came to the library as cataloger in September, from the Rochester (N. Y.) Public Library.

A Great Books Discussion Group, the first in Newport, was started at the library in November. There are plans to form additional groups next year at the high school.

During the past nine months 150 new shares have been issued. This is approximately a 20 per cent increase in the library's public.

Rhode Island School of Design Library

One of the major events of the current year has been the establishment of a small bindery. Mr. Americo Izzi, library assistant, has recently completed a series of lessons in the techniques of bookbinding from Mr. Daniel Gibson Knowlton of Bristol. Mr. Izzi has been doing the simple book repairs for the library and has shown ability in devising techniques. With the formal instruction he has recently received, he is now in a position to do all of the bookbinding for the library, with the exception of the rare books. The necessary equipment has been purchased, or has been made by Mr. Izzi. In conjunction with the establishment of the bindery, the library recently exhibited hand-bound books by Mr. Knowlton.

Progress is being made in the installation of a new classification scheme for slides. An illustrated slide card catalog is under way and is being developed as the slides are classified. No card catalog of the slide collection has previously existed. The project will take some time to complete. Approximately 17,000 slides are involved, of which many require considerable research for labeling purposes. The library is fortunate in having two able assistants to carry out this work.

Rhode Island State College Library

The library at Rhode Island State College has recently acquired a micro card machine and subscribes to the Saturday Review of Literature on micro cards. The faculty is very much interested in this new type of service.

Mr. Franklin Talbot has replaced Miss Shirley B. Elliott as Associate Librarian and Head of the Service to Readers Division.

Westerly Public Library

The Westerly Public Library observed "Authors' Night" as a feature of its Book Week celebration, with authors, illustrators and publishers as guests. Only those actually registered as borrowers were invited to participate in the program. It proved to be one of the highlights of the year for the invited guests and the two hundred persons in the audience.

Those taking part in the speaking program included Ruth Vickery Holmes, Alfred L. Murray, Chon Day, Marian McNeil, Josephine Dascom Bacon, Frederick B. Tuttle, Maj. Eugene Lohrke, William Haynes, Edith Campbell Camp, Daisy Newman and DeVere Allen.

Letters of greeting were read from Francis H. Taylor, Harriet K. Morse, Odell Shepard, Dana Burnett, John Rae, Harve Stein, Helen Husted, Helen Mason Grose, John Mason Brown, Griffith Coale and Margaret LaFarge Osborn.

To meet the need for additional shelf room, book stacks containing approximately 1350 shelf feet, with a storage capacity of nearly 11,000 volumes, will be installed during the month of June. The present first floor stacks out of the Reference De-

partment will be extended an additional section to support a mezzanine floor balcony. The entrance to this balcony will be from the mezzanine floor of the main stack room.

The Westerly Public Library sponsored a meeting during World Affairs Week at which time Mrs. Lakshmi Nandan Menon, chief of the Section on the Status of Women, Department of Social Affairs, United Nations, spoke on the subject, "The United Nations and the Status of Women."

William H. Hall Free Library

Friends of the William H. Hall Free Library sponsored three public meetings in the library auditorium. They presented "Junior Town Meeting," in February, with a film, "Clearing the Way." The March evening brought to a close "Give Books to the Library Week," and Miss Ruth C. Coombs of the Providence Public Library, gave a book review. The film, "Portrait of a Library," was also shown. On April 19, Professor Charles H. Smiley, the popular Brown professor, and head of the Ladd Observatory, presented an illustrated talk, "On Top of the World."

Library Demonstration Bill

Rhode Island librarians will be happy to know that both of our representatives in Congress voted in favor of the Library Demonstration Bill,

when it was introduced for action on March 9. After five hours debate in the House of Representatives the measure was finally defeated by only three votes. Letters of appreciation to Hon. Aime J. Forand and Hon. John E. Fogarty for their support of the Bill are in order from all Rhode Island librarians.

Boston Regional Group of Catalogers and Classifiers

As we go to press, notice has just been received that the Boston Regional Group of Catalogers and Classifiers will hold its Spring Meeting at Brown University on May 6. The morning is to be devoted to visiting Providence libraries. At the luncheon at Faunce House at 1:00 p.m., Miss Margaret B. Stillwell, Librarian of the Annmary Brown Memorial, will speak. A business session follows at 2:45 p.m. in the Faunce House Art Gallery. A round-table discussion will be held on the question, "Shall the Breed Known as Library Cats Be Allowed to Die Out?" Mr. Francis P. Allen, Librarian of R. I. State College will be the moderator. The speakers will be Miss Marjorie R. Shaw, Milton Public Library, Mr. Robert E. Booth, M. I. T., and Miss Helen G. Kurtz, Brown University. At 4:30 there will be open-house in the Catalog Department of the John Hay Library.

We certainly hope that the Providence visit will give the "Library Cats" a new lease on life!

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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