

DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY

Annual Report
of the
City Librarian

This centennial year of the Decatur Public Library has been a crowded one, marked by special observances and programs and, appropriately, substantial increases in circulation and service to the community.

Circulation gained by 6%, and there were, moreover, indications of a shift in the character of circulation toward more serious concerns, toward a higher percentage of non-fiction circulation. Professional service by staff to patrons increased an impressive 80%. Of course, the worth of the Library cannot be assessed merely from statistics. There is a human component that lies buried in the figures no matter how refined such figures may be. The final value of library service can only be stated in terms of help extended and thanks received, of user satisfaction, of individual growth - and who can measure the impact suggested by such terms? The staff remember with interest the dedicated ladies from Junior Welfare League researching the Millikins and the history of the Millikin home they are restoring; the businessmen seeking the subsidiaries of a large corporation; the gentleman who was an orphan at Pythian Home and who spent hours consulting microfilmed files of newspapers to gather information for a reunion of former Pythian Home residents. The staff also recall with warmth a box of candy, an azalea plant, given by patrons as spontaneous gestures of appreciation.

Mention should also be made of those continuing but seldom mentioned services that completely escape the net when statistics are gathered: no figures are available for use of reference works within the Library, books desultorily consulted, magazines or newspapers read in the building, materials photocopied, and the like. But these unmeasured services are not only important but bulk large in total usage by certain categories of patrons - retired persons, students, businessmen. And this use is increasing as is indicated by increases in service to patrons and by a 30% increase in use of microfilmed resources.

Among the added services of the Library have been the institution of service at Lincoln Manor North, an intermediate nursing care home, which will serve as a paradigm to the Extension Department for eventual service to other such facilities in Decatur. In collaboration with the Decatur School District 61, an experimental station was initiated at Enterprise School to serve adults in Southwest Decatur during the school year. The success of this experiment is currently under assessment. Mention may also be made of another effort of the Library to help out: the practice has been initiated of sending discarded but still serviceable picture books and easy materials to the Progress School.

Acquisitions and Organization of Collections. During 1975/76, the Library received and cataloged 11,882 copies of 6,376 books, an increase in volumes added of 17% over the previous year and an increase in cataloging load of 26%. The audio-visual collections grew

by 205 items (excluding microforms). Attention to retiring outdated or dilapidated books held the book collection growth to 3,333 volumes, a figure that is not quite 25% of total book acquisitions.

Nearly 20,000 issues of magazines and newspapers were added during the year. Newspapers normally are held only three months. 7,630 issues of magazines were withdrawn during the year. The growth of other unclassified material in the library, such as telephone books, pamphlets, college catalogs, and government documents was less than 1% due to extensive weeding in the pamphlet files (much material such as phone books are discarded, 1-for-1, with additions).

At close of the year the U. S. government depository collection numbered 41,926 items and the pamphlet files numbered 14,911 items. Total unclassified printed materials numbered 59,242 items.

Although the cost of library materials has been characterized nationally by double-digit inflation for the past few years, the Library has largely avoided the consequences of this magnitude by increasing emphasis on acquisition of paperbound books and by an acquisition program that assigns an important place to retrospective book selection. It is apparent, however, from a survey of book costs for the past year that these conservative budgetary measures have bottomed out. Book costs this year increased by 16% for the circulating collection and by 30% for the Reference collection.

The Reclassification Project and the conversion from Sears' List to the Library of Congress List of Subject Headings both entered a new systematic phase this year. The systematic approach in the first instance was permitted by the establishment by Library Staff (a project initiated in 1974/75) of scope notes and resolution of ambiguities existing in the Dewey tables. Three major classes have been surveyed so far and systematic reclassification in the 800 class was initiated during the year. Systematic overhauling of subject assignment to bring catalog practice into conformity with subject headings used by the Library of Congress was prompted by the publication of a new edition of the L.C. List of Subject Headings.

Community Relations. Clearly as a community resource it is desirable that the Library be integrated as firmly as possible in the life of the community. As in previous years this objective was sought through such activities as participation of the staff in such organizations as the Council on Community Services, by television and radio appearances, talks to service clubs, book review clubs, and other such groups, articulation with the schools, etc. Other activities by which the Library was projected into the community were National Library Week activities, extension of use of the auditorium to local organizations who held a total of 122 programs with a total attendance of nearly 1,800 persons, and the cooperation of the Library in a number of activities sponsored by other organizations - hearings on public transit, interviews of political candidates and the like.

The professional obligations of the Staff to the surrounding area were met by participation of Decatur Public Library personnel in mini workshops sponsored by the Rolling Prairie Libraries. Many libraries in the area are staffed by persons without formal training and such workshops are designed to improve upon services offered in such libraries.

Maintenance and Repair. The high incidence of repair to the mobile libraries continued this year, resulting in the decision to make major modifications in the trailers. Acting on professional advice, a third axle was added to each trailer and new springs and heavier duty tires provided to augment suspension capabilities. Air conditioning units had extensive work done to overcome the continuous problems which have plagued the library since the original installation. Carpets in the central library and both bookmobiles were shampooed. Two new condensation return pumps for the boilers were installed in the furnace room, replacing two which were originally installed in the old building in the late thirties. In addition to numerous routine repair and maintenance functions at the Central Library, bookmobiles and bookmobile stops, the Library's maintenance man also contributed substantially to the Library's needs and operational efficiency by construction of a number of articles of furniture including two phonodisc bins, two collapsible book fair booths, a table to hold IBM card trays in the Circulation Department, and the like.

Personnel. This year staff turnover in the Library affected a professional department head, seven clerical staff and two pages. In addition to this turnover, Mrs. John Redden, Senior Circulation Clerk retired after ten years with the Library. Mrs. Crawford transferred from the Circulation Department to the Extension Department to fill Mrs. Redden's position and Miss Anderson was promoted to Senior Circulation Clerk to become assistant head of the Circulation Department. Two professional librarians commenced work in the Library: Miss Loe assumed duties as head of the Reference Department in June replacing Mr. Uhles, who had resigned during the previous fiscal year. Mr. Poertner became Audio-Visual and Young Adult Librarian in April filling a new position created by the conversion of a Library Assistant position and a part-time Librarian position. In addition, the Library has also participated in the City's CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) program, hiring under this program a Library Assistant and a clerical worker.

The past year has also been a professionally satisfying and stimulating one for myself and I am indebted to many for making it so. It takes many people to maintain a good library. I would like to express my personal thanks to my colleagues at the City in the Finance, Data Services, Personnel and general services departments for the many considerations extended to me and for their support of the Library program. The Library continues to benefit from the activities and support of the Friends of the Library, and special thanks is due for their sponsorship of the Centennial Celebration

Circulation

| | <u>1975/76</u> | <u>1974/75</u> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Non Fiction | | |
| Books | 200,264 | 149,407 |
| Periodicals | 32,108 | 26,248 |
| Pamphlets | 6,270 | 6,222 |
| Total Non-Fiction | <u>238,642</u> | <u>181,877</u> |
| Fiction | | |
| Novels, short stories, etc. | 187,466 | 219,965 |
| Juvenile Picture Books | 75,178 | 72,091 |
| Total Fiction | <u>262,644</u> | <u>292,056</u> |
| Inter-Library Loan | 662 | |
| Total Printed Material | 501,948 | 473,933 |
| Audio-Visual | | |
| 16 mm films | 5,196 | 4,250 |
| 8 mm films | 227 | 182 |
| Cassettes | 109 | 119 |
| Maps | 13 | 5 |
| Phono discs | 3,696 | 3,840 |
| Pictures, framed | 1,234 | 1,140 |
| Pictures, mounted | 672 | 974 |
| Total Audio-Visual | <u>11,147</u> | <u>10,510</u> |
| Total Circulation | 513,095 | 484,443 |
| Home Reading Dept. | 246,031 | 241,305 |
| Young Adult | 26,442 | 25,118 |
| Childrens | 105,787 | 97,481 |
| Reference (Interlibrary Loan) | 602 | 472 |
| Total Central Library | <u>378,862</u> | <u>364,376</u> |
| Mobile Library #547 | 59,562 | 52,231 |
| Mobile Library #548 | 57,970 | 54,750 |
| St. Mary's Hospital | 2,335 | 1,123 |
| Decatur Memorial Hospital | Not served, 1974-1976 | |
| Enterprise School | 405 | service new 1975/76 |
| Hartford Apartments | 519 | 217 |
| Concord Apartments | <u>1,633</u> | <u>1,236</u> |
| Total Extension | <u>122,424</u> | <u>109,557</u> |

Collection Growth, Organization
and Maintenance

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Books | |
| Titles Added | 6,376 |
| Volumes Added | 11,882 |
| (Includes 1,362 vols. on Permanent Loan from RPL) | |
| Titles Withdrawn | 3,337 |
| Volumes Withdrawn | |
| Lost in Circulation | 1,315 |
| Lost in Stock | 1,225 |
| Physically Withdrawn | 6,273 |
| (Vols previously withdrawn but now reinstated) | <u>- 264</u>) |
| Net Volumes Withdrawn | 8,549 |
| Titles, Net Growth | 3,039 |
| Volumes, Net Growth | 3,333 |
| Audio-Visual Materials | |
| Phonodiscs | |
| Titles added | 187 |
| withdrawn | 17 |
| Items added | 187 |
| withdrawn | 33 |
| Cassettes added | |
| Titles added | 0 |
| Items added | 0 |
| Microfilm | |
| New titles | 0 |
| Reels added | 245 |
| Microfiche | |
| New titles | 0 |
| Sheets added | 4,047 |
| Films, 8 mm | |
| Titles added | 37 |
| Copies added | 37 |
| Filmstrips | |
| Titles added | 1 |
| Copies added | 1 |
| Framed Art Reproductions | |
| Titles added | 13 |
| Copies added | 13 |

Collection Growth, Organization and Maintenance (Contd)

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Materials recataloged | |
| Books | 2,126 |
| Phonodiscs | 25 |
| Processing and Collection Maintenance | |
| Books mended | 9,957 |
| Books rebound | 426 |
| Periodicals bound | 18 |
| Books Processed (casebound) | 9,392 |
| Books Processed (paperbound) | 1,128 |
| Magazines Processed | 6,912 |
| Books Rejacketed | 1,472 |
| Phonodiscs Processed | 200 |
| Cassettes Processed | 1 |
| Framed Prints Processed | 13 |
| Film Processed | 37 |
| Magazines added (issues) | 13,485 |
| Newspapers added (issues) | 6,255 |
| Magazines withdrawn | 7,630 |

Services

| Service to Readers: Summary | <u>1975/76</u> | <u>1974/75</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Professional Assistance | 30,717 | 16,890 |
| Directional Information | <u>48,797</u> | <u>49,817</u> |
| Total | <u>79,514</u> | <u>66,707</u> |

Service to Readers: Analyzed by Department

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Professional Assistance | |
| Home Reading | 5,429 |
| Reference | 14,556 |
| Young Adult | 1,198 |
| Children | <u>5,504</u> |
| Total Central Library | <u>26,687</u> |

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Mobile Library #547 | 1,840 |
| Mobile Library #548 | <u>2,190</u> |
| | <u>4,030</u> |

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Directional Information | |
| Home Reading | 13,074 |
| Reference | 23,630 |
| Young Adult | 2,521 |
| Children's | <u>5,283</u> |
| Total Central Library | <u>44,508</u> |

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Mobile Library #547 | 2,215 |
| Mobile Library #548 | <u>2,074</u> |
| | <u>4,289</u> |

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Microfilm consultation | 6,217 |
| Film Programs | 113 |
| Discussion Programs | 27 |
| Other Programs | 9 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Class visits to Library | 87 |
| Staff visits to Schools | 25 |
| Other group visits to Library | 27 |

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Story Hours | 43 |
|-------------|----|

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| Publications | |
| Booklists | 17 |
| Informational (Calendars, bookmobile schedules, etc.) | 40 |