

Friends of Kentucky Libraries

NEWSLETTER

INCORPORATED

November 1969

REPORT

In this issue you will find a resumé of the activities at the luncheon meeting held, with the Trustees, on October 30, in Louisville. Members who did not attend will be able to keep up with events by reading these notes and those who did will have a written record.

The luncheon was a great success in that more people attended than ever before. It was a success in other ways, as well.

Mr. C. D. Cooper, President, Association of Library Trustees of Kentucky, gave the first address. Following are a few of the highlights of his exciting speech.

Talk by Mr. C. D. Cooper

Mr. Cooper sees one of our overall problems as communication between libraries and the public they serve. The library at Hazard, of which he is trustee, was situated in a beautiful but out-of-the-way place and was used by few people, being just a building which housed books, not a vital out-reaching program.

He mentioned Mrs. Virginia Blankenship who has been very helpful in getting people interested in having a new library in Hazard through her use of ideas and skill in writing. In addition to articles and books, Mr. Cooper believes that one-to-one communication is still the most effective as well as being the oldest and best method. He believes that the library should be the center of a community and that it will be, someday, if people so desire and work for this goal. The difficulty is finding the people who will work.

He told of his long and complicated difficulties in getting funds from state and federal organizations to help get the new library project in Hazard going. Everywhere he turned, he was referred to some other agency and told what still had to be done before he could get matching funds. The library board had selected an excellent piece of property (a scarce item in down-town hilly Hazard) but needed 68,000 before they could go ahead. After enormous headaches, many set-backs, delays, despairs, he had the surprize of his life, that morning, at breakfast, when, at 9:30, he received a telephone call saying the grant had come through! His announcement to us was the very first! He invited us to the ground-breaking which will take place, next Monday.

Talk by Margaret Willis, State Librarian

She mentioned that the good news that Perry County (of which Hazard is the County seat) has passed a library tax is particularly gratifying when it is remembered what a large county this is, containing many communities difficult to reach. She considers Mr. Cooper largely responsible for the success of the tax.

Miss Willis then asked us to think back to 1952-53 when librarians and trustees tried to get the state to give aid for a library program and succeeded in getting \$100,000 for a two-year period - a small amount by current standards but large at the time. In those days, many Kentucky libraries were limited to collections of discards - something still true of a very few libraries to this day.

She mentioned bookmobiles and how the suburban areas, though wealthy in comparison with many county areas, also house disadvantaged people - for instance, families where mothers with small children and no cars have no library service. Bookmobiles remain useful in many areas.

In 1956-57 came the National Library Services Act which distributed federal money but required matching funds from community and state. Kentucky would not have had enough money to put into matching funds but the interest in the bookmobile project had raised the budget from the initial \$28,000 to \$176,000.

In 1957, the Library Services Act gave \$40,000 to Kentucky. This amount was spent in buying books. Later, the figure went up to \$173,000. Still later, the act was divided into four parts, offering greater possibilities to libraries. At present, however, the funds distributed by these acts are in danger of being cut in two, or worse. Last year, \$596,000 was received from the Federal Government through Title I (services.) This year, however, Kentucky will receive about half this amount. What is especially difficult is planning for the year before knowing the amount of money to become available. In Washington, the House has passed an amendment to increase amounts for services to public libraries to the amount received last year and this bill is now in the Senate. If passed, the funds will then have to be allocated - which means that many questions will remain.

Miss Willis asked us all to write to Senators John Sherman Cooper and Marlow Cook as well as to the President asking for their cooperation in restoring this fund.

She told us that Governor Nunn has set aside \$200,000 for each year for the next 20 years for the use of library building. All of these funds have now been allocated. However, she said that the success at Hazard was a case of people helping themselves to build a new library.

Kentucky has 120 counties about 90 of which are now working within the regional programs. There are no hard and fast rules on how a county can join a region. Why not? It would not be realistic to make such rules. Many counties do not trust each other but will make contracts with the state. The state just takes a county on faith if the people in it are trying.

Experience has taught the Department of Libraries that a "demonstration" is more effective than just sending a library some books to improve it. The demonstration is sudden, showy, dramatic. An addition of books, art, music, etc., all at once, especially impresses. A demonstration lasts two years after which local people either take over or else see the library disappear. Thirteen demonstrations have been made without a failure.

Miss Willis requested that we all study the newly printed A.D. Little Report. She mentioned that the report suggests that counties buy their own books, an opinion with which she does not, at present, agree, but holds that it is a goal for the future. She also values the regional library staff members who work to improve individual librarians and libraries.

As a parting shot, Miss Willis added, "Don't be happy with what is -- work for more improvements for the people of Kentucky."

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Our new officers, elected at the business meeting held after the luncheon, October 30, are:

President - Mrs. John Davenport, Louisville
 Vice-President - Mr. Charles Allen Gage, Louisville
 Second Vice-President - Mrs. Garnett Bale, Elizabethtown
 Secretary - Mrs. Russell Houston, Jr., Louisville
 Treasurer - Mr. John L. Dugan, Jr., Louisville

The list of new members of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee will be given in the next newsletter.

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Library Opening - Frankfort

KENTUCKY REGIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

On November 26, in Frankfort, there was a formal opening of the Kentucky Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 150 East Clinton Street. This library is especially noteworthy as being the only one of its kind in the state. A reception followed the dedication. Miss Frances Coleman is the Librarian.

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Annual Dues

Many members have paid their current annual dues either at the October meeting in Louisville or since that time by mail. For the convenience of those who have not yet done so, the coupon below is included. New members are invited.

Coupon to be sent with Dues

(Remember - all dues, gifts, etc., are tax deductible)

Membership fee (Regular - \$2.00)	_____	
Membership - Patron	5.00	_____
Contributing	10.00	_____
Gift-Scholarship Fund		_____
Total	_____	_____

Signature

Address

Please fill out and return with check to the executive secretary:

Mrs. Russell Houston, Jr.
 2512 Brighton Drive
 Louisville, Ky. 40205

You will receive a membership card from her.