

## NLW AND NCLA AND NCBL

By

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for National Library Week in North Carolina for 1969

Librarians in North Carolina and the North Carolina Library Association have been active supporters of National Library Week from the first announcement of the program in 1957 by the National Book Committee and the American Library Association. It also may be said that NLW has had support of leading citizens of North Carolina from its first inception. Even with many disruptive forces making headlines throughout the nation, it is still stirring to read in the local organization handbook for NLW a note of idealism and ultimate faith in the work to which we are all directly and indirectly dedicated. "In the belief that reading and libraries are truly means toward this full pursuit of life, liberty and happiness lies the ultimate goal: to help develop an informed, creative citizenry that is competent and willing to make the choices and decisions that free men and women have the privilege and the responsibility to make."

The records of the accomplishments and diversity of programs for National Library Week in North Carolina passed on to the Executive Director fill to overflowing a large carton even though many other records have been deposited in archives and disposed of by more primitive procedures. It may be just as well not to be bound by past activities, but it is with a sense of gratitude that we look at some of the highlights of the past decade. Our governors, Luther Hodges, Terry Sanford, Dan Moore, have recognized National Library Week with active support and proclamations. The list of those who have been willing to chair the State Committee or serve on it is too long to record here, but a few names will indicate the leadership and support we have had: Mrs. Luther Hodges, Mrs. L. Richardson Preyer, Irving Carlyle, George M. Stephens, Edwin Gill, McNeill Smith, Stanford R. Brookshire and Mrs. Dan K. Moore. The names of librarians who have helped and promoted the program can also be indicative of the support and leadership NLW has had. Dr. Benjamin Powell has served as Chairman of the program for the American Library Association for NLW. Mrs. Elizabeth Hughey, both as State Librarian and President of the North Carolina Library Association, gave it her full backing. The Division of Educational Media in the State Department of Public Instruction under the leadership of Cora Paul Bomar has inspired many librarians and library programs not only among school librarians in North Carolina but also nationally because of her positions in the Southeastern Library Association and the American Library Association.

Where do we stand now? As librarians we should remember the advice Elizabeth Hughey gave us: that we should work to "make every week Library Week." From our point of view promotion of library work and its goals is a year-round job. The state committee and the county committees need our special support for the programs on which they are concentrating this April. The county chairmen for North Carolinians for Better Libraries (NCBL) are joining with our NLW committee and NCLA for the week of April 20-26.

There is such good potential in North Carolina for library promotion. North Carolina has been blessed with many excellent professional librarians who, over the years, have

given leadership to our work here and built many good libraries and established good library programs throughout the State. *Resources of North Carolina Libraries*, edited by Robert B. Downs and published by the Governor's Commission on Library Resources in 1965, has been and is still a good foundation of fact and guidance for us. *Library Services for the Nation's Needs*, a Report of the National Advisory Commission on Libraries, published in 1968, for which President Douglas M. Knight of Duke University was chairman, gives us goals and a perspective toward fulfillment of a national policy. *Planning for Higher Education in North Carolina*, a Special Report of the North Carolina Board of Higher Education under the chairmanship of Watts Hill, Jr., has a chapter on libraries which is an especially thorough evaluation of libraries for institutions of higher education and presents realistic and challenging recommendations on which citizens can proceed to implement with confidence.

It was with some hesitation I first considered the invitation of Mildred Councill, our NCLA President, to accept the position of Executive Director. But the enthusiastic support and efficient leadership of Mrs. James Harper as Chairman for North Carolina NLW program in 1969 has given me confidence. It is no accident that the support from Mrs. Harper and also from the many other citizens on state and county committees is based on the good work each librarian performs in his or her unit. For some librarians who have worked on this program for the past ten years, the activity may seem a bit repetitious and stale; but from the eyes of our lay committee I see a gleam of pleasure that they now have an opportunity to return some of the many services which libraries have given them and their communities. Your committee members like the idea of a "week," a time, a period in which we and people around the nation will emphasize libraries.

National Library Week is a joint or cooperative effort of citizens and librarians. The committee of citizens changes each year and in a state the size of North Carolina it can be a problem to get organized and under way, even with nearly a year to plan in advance. Then too often the same librarians year after year are asked to take the local leadership, and the same pattern of program results. It does not need to be a big splash each year, but even though we may not notice the changes and still have many of the old problems and needs facing us, libraries today do have new challenges and need the support and understanding from all our citizens in the fulfillment of goals. Although we may use NLW for the improvement of our individual libraries or special programs, NLW chiefly aims to promote libraries at the state and national level as social forces and vital institutions in our democracy.

Charlesanna Fox, Librarian of the Randolph Public Library and Past President of NCLA, this year is serving as Deputy Executive Director for National Library Week and will serve as your Director for 1970. If we do not accomplish everything planned for this year, remember not only that every week is Library Week but also that NLW, by any name, is a continuing program. Come April 26, 1969, Miss Fox is ready to pick up the reins for 1970.