

LIBRARY BUILDING PROGRAMS IN NORTH CAROLINA, 1951-1952

PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDINGS

Blueprints and ambitions which had been thwarted by lack of materials during the 1940's were revived with the result of many new public library buildings, additions, and renovations during the 1950-52 biennium.

New Buildings

The Rowan County Public Library, Salisbury, was completed in the fall of 1951. The new two-story Georgian structure with a book capacity of 80,000, along with the site of the old Boyden home in Salisbury, was a gift from the family of the late Burton Craige of Winston-Salem. The total cost, including furniture and equipment, amounted to \$109,475.71. (Featured in NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES, Vol. 10, No. 1, October 1951).



Rowan County Public Library, Salisbury, N. C.

On July 5, 1951, the new public library of Faith was dedicated. The building drive originally sponsored by the local Civitan Club, had the cooperation of civic and church groups as well as of private citizens and newspapers in the area. Granite to face the building was donated by the local Rogers Brothers Quarry.

The Randolph Negro Branch, Asheboro, was built in 1951 and represents the realization of efforts on the part of the Negroes for adequate library quarters. It is located in a new cement block building on the grounds of the Randolph County Training School.

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

In October 1949 the estate of Emma Hollingsworth made \$45,000 available to the city of Fayetteville for the erection of a new library building. The City Council allocated an additional \$75,000 for this purpose. Construction of the building of contemporary design was completed January 31, 1952; thus the new Cumberland County Library, formerly housed in the Market House, was opened for service March 1, 1952. The total cost of the project was \$124,316.62. The building as now constructed has capacity for 40,000 volumes with structural strength to accommodate a second level over the stack room making a total capacity of 75,000 volumes. (Featured and pictured in NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES, Vol. 11, No. 1, October 1952).

The new Elbert Ivey Memorial Library, Hickory, was opened March 31, 1952. This building was erected at a total cost of \$131,000 and contributed to the city of Hickory by George F. Ivey and family. The present book capacity is 37,000 with space designed for doubling this amount.

Part of the recently completed county building in Jacksonville was designed to house the Onslow County Library. In June 1952 the library was moved from the cramped quarters in the courthouse into the new modern air-conditioned structure where there is room for several years' growth.

A new library building has been constructed in Robbinsville on the site of the former library. This building, a frame structure with an approximate book capacity of 5,000, is a gift of the Bemis Lumber Company through Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Veach in memory of Mrs. Veach's parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Bemis.

The Orange County Negro Public Library, Hillsboro, was open to the public in May 1951. The Negro people secured the money for the building in different drives and from private donations.

The Belhaven Public Library in Beaufort County has been moved into its new building, a one-story brick structure located in the center of town. It has been renamed the Fannie Mebane Ralph Memorial Library in honor of a former trustee, the wife of Dr. W. T. Ralph. Funds for the building were contributed by the citizens of Belhaven with Dr. Ralph as the principal donor.

Additions and Renovations

Rockingham County Library, Leaksville, has had a two-room wing added; one room of which has been furnished as a browsing room by the friends of the late E. D. Pitcher, library trustee for many years.

The Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, has been expanded to include the building adjacent to it on the east side. This new rented space has been remodeled to provide a reading room, periodical room, bookmobile department, offices for librarian and business manager, and twenty per cent more stack room. A vault and storage room are included in the basement layout. The remodeling and decorations for this addition were planned by Anthony Lord, architect and member of the Library Board. The color scheme is gray and Venetian red, and the furniture is a combination of Eames chairs and birch tables with Remington Rand stacks.

Warren County, Warrenton, expanded its building by the addition of a room for the children's library, a stack room, reference room, and a work room.

Since a new building could not be constructed for the Anson County Public Library, Wadesboro, and since cramped space in the courthouse made a change imperative, a former residence was purchased and renovated for the central library headquarters. The large colonial hallway, parlor and drawing rooms were converted with minor remodeling into the library reception lobby and separate reading rooms for adults, youths, and children. The library was moved into this new location in the second block of East Morgan Street in September 1952.

Under Construction

In December 1952 work was begun on the new building for the George H. and Laura E. Brown Library, Washington. Plans call for a book capacity of approximately 40,000 volumes in a modified Georgian style with a multi-purpose room on the second floor. This library was made possible by the will of Mrs. Laura E. Brown who designated \$100,000 for the construction and equipment of a city library to be built on Van Norden Street. Provision was made also for a trust fund for the maintenance of the library.

A centrally located lot valued at \$100,000 was presented to the Winston-Salem Library Commission by Richard J. Reynolds in December 1948. Approximately \$800,000 was contributed for the building by the people of the city and county and construction was begun in 1952. At the present time the new building of the Public Library of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County is nearing completion. The building is to be inspected and given to the city sometime around February 15, after which equipment, stacks, and furniture will be installed. It is anticipated that everything will be in readiness for the formal opening and dedication by April 1 of this year. (Featured in NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES, vol. 10, No. 3, April 1952).

The new fire station and public library branch for West Asheville will be completed and ready for use by April 1, according to a report from the architect. The amount of book space in the new branch will be approximately 1,000 square feet. This municipal building, including fire station and library, is of modern, simple design with emphasis on its functional qualities.

Proposed Buildings

There are a number of proposed buildings in the immediate and near future. Plans are underway for a new library building in Valdese. A conveniently located lot has been given by John Pons, a former resident of Valdese, and a sum of \$16,000 is available for the construction of the building.

In March 1951 the City Council of Fayetteville earmarked the sum of \$65,000 for the construction of a new library building for Negroes. At the present time efforts are being made to obtain a clear title to a lot which had been left in trust for the educational use of the Negro youth of the city.

Rowan County placed \$60,000 in its 1951-52 budget for construction of a new building to be used by the Negro Home and Farm Agents and the Negro Library.

On May 23, 1952, the Board of Trustees of the Charlotte and Mecklenburg County Library completed property transactions upon which they had worked for several years. They purchased three buildings on property which adjoins the main library building property in Charlotte. The additional property increases the usable square footage of the site for a proposed new library building from 19,126 square feet to 30,711 square feet. This is an increase of 60% in site space. Charlotte-Mecklenburg voters gave approval to eight separate county and city bond issues on December 13, 1952. As a result the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County was given the go-ahead to spend \$1,600,000 for a new main library building, three branch libraries in the city, and branches in the five other incorporated towns in the county. The library board has already drafted preliminary plans for a new and modern public library on the present site fronting on North Tryon and East Sixth Streets.

Many public libraries in North Carolina are still inadequately housed and there is a dire need for more new buildings, renovation of old buildings, and expansion of cramped quarters. It is encouraging, however, that a backward glance over the past two years, a look at the present, and a glimpse into what the future promises, show considerable accomplishment toward a goal of adequate housing facilities for every public library in North Carolina.

—MADGE BLALOCK, *Librarian*
North Carolina Library
Commission