



CHECKING OUT—At the checkout desk at the Deschutes County Library Mrs. Carson Call, assistant librarian, stamps due dates in books for library patrons. The hand-stamping system will soon be replaced by automatic equipment.



PERIODICALS ON FILE—The library keeps a good supply of newspapers and magazines in open cases for its patrons to read.



YOUNG READERS BROUSE—The children's room at the library is a busy place. In the summer story hours and contests promote interest in reading the many books on the shelves.

Library born in Bend in 1908

By Linda Hamby

Bulletin Staff Writer

Somehow the name and the building of the Deschutes County Library seem to be in antipathy to one another.

The more usual conception of a library suggests grey stone steps and masses of rough-hewn stone excised by intermittent steel-rimmed window-holes. In fact, the exterior of such an edifice would frighten away little children, imagining the interior to be dark, foul-aired, and run by old fogies. This library in Bend, however, embodies quite a different tale.

Only one year more than half a century ago, a library was born to Bend. A small but conscientious group of women organized a Ladies Library club on February 16. They met at the home of Mrs. J. E. Sawhill. Mrs. C. D. Rowe became the club's president; Mrs. F. F. Smith, vice-president; and Miss Mary E. Coleman, secretary-treasurer; and later, librarian.

These women decided to open a public library and reading room. Since they had to raise money for magazines and current expenses, they began to give dances, suppers and other social affairs, the first on the following Saturday.

Traveling Library
They immediately ordered a list of 17 magazines and five weeklies, and made arrangements with the Oregon Library Commission to send a traveling library consisting of 50 books to Bend every six months, the local club paying freight charges both ways.

The first book collection consisted of 38 volumes, donated by the club members and their friends.

Just as the library's future seemed bright, troubles began. Although 1908 was a lucky year—J. M. Lawrence donated the rent to the library which, from April 6, occupied his building on Wall Street—the two years later he sold the building.

Mrs. E. D. Wilson, the librarian, feared that the library would have to close, since rent was too expensive. Finally, however, a commercial club cared enough for the library so as to pay one year's rent for the store room in the Johnson Building.

When the Bend Company erected a building for its electrical supplies, the library was transferred to one large room which it occupied rent-free.

City Contributes
The young library began to wax stronger under nourishment of \$3,000 which the city appropriated in 1919. Later the county and city decided to divide the cost of the library, and in 1920, the Bend Library became the Deschutes

County Library.

On January 6 of that year, the county court appointed the first Deschutes County Library board. Mrs. J. M. Lawrence was president; R. W. Sawyer, treasurer; George A. Paddock, secretary; and Mrs. Max Cuning and Fred Wallace members of the board. Once more the Ladies Club came to the library's aid and donated their library and funds to the newly-formed organization.

Like all growing concerns, the library began to develop loftier ideas about its future. In 1923, John Du Bois drew tentative plans for a new structure. In February of the following year, the Bend Company donated the lot on which the new library was to stand. It also sold the adjoining lot to the library. The Ladies Library club and the Bend Civic League raised the funds. A. E. Doyle, a Portland architect, drew plans for a brick building, but later a wooden structure won the honor.

Steady Growth
Donations for the building fund from the PEO Sisterhood were first reported in April 1927. In the fall, the Ellis building was enlarged to house the growing library. Over 1,000 volumes were given to the library in 1928 from the estate of Charles Stuart Benson.

In 1929, Hugh M. Thompson, a Bend architect, was asked to review the library building plans with the board. He estimated that a brick structure would cost \$36,634.

With the constant growth of the library, there arose a query among many citizens as to whether or not the library was operating as a special agency. On Jan. 4, 1930, Ross Farnham, district attorney, answered that any money left over to the library at the end of the year was to stay with the library, in a special library fund, and not revert to the general city fund. PWA and WPA applications were approved for the library. The Board accepted the PWA grant of \$13,500 for construction of the \$30,000 building which remains on Wall Street today.

The same year, Whitehouse and Church, architects, used native woods for the exterior and interior designs of the library. Fred W. Van Matre was the contractor.

Changes in War Years
During the war years, the library underwent spectacular changes in reorganization and expansion. In 1942, it procured an approximate 1000 record collection, free of charge. In '43 and '44, the periodicals were reorganized. All magazines were encased in cardboard boxes. Library rules

were worked out. The first glass showcase was secured for exhibits. The Oregon collection was segregated, and there began a Young Moderns' Corner.

In 1944, a complete inventory of books was taken, and a complete mending and binding program begun. The library acquired fixtures such as easy chairs and reading tables.

By the end of the war, the record collection had grown three-fold. The library began to buy records from the local stores. The collection has now grown and developed in various categories. The music includes early through contemporary serious music; show music, popular and folk music, and early and modern jazz.

The collection also includes recordings of famous speeches, poetry readings, and language series in German, French, Spanish, Italian and Russian.

Aids School Teachers

By 1946, the library had 25,000 volumes. It supplied with room collections eight teachers at Allen, four at Kenwood, four at Reid, and two in the high school. It served, as to teachers and rooms, 100 per cent the schools outside of Bend. It also served the St. Francis school and the three Seventh Day Adventist schools at Bend, Redmond and Sisters.

An example of a seemingly phenomenal being of both stable and moving body, the library acquired a one-and-one-half-ton Vanette bookmobile to provide greater efficiency in delivery and pick-up service to schools, branches, and stations. As a result, it eliminated the expense of maintaining a shipping department. Trips are made regularly once a month on definite fixed schedules.

In September, the library will install an automatic checking system. Three book charging machines will serve the main library, the children's room and the bookmobile.

The machine will eliminate hand charging and save the librarian hours of time.

Children are a special interest to the library. They look forward every Saturday to story hours. In the summer, they have a special reading project followed by a picnic. Every November, they visit the library in groups. They combine fun and skill in organizing doll shows, hobby shows and special exhibits. The library, in fact, has become a realm of adventure to them.

This year, the children's room has a particularly friendly atmosphere. Two large mural maps of Oregon greet the incomer, reminding him of the Centennial. Other maps stud the walls, as well as drawings and paintings done by careful little hands.



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