

History of Jackson County Libraries Starts in 1890s; Expansion Noted

Mrs. FDR Slightly Injured by Auto

New York (AP)—Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, 75, has cancelled engagements outside her home for the next three days to rest a sprained ankle, received Sunday when she was knocked down by a car which backed into her as she stepped off a curb.

The former first lady picked herself up, had the ankle taped and kept three engagements Sunday immediately following the accident, leaning on arm crutches. She said she hadn't bothered to get the name of the driver who struck her.

Today Mrs. Roosevelt went to Columbia - Presbyterian Medical Center for examination by an orthopedic surgeon and X-rays which, her secretary said, showed no break.

Good roads interested the residents of Jackson county in 1912 as much as they do today, according to a letter from the Oregon library commission to Miss Elizabeth Robinson, Medford's first librarian, on file at the Public Library of Medford and Jackson County.

The letter dated Feb. 5, 1912 was in answer to an inquiry from Miss Robinson regarding library administration problems and a request for books or bulletins pertaining to good roads.

The correspondence was exchanged prior to the dedication of Medford's newly constructed library, Feb. 8, 1912.

The new library was the culmination of a series of small libraries that had been established in Medford since 1890.

In 1903 the Medford Library association was organized with a subscription library in the G. H. Haskins drug store on East Main st.

The membership fee was \$2 a year with a monthly assessment of 25 cents.

The Greater Medford club in the next few years was active in promoting a free library for Medford and at one time the library was located in their clubrooms above what is now Mann's department store.

Public Library Established

A Medford city council resolution establishing a public library was passed July, 1908

and this library was located in the city hall at Sixth and Front sts. The library was open only two days a week on Thursdays and Saturdays.

During the 1909-1910 period, funds from the Carnegie Foundation were made available to the Medford library on the condition that the city government agree to furnish funds for the library's maintenance.

For the purpose of acquiring maintenance funds the council called a special election on Aug. 2, 1910, to authorize them to levy a special tax on all normally taxable property. The tax was to equal 10 per cent of the cost of the library building itself.

The levy passed and the city agreed to donate land for the library site in the west end of the city park.

Alfred Ivey, an early day Medford contractor and builder, was granted the contract to build the library after negotiations were successfully completed with the Carnegie Foundation. The cost stated in the Ivey contract is \$19,600.

County Libraries

Several years after the Medford library was opened, residents of smaller Jackson county towns started a campaign to obtain county funds to support libraries that already existed in several of the towns or to establish new libraries.

On Dec. 23, 1919, Jackson county agreed to levy a tax of .2 of a mill to extend the library service to the smaller towns of the county. This service started on April 20, 1920.

Rogue River and Wimer residents, particularly, had been active in the campaign to interest the county in contributing funds to expand the library system, and the Rogue River library received volumes for their library early in 1920. Jacksonville, Eagle Point, Gold Hill, Talent, Butte Falls, Sam Valley and Central Point, also, received volumes at this time.

Rogue River has since withdrawn from the county system and operates as a separate library facility although it still continues to receive county funds.

2,000 Books

When the Medford library first opened in 1912 there were approximately 2,000 books available for circulation to Medford residents.

But following the expansion of the system to smaller towns in the county the total number of volumes increased to some 27,500 books by 1930. In this same year too, total circulation increased to 178,856 books for the estimated 36,000 persons being served by the system.

Since 1930 the book stock has increased by 105.8 per cent to the present total of 56,200 books; the population being served by the library has increased 98 per cent to 71,500 persons, but the total circulation has increased only 20.2 per cent to 215,156 books. Book circulation will be discussed in a later article.

The Public Library of Ashland, is, and always has been, outside of the city-county library system.

Another library which is little known publicly is the 38-year-old Jackson county law library, located on the third floor of the county courthouse.

This library contains over 6,000 books including supreme court reports from every state in the union and records of the U. S. Supreme

court and U. S. courts of appeals.

It was organized in 1930 under a 1927 legislative statute which permits Oregon counties to establish law libraries. However, it was not used until 1933 when space for it was made available in the new county courthouse.

The \$2,700, which is needed annually to maintain the

library, comes from a small percentage of each legal fee filed in the clerk's office and designed for that purpose. This is also permitted under legislative statute.

It is administered by a committee from the Jackson County Bar association and can be used by both members of the bar association and litigants in court action.

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Hillcrest School Escapees Caught

Salem (AP)—Two 15-year-old escapees from Hillcrest School for Girls who got away Friday night wearing only swim suits were taken into custody at Sweet Home Sunday.

The girls were taken to the police station by one of their fathers, Hillcrest officials returned them to the school Monday.

When the girls got away they were about to board a bus for a swim party at Fairview home. They had hidden some street clothes in a jacket one was carrying.

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novated and made into a meeting room, able to seat some 60 persons.

The library's circulation during 1958-1959 totaled 89,974 books among an estimated population served of 22,000, Miss Mason said, which compares favorably with the Public Library of Medford and Jackson county's circulation. The Ashland library also has the enviable record of having 40 per cent of the population served, registered as borrowers.

There are two libraries at the Camp White Domiciliary which are little known to anyone but members of the Domiciliary itself.

One of these is the 5,500-volume library for use of VA members and personnel and the other is a completely indexed 900-volume medical library.

The general library has just recently moved into new quarters in the main Domiciliary building from a smaller building across the street. It is the standard type of library found in all VA centers, according to Miss Enid Holmes, librarian.

During 1959 the library circulated some 25,000 books and magazines among the 900 Domiciliary members at the center, not counting books read on the premises.

It is hoped that the new location will be of added convenience to members and boost this circulation even more, Miss Holmes said.

Medical Library

The medical library is located in the same area as the medical staff and pharmacy offices, at the Domiciliary. Miss Holmes is librarian for this facility also.

In addition to the usual amount of standard medical books there are many volumes pertaining to geriatrics and diseases commonly associated with aging.

Besides the books in this facility, the medical staff also has access to the many books in use at all VA medical centers, through a general indexed list from which they can order directly from the library which lists the desired publication.

Miss Holmes is establishing specialized libraries for other members of the Domiciliary staff too, including a small library adjacent to the nursing staff offices and the dental clinic.



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