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*R. J. Moore*  
1963

# LIBRARY SERVICE IN DURHAM

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DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

1963

# LIBRARY SERVICE IN DURHAM

A look to the future

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## LIBRARY SERVICE IN DURHAM

### A look to the future

Two essential elements of a good library system are:

- 1) adequate financial Introduction and 2) an adminis-

The people of Durham have long recognized the importance of free public library service, for it was in this city, in 1897, that such service was first given in North Carolina. This library was always alert to change and modern means of serving its readers and in 1923 established the first bookmobile service in the state. That year its librarian became director of the North Carolina Library Commission and thus extended its influence beyond the city. The Stanford L. Warren library has also made a fine record of service to its readers; its services, collections, building and fiscal support are recognized for their excellence. Both libraries face a future for the development and growth of a service that can only lead to the improvement of the individuals who use library services in the county libraries.

It is most fortunate and apropos that Dr. Benjamin E. Powell, Director of the Duke University Library, a past-president of the American Library Association and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Durham Public Library should lead in the strengthening and growth of public library services in the City and County of Durham. I value not only his interest in this study, but also to the many others who are deeply interested in the future of library service in Durham and for their aid, information and assistance.

The professional staff should be increased from five to

not less than seventeen.

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Two essential elements of a good library system are:
  - 1) adequate financial support; and 2) an administration which knows what to do with money once it is appropriated.
2. The development of a single library system.
3. A strong book collection in sufficient scope, depth and quality is required.
4. The book collection should contain 165,000 - 175,000 active books.
5. There should be reliance, on a contract basis, for older and less frequently used materials, on other libraries in the city and state.
6. The book budget should be not less than fifty cents per capita.
7. To build upon adequate basic collection, \$25,000 annually should be appropriated.
8. Special rather than funds from the regular operating budget should be used for the creation of a special audio-visual collection, with educational films being purchased on a cooperative basis.
9. The professional staff should be increased from five to not less than seventeen.



10. Staff should be selected because of their education, experience and proven leadership.
11. The director of the library must be chosen, having certain specific qualifications.
12. Responsibility is placed on the Board of Trustees for personnel policies.
13. Salary expenditures should approximate 70% of the total budget.
14. The Board of Trustees should adopt a statement of library objectives and book selection policies.
15. Convenient location and parking facilities are of the utmost importance.
16. A library building should be designed so as to give greatest emphasis to the functional requirements.
17. If necessary a new building may be built in phases if certain conditions are met.
18. The critical space problem for the present Durham Public Library must be met immediately by both temporary and permanent relief.
19. Temporary quarters are recommended.
20. A new building should be planned for.

21. The development of a public relations program is recommended.
22. Increased funds of \$25,000 annually for the next six years is recommended.
23. A merger of the Stanford L. Warren Library and the Durham Public Library should be made as soon as possible.
24. Appointment of a director of libraries.
25. The establishment of a Friends of the Durham Public Library is recommended.
26. The formation of a Durham Library Council is recommended.

With these two basic premises to build on, a program

growth and development for a single library system can be

achieved for the Durham libraries. Sufficient funds and strong

leadership can work wonders in the provision of a strong, real

library program. Let us review and consider the various

elements involved in good library service.

#### The Book Collections

A library without enough books is not a library. The

best library in the world cannot provide reading and reference

service without a strong book collection which is in sufficient



## A PLAN FOR DURHAM

Elements of a good library system have been set forth by Mrs. Catherine Maybury in a report to the Subcommittee on Libraries of the Durham City - County Charter Commission. She stated that the two essential elements of a good library system are: 1) adequate financial support; and 2) an administration which knows what to do with the money, once it is appropriated. Regardless of the legal frame - work within which the library operates, if these two elements are lacking, the library cannot function effectively and will not fulfill its proper role in the community it serves." Mrs. Marbury also emphasized that "there is no magic to be found in legal organization." Clearly, the two ingredients to success must occur simultaneously, for the one without the other will not mean for a successful program.

With these two basic premises to build on, a program of growth and development for a single library system can be projected for the Durham libraries. Sufficient funds and strong leadership can work wonders in the provision of a strong, reasonable library program. Let us review and consider the various elements involved in good library service.

### The Book Collections

A library without enough books is not a library. The best librarian in the world cannot provide reading and reference services without a strong book collection which is in sufficient

scope, depth and quantity to meet the reading requirements of the people of Durham. In the two libraries, the Durham Public and the Stanford L. Warren Library, there are only 139,490 volumes available to the people using these libraries. This figures out at 1.39 volumes per capita for those using the Stanford L. Warren Library and at 1.08 per capita for those using the Durham Public Library. This does not give enough diversity or quantity to meet the needs of library patrons, for both libraries contain some materials no longer needed, some which are obsolescent and some which duplicate titles in the other library and where the duplication is not necessary or required. The prevention of unnecessary duplication can mean that either more titles can be added or more duplicates of highly used books be secured. For the Durham area needs, there should be in the library system not less than 165,000 - 175,000 active books. This recommendation is based on five major premises:

- 1) students who use public libraries, now in increasing numbers, require extensive duplication of materials as well as access to long files of periodicals, older book titles and subject material in depth that cannot be housed in the high school library;
- 2) county library service requires a larger collection to work from because of a lower turnover rate of materials used and because of a wide variety of materials used and needed to satisfy demands;
- 3) more books are needed to meet the growing needs of research specialists and their allied and family needs;



- 4) more leisure time for many people, including the senior citizens will require more books for general reading; and
- 5) the full potential of service to business and the improvement of people on the job, has not yet been realized.

The collections must be kept free of older and obsolescent materials that can be obtained from the State Library, or possibly on a contract basis from either academic institution in the city. These materials, usually infrequently used should be borrowed on a fee basis as the unit cost of a book borrowed from another library must be reckoned less in terms of the borrowing library than in terms of the lending library. Even on a fee of basis it will be cheaper to pay for the borrowing of a book from an academic library than it will be to purchase, keep and service the book in the Durham libraries. Precedent for this type of financing has already been set by the state of Maryland which contracts with Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library to supply little used materials to other public libraries in the state.

The book budget should ideally be not less than fifty cents per capita and this would involve an expenditure of approximately \$56,000 annually rather than the \$30,000 now expended. This annual figure presupposes an adequate book collection to begin with, a situation which does not now exist. It is further recommended, therefore, that supplementary annual grants of \$25,000 be granted for the next six years to bring the collection up to an adequacy to permit the annual budget to be solely used

for current accessions and for the replacement of worn out books.

It is not without coincidence that the city in the state (Asheville) with the highest per capita book budget expenditure (46¢) also has the highest per capita circulation (7.6) of books loaned for home reading. People cannot use materials which the library does not have and an inadequate book collection will not encourage the use, to the extent desired, of libraries with an inadequate book collection. A sound investment, therefore, does result in increased use of library materials.

Many public libraries to-day have developed fine audio-visual programs, adding both musical and non-musical recordings as well as educational films to their collections. Whether using linguaphone recordings or documentary files, this method of extending educational opportunities is most popular and instructive. If such a program is added, consideration should be given to the establishment of a cooperative program with other cities and counties or possibly through the expansion of the existing system. Special funds should be allocated for this purpose over and above those needed for the acquisition and maintenance of the book collection. It is conservative to say that the establishment of such a service would be tremendously used and would result in a popular use by community and church groups especially. Again may I emphasize, the establishment

widely used. In addition to staff for the public services,



of such a program on a regional basis would bring a valuable service at a much lower cost.

The book resources, or collections, are the heart of a library. Without them in adequate numbers, we cannot provide the service that is expected of a library. In order to get the full use of a library collection, the books not only must be carefully selected, but they must also be interpreted to many of the library's patrons. Reference questions must be answered and advisory services given when required.

#### The Staff

The quality of the personnel of the library will be of even greater importance than the quantity, though it must be pointed out that without the required number of professional assistants, not even the best librarians will be able to do an adequate piece of work. Instead of the five professional librarians in the two libraries in Durham, there should be not less than seventeen. This is a basic need in order to cover the diversity of more, both within and without the library. Included on the staff should be members who are specialists in selecting resource materials and in preparing service programs for children, for young adults and adults, whether that service is given in county or in the city. There should be staff members for the public services who specialize in reference services and who are knowledgeable about essential subject literature which is more widely used. In addition to staff for the public services,

personnel, in adequate numbers must be secured for the acquisition, cataloging and classification of the materials secured for the library.

Extension of services into the county is in itself a specialty that must be carefully correlated and coordinated with that given through libraries within the city. Here we have challenging opportunities, as well as problems, for the density of population is not equal to that of the city and, therefore, the service cannot be exactly the same. This will require a different use of the collections and staff time in order to equalize as far as it is possible, library services to those in the county with that given in the city. It is fortunate that the Durham city-county area is so compact, for almost any one in the county can get into the city in a matter of minutes, rather than hours, and transportation in and out of the city is bound to improve through the development of highways and adequate parking facilities.

The selection of the staff should include senior staff members, selected because of their education, experience and proven leadership within the community where they have served. Leadership within their profession should also be a prerequisite to their joining the staff. The younger staff members should have these potentials beyond their basic education.

It is the director of the library, however, who will really set the course for the work of the library. He will prepare over all objectives, advise the Board of Trustees as to the purpose of the library, prepare the budgets, provide the management leadership of the operations, be a civic and educational



library leader, and on his shoulders falls the full responsibility for the on-going operations and the future progress of the library. He must be selected with these qualities in mind.

There is a responsibility of the Board to provide for a merit system, a job classification and pay plan for all staff members in order to provide for a career service. Provision should be made for adequate pension, vacation and sick leave programs and also for working conditions that will provide for the most efficient use of staff time. The salary item in the budget will account for approximately 70% of the library budget.

With a strong staff and the book collections adequate, a satisfactory service program should ensue.

#### Free Library Service Program

Before an adequate service program can be developed by the staff, the Board of Trustees should adopt a statement of library objectives embodying a book selection policy in order to give proper direction to the development of library services by the administration and the staff. This will contain a statement of the library's goals and responsibilities in reference and information services, in building the collections, in the development of services to students and in the provision of materials for self-development. It will also include statements relative to the development of recreational or leisure time reading, in the planning of story hour programs for children and group

discussions and lectures for adults and young adults and in the provision of educational film programs. Other activities may be added as the occasion and need warrant.

In addition to the recording statistically the home use of books by children and of the non-fiction and fiction used by adults and young adults, it is well to watch closely the reference and informational services and to record this use. Such information is a valuable index to an extremely important function of the library's services. It may be noted that the use of non-fiction by adults in Durham is extremely limited in spite of the limited use of this type of material from the college and university libraries. While the library does rank fourth of the seven major libraries reporting, there is a considerable gap between the per capita circulation of Asheville (7.6) and that for Durham (3.6), while the lowest per capita use is (2.6) for Raleigh. To look at this situation another way, if the people of Durham, having as many books available proportionately to them, were to read at the same rate as people in Asheville, the book circulation in Durham would be at the rate of 851,000 volumes annually rather than the present circulation of 413,000. The important point, is not the amount of circulation, but whether the ideas gained, the knowledge absorbed or the pleasure received would not contribute to the growth of Durham and thus the development of its people.

A library building should be designed so as to give emphasis to the functional use it will be put to by both



## Physical Facilities

Convenient access to the library's resources and services means a greater usage of them, which in turn means a lower unit cost for circulation and reference services and also a higher turn over figure for the library's resource materials. In other words, the right location means that the citizens get greater mileage out of their civic investment because of a greater usage of the facilities by the citizens of the area served. Conversely, the wrong location can reduce drastically the use of the library. In reality the library is a market place of ideas and it must be located where the greatest number of people who are most likely to use a library will walk past the library's front door. Essential also is easy access to a parking area for both county and city patrons who must drive to the library. It is desirable for the parking area to be included in a municipal parking facility for the library is not equipped to handle such a lot. With the library located in the downtown area, it is inevitable that it will be used for multiple purposes. A municipal parking lot should be located near or adjacent to the library and should expect about 125 cars daily for persons using the library. The bulk of this use will be in the afternoon and evening hours.

The library building should be designed so as to give greatest emphasis to the functional use it will be put to by both building so that its construction and the materials used will

the public and the staff. Great savings in operational costs and convenience to the public can be made in the preparation of the plans by careful planning in the early development of the building lay-out. The building should be so designed as to be adequate for the next 25-35 years and if possible should be designed so that an addition can be put on at a later date, should that be necessary. This will require thought as to not only the initial layout, but also as to what can be done should an addition be required. Such plans will undoubtedly call for a minimum of permanent interior walls.

If such a plan is adopted, extremely careful planning will be required as to: 1) the floor plans in relation to the total use of the building once the building is finally completed; 2) a careful scheduling of building phases to match the growth of the library business in order to provide for an orderly expansion without inconveniencing either the public or the staff; and 3) the provision for a fiscal program to permit such a program. Should it not be possible to come up with a practical plan along these lines, then the entire building should be built at once, allowing for the growth of the library and its services for the next 25-35 years.

Another essential is that the building should be so designed aesthetically that the building will be a focal point and a contribution to the architecture of the city.

Thought should also be given, in the planning of the building so that its construction and the materials used will



mean that future maintenance costs will be kept to a minimum. It is far better to put more money annually into the book resources and the services given by the library, than into the upkeep of the building.

The Stanford L. Warren building appears to be in excellent shape structurally. More reader space could be used at the busy hours and more importantly, more bookstacks are needed, especially for the extension services. Before final plans are made, a careful study should be made to see where duplication is necessary between the collection in this building and the titles in the Durham Public Library.

An extremely critical situation, however, faces the Durham Public Library as to its facility. There simply is not enough space for the readers, for the collections nor for the staff. In fact the situation is serious, impossible and plans, even though temporary, must be made to alleviate the situation if this library is to fulfill its normal functions. A new main library is called for immediately. Until a new main library is built, it is imperative that approximately 20,000 square feet be obtained on a lease arrangement and the Durham Public Library be moved into commercial quarters in the most favorable area possible. With its staff, collections and services divided between two buildings and on two levels in one, adequate service cannot be given. There is so little reader space, that already

people must stand in order to do reference work and study books in the library. Nothing is adequate about the present arrangement in spite of every effort on the part of staff and the Board to make do with what they have.

The present cramped, crowded and non-functional areas require the leasing of new quarters at the earliest possible moment -- by the end of this year at the latest and certainly before another new school year. If satisfactory quarters can be found, two things might be done to offset the rental cost of new quarters. The present main building could be leased and the annex building be torn down and the entire ground area in back of the main library be leased for a parking lot on a commercial basis. The income thus derived could be applied toward the cost of the lease on the new quarters. The leasing of commercial space certainly is feasible and not without precedence, for very satisfactory arrangements have been made in Raleigh.

In the meantime, plans should go forward toward the planning of the new main library building. For the population served, provision should be made for not less than 35,000. sq. ft. Full provision should be made for both county and city requirements. The cost to build and equip such a building should run to about \$600,000 - 750,000. It is not too early to begin the preliminary thinking necessary to the securing of a building. The services of a competent architect should be obtained at the earliest possible moment, for he should be consulted in the acquisition of a site, as his advice may well affect the construction costs and it is well



at the outset to avoid any unnecessary expense. Planning at this stage involves not only the design and layout of the building itself, but it is also necessary to plan for the acquisition of staff to select books for the new facility, for we have already noted that the book collections are inadequate. It will take as long to select, acquire, catalog and prepare the books for use as it will to build the building itself.

Let me reemphasize the urgent and imperative need to secure immediately, temporary quarters to relieve the present and impossible situation. It is essential to move all services to new quarters for to fragment either the library's services or its collections is to make for unsatisfactory services for the public and an equally unsatisfactory situation for the staff. Furthermore, it would not only be inefficient, it would result in an organization that would be more costly to operate.

#### Public Relations

To have books and library services and not to let people know what is obtainable is folly. There should be sufficient staff to permit news, radio and TV releases about new books, special events and ongoing programs for adults, story hours for children and regular library services. Funds should be provided for the publication of book lists on special subjects for the various age levels and for brochures telling about the library and its services. This will require the provision of funds for the preparation of the materials, the printing and distribution

of them. They should be placed in the hands of non-users of the library as well as regular library patrons. Emphasis should be given to the services that would be of value to commercial and industrial firms, to labor and to the professional people of the community. In addition to the above media, exhibits should be provided for constantly, not only in the library, but in store and bank windows, thus drawing attention to the library's resources and services.

### Finances

In order to accomplish what has been described and recommended, money will have to be secured for both the operating and the capital programs. As has been pointed out by the Durham League of Women Voters in a report on the Durham Public Library, whereas public library standards call for an expenditure of \$3.49 per capita for a county serving a city in a county of 100,000 people. This would call for a budget of approximately \$440,800 annually. The library budgets in Durham result in a much lower figure. The Stanford L. Warren receives funds at the rate of \$1.55 per capita and the Durham Public Library at the rate of \$1.12 per capita or an average for the city of \$1.26 for 1962. While this is more than the average for the state as a whole, it does not measure up to Charlotte (\$1.54); to High Point (\$1.76) or to City of Asheville (\$2.51). Fiscal support of a library is really a combination of the ability of the government to provide funds and its willingness to do so. Libraries like other cultural institutions have fewer vocal supporters, but government does have the



### Organization for Library Service

responsibility to provide for the educational and cultural facilities to enable all -- children, young adults and adults -- whether they be in school, at home, or in business, industry or on the farm, to have a means of self-improvement. There is no other community institution that can and does provide for services to all age groups to achieve this purpose.

To improve the library situation in Durham -- city and county - I recommend that the per capita support for library service be increased not less than \$25,000 annually for the next five years. If this be done, it will be possible to give to the people of this community modern library service. There is no reason why the present city - county support cannot be continued. The proportion of support may change as the county grows or even be eliminated should consolidation be effected. In addition from planning funds a competent, qualified architect should be secured to establish necessary cost figures for both the capital and annual operating budget estimates.

Such a program should provide for an orderly growth to meet the library service requirements under a new program. It would permit the Board of Trustees and the library administration to plan intelligently for a planned program of expansion. The dollars put into the library system should pay real dividends, not only to individuals, but also to the community served.

books and other materials can then be done at one time and in one place, thus saving a duplication of effort. Book budgets should be established annually according to the volume of

## Organization for Library Service

It is not, as Mrs. Maybury has already noted, necessary to solve all legal problems in order to have good library service. Nor should the arguments relative to city share vs county share be allowed to hold back the development of Durham's library system. It is my recommendation that steps should be taken as soon as possible to merge the two, now independent, libraries into one system. Both Boards should meet and agree as to the logical steps to be taken and legal advice sought as to such necessary ordinances and laws that might need to be enacted.

Under the new arrangement it would be well to have an active Board of seven members drawn from both of the present Boards and still maintaining a representation of membership representing both county and city residents. The members of the new Board should be dedicated to the building of a library system to meet the needs of all residents of the entire area.

Such a merger will call for important policy decisions to be made not only by the new Board, but also by the old Boards before they merge. Likewise the administrative staffs of both libraries will be involved and there is no problem that men of good will cannot solve. There will be many advantages. Book selection; the acquisition, cataloging and the processing of books and other materials can then be done at one time and in one place, thus saving a duplication of effort. Book budgets should be established annually according to the volume of



business transacted for each agency of the new library system, whether according to age level or location of the agency, thus insuring an equitable distribution of the book funds. Staffing would be provided in direct proportion as to the volume of work done or according to an estimated potential of work loads to be achieved in new agencies or under new conditions. Adjustments should be made annually in terms of changing conditions and volume of the work load. Cognizance should be made of the type of work and staff requirements for the different units within the library organization, whether in the main library, a branch or on the bookmobile, thus insuring within budget limitations an equitable distribution of staff. Older less used materials should be kept in one building, preferably the main library, with daily delivery service to other units of the system. This will provide rapid service to the borrower who cannot get to the main library. This will eliminate the need of housing older, lesser used materials in both libraries, thus freeing shelving for books with a greater use and turnover. Moreover, keeping lesser used materials in a closed stack collection means that the collections will be more "alive" and attractive to the readers.

The merged libraries should be known as the Durham Public Library and the building now occupied by the Stanford L. Warren Library could well be called the Stanford L. Warren Building, a branch of the Durham Public Library. It is customary in many city systems to name buildings other than the main library building after citizens who have made notable contributions to the community.

A director of libraries should be appointed to manage and administer the new public library system. It will call for a person of wide experience and education for the merging of two libraries will be a complicated problem to resolve. The present heads of the two libraries should continue their responsibility for the work that goes on in each main building. It would be wise to establish an advisory committee to the new director consisting of the major supervisors in each library, i.e. those in charge of the various activities -- either by age level or by type of work. This committee should assist the director in arriving at decisions relating to the preparation of policy statements for Board approval and to plan for library services, for programs and lectures for the public, for working with civic groups, for children's activities, for book selection policies and routines and for the general reorganization that will take place. Such an advisory committee will insure a smoother internal operation, for the supervisors will be in a better position to interpret new policies and routines to the staff.

Up to this point nothing of substance has been said regarding branch library services. In my opinion it will not be possible, within budget limitations, to accomplish what has already been outlined and to also develop a branch library system which will be satisfactory to both the public and the staff. Rather, I would recommend that where there are communities of approximately 10,000 people living within a radius of a mile or mile and a half, that Reading Centers, rather than branch libraries be



established. Such agencies would have more limited services than is ordinarily found in branch libraries. Rather than being staffed by trained librarians, persons who are college graduates, who have good book backgrounds and interests, and who have an ability to get along well with people, would be in charge. Essentially they will be advisors and counselors as to good reading. The clerical work of charging and discharging of books, the registration of borrowers, the housekeeping duties of keeping the library in order, would be the responsibility of the clerical staff. The book collections would consist of good current books for all age levels together with the popular classics of all times. The collections would contain approximately 10,000 volumes and any book which not used actively in the course of a year would be returned to the main library collection. The reference collections would be kept to a minimum and readers would be referred to the main library for reference work in depth and for the use of more specialized materials. There would be week day afternoon and evening hours, as required, and hours on Saturdays to meet the needs of those who work. The Reading Centers should be attractive, informal and convenient of access to the communities they serve. They would probably be located in rented, or rent free quarters in shopping centers.

To aid the Board of Trustees in carrying out its work, I recommend the establishment of an informal group to be known as the Friends of the Durham Public Library. Such a group should have a representative membership, should through nominal dues

dues raise funds for the further development of the library. Indeed, often they will be the catalyst whereby others will contribute to the welfare and growth of the library. This group can by means of lectures, programs and the like, publicize the work of the library and give those in charge of the library support to their endeavors. In addition strong support can come from many civic and service groups who are keenly interested in the growth and development of the library. Sometimes they approach the library, more often the Board or staff must go to them with their story and request for support. Usually they welcome projects for their interest and activity and the library family should never hesitate to tell their story to such groups.

### Cooperation

Because of the current explosion in the intensified use of libraries every where and in all kinds of libraries, and because so many library problems can be solved by cooperation, I further recommend the creations of a Durham Library Council. The Council's membership would include the administrators of the separate libraries of the area -- college, public school, special and university, and to this group I would add some trustees and lay people to directly represent the reader's point of view. This Council should meet three or four times a year; should have a stated agenda; should have sub-committees to study problems and report back to the Council for action; and should have some means for publicizing the achievements, goals and the problems of the libraries, both collectively and individually. At least one of



the meetings should include the head of each institution or agency represented on the Council. Until some such body as this can study the needs and requirements for total library service in a community, we will not make the contributions to society we could make with this type of cooperation. One of the chief advantages is that by cooperative action, through savings, the library dollar for each institution should go much further.

#### CONCLUSION

This study has been an attempt to bring practical, conservative recommendations to improve library service in Durham - county and city - within reasonable fiscal means of doing so. I believe this can be done at not too great a sacrifice by the community. The above goals have already been met and exceeded by many other communities the size of Durham -- and by some smaller and by many larger. It must be remembered that the public library is a unique institution -- no other one community service agency can or does accomplish as much for so many people. In a democracy we are free to use our libraries with no restrictions and the ideas and knowledge contained in books is available to all. There is a direct ratio between what we get out of our libraries as to what we put into them.