

## NORTH

## CAROLINIANS

### WELL REPRESENTED AT SELA

### IN MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

Tar Heel librarians were very much in evidence at the general and special sessions and in the exhibit area during the 23rd biennial conference of Southeastern Library Association in Miami Beach October 30 - November 2, 1968.

At the final business session of the conference Miss Cora Paul Bomar, Director of the Educational Media Section, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, turned the president's gavel over to Assistant North Carolina State Librarian Elaine von Oesen who is serving as SELA president during the 1968-70 biennium.

Other Tar Heels who participated in the conference sessions were Miss Emily Boyce, East Carolina University, outgoing chairman, School and Children's Librarians Section; Charles Adams, UNC-Greensboro, outgoing chairman, College & University Section; Dr. Doralyn J. Hickey, UNC-Chapel Hill, outgoing chairman, Southeastern Regional Group of Resource & Technical Service Librarians; Miss Margaret Kalp, UNC-Chapel Hill, who presented the report of the Resolutions Committee; Philip Ogilvie, N. C. State Library, who presided at the Joint ALA-SELA membership committee meeting; and Vince Anderson, Sandhills Regional Library, incoming chairman of the Public Library Section.

Two other North Carolinians recognized at the final business session were Dr. Jerrold Orne, UNC-Chapel Hill, editor of *Southeastern Librarian*; and Miss Charlesanna Fox, Randolph County Public Library, state representative on the SELA Executive Board.

Approximately 950 librarians, including several from Canada, registered for the conference at the Americana Hotel.

Significant actions of the conference included the decision to change individual membership dues from a fixed amount to a scale based on one's salary.

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## LIBRARIES "FOR WHAT"

By

B. C. CREWS, JR. AND VIVIAN ROBINSON

It is a known fact that many college and university libraries are used for activities for which they were not established. Hence, we wanted to know how common this problem was, and for what purposes libraries are being used outside the realm of regular

library activities. By regular activities we mean the selection, storage and utilization of books, periodicals, films, film-strips, micro-films and other non-book library materials.

Robert Lightfoot in his article, "Put It In The Library," mentioned that libraries he had encountered were used for dining halls, rifle ranges, dance halls, biology laboratories, presidents' offices, business offices, church publication offices, for conventions and for school registration purposes.<sup>1</sup>

The Lightfoot investigation revealed many uses of the library, but our survey which was made about eight years later indicated libraries were used for many additional activities, such as testing centers, television stations, post offices, general assemblies, movie theatres, alumni offices, faculty coffee lounges, museum and experiment station storage purposes.

This survey was limited to college and universities with enrollments between 2,000 and 4,000 students. Schools were picked at random from each section of the country. *American Universities and Colleges*<sup>2</sup> was the source used to select the list of colleges and universities to which our questionnaire would be sent.

The questionnaire consisted of eight major questions phrased in such a manner as to establish a valid use of the library building. The following questions were asked:

1. Are the facilities of the library reserved for library (study, research, etc.) purposes only?
2. Are there facilities provided within the library for activities other than those that are regularly carried on within the library?
3. Are meetings and conferences held that utilize facilities in the library other than those provided for such purposes?
4. Are reading rooms and other facilities provided for study and research closed to the student body for any of the following reasons: Meetings, Tests, Displays, Classes?
5. Indicate the total number of days the library was closed for the above reasons.
6. Do you feel that library facilities should be used for purposes other than library activities?
7. Are library staff members ever called upon to work in other areas of the campus?
8. Who is responsible for scheduling the use of the library facilities?

The questionnaires were sent to 200 colleges and universities throughout the United States in April 1966. One-hundred eleven returns were received (55.55 per cent). All returns were analyzable. Many replies were received with explanations.

## FINDINGS

The survey revealed 57% of the reporting libraries' facilities were used for library purposes only. Forty-three per cent indicated there were facilities within the library

which were used for other purposes, such as those indicated in the introduction. Many of the facilities, according to the respondents, were included in the original plans of the libraries. In other cases space was needed for certain activities and such space was available in the library. Twenty-three per cent said their library facilities are used for such activities as meetings and conferences. Eleven per cent indicated the entire library was closed at certain times for meetings, registration purposes, or displays. One library was closed for 10 days, another 6 days, for these purposes.

Sixty-nine per cent of the respondents felt the library should not be used for any purpose other than library use. Of the 31% that felt otherwise, 10% of those qualified their answers with such statements as, "We schedule an occasional examination in the reading room," or, "When convenient to library schedule," or, "One has to be reasonable about this, after all the library is a part of the college."

Twenty-one per cent of the respondents revealed their staff members are called upon to perform such duties as those of relief telephone operators, proctors for examinations, instructors and lecturers. Seventy-one per cent of those reporting indicated scheduling was done by the librarian or by his designated assistant. Twenty-nine per cent revealed scheduling for use of the library was done by a dean, superintendent of buildings and grounds, or some other officer of the school.

### CONCLUSIONS

It is unfortunate, but nevertheless true, that some libraries are being closed for meetings, tests and registration purposes and that libraries by design, or otherwise, are being used for such things as radio stations, presidents' offices, post offices, experiment stations, storage, etc.

This survey was made to determine how library facilities are being used outside the sphere of regular library activities. What was discovered was indeed surprising.

We do not contend the library building should never be used for non-library related activities, but we do feel that to deny students the use of a library for extended periods of time because of a conference or test is undesirable.

Academic excellence is what all students should be seeking and the chance for study and research should not be denied students under any circumstances. Libraries exist to serve present and future readers and that should always be the foremost thought in the mind of every librarian and administrator.

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Robert Lightfoot. 'Put It In the Library,' *Library Journal* 83:3123-25, August 1959.

<sup>2</sup>*American Universities and Colleges*, 9th ed. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education.

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