

Also, I should like to point out that there is no time limit, other than inconvenience, on reclassification. I feel that we owe a great deal to the patron of today, but I also feel that we owe equally as much to our successors and the patron of tomorrow. When I leave my present position I will be able to say with reference to the classification system that I have not dug the Georgia State College Library so deeply into a hole with a Dewey shovel that my successors will have a difficult time getting out.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND THE KNOWLEDGE EXPLOSION

by

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When we explore public library service we are talking about the heart of the state's education system, as the 1967 General Assembly recently affirmed.

After twelve years in public school, citizens in most North Carolina counties must turn for further learning during their remaining forty or fifty years to their public library. Moreover, when we talk education we are exploring North Carolina's major endeavor. Neither manufacturing, agriculture, nor service jobs outnumber the total number of workers in education.

Of our five million population, fully one citizen in four is at work in some form of education—student or teacher, trainee, or self-directed learner. Probably no state in the Union has such a high proportion of its citizens at work learning or teaching. And no form of industry yields such returns. Years invested in school and in college, as well as in most other learning programs, have the effect of doubling income for those who learn well in this age of rising technology.

When available tax funds are considered, North Carolina's education effort ranks high among the 50 states. And its schools show a good value for the taxpayer's money. Striving for a full generation to build statewide basic support for schools, we have risen to about two-thirds of the national average. North Carolina aims to provide in its schools the training to *learn how to prepare by further learning* for today's better jobs. North Carolina invests over \$400 per pupil each year to operate its public schools. Considering the total income of our people and what they can spare for taxes, this is a heavy investment in each young citizen.

Once out of school, how much safeguarding of this investment does each new citizen have spent on him by a state so concerned with education to earn a better living? Approximately 16¢ per year, unless he is in a county favored with a college or a technical institute. Almost the only learning materials open to him in most counties are in public libraries, pitifully small and understaffed.

Now let us explore North Carolina's education beyond the twelve school years. Here is where we drop from the \$400-plus per student per year to sixteen cents for the citizen who must turn to public libraries for further learning materials and guidance. To meet the needs of our citizens facing today's knowledge explosion, \$3.50 per capita can be used for operating public library service as a realistic national standard.

Compared to this, where does North Carolina stand? At just barely one-third of this

\$3.50 for each citizen, for library operating funds from all sources. For schools, we have passed the two-thirds level by national standards. For public libraries to continue this education, we have met only one-third the standard, and far below this in many counties. States with whom we would like to compete have three and four times the per capita library support we have. Twenty states show two or more times our per capita support.

North Carolina has followed for a generation the wise policy of basic statewide school support. But with libraries the inequalities are sad and surely unwise. From local sources my home library system gets \$1.94 per capita, while a neighboring county starves on 41 cents.

A saying of the good old days was "What you don't know doesn't hurt you". But in today's world of technology what we don't know hurts us terribly. Consider these stark facts:

In a nationwide ranking, North Carolina is about 40th in expenditures for education and 42nd in estimated teacher salaries. In library operating funds per capita latest available figures place us about fortieth. Does this undernourished state of knowledge hurt us? Well, the 1965 total income per capita list ranks us 44th. The industrial hourly wage rate rank was even lower.

Thus the angel of a fuller life is not sparing our first-born, or our second or third — and will not until we relieve the appalling famine on knowledge resources in most of our 100 counties.

Seeking a way out, we can find on two pages of our recent history a beacon to guide us. Half a century ago Tar Heel roads were a sorry patchwork. Like the journey through life today for many, a journey across the state was on roads depending upon local taxes for maintenance. Then as a state we got the facts, formulated a practical financial plan, and became a model for good roads. Half a century ago our public schools were a pathetic patchwork. Into the jaws of the depression of the thirties we marched, resolved to build a soundly financed statewide school system. And we have. The sound tax source and the statewide quality of staff have done this. Three more hopeful vistas can be raised in the form of questions:

1. Is it realized that in counties which have pushed library service near national standards the people do use this as the heart of our public education system? Registered library borrowers appear to outnumber the families with children in public school, and hours of library use show ten times the average use in poorly supported libraries.

2. Is it realized that by adding to public library support only one percent of the state's total budget for public education, that the quality of books and library service can soon be doubled?

3. Is it realized that for the first time in history our General Assembly has shown its concern by authorizing a Legislative Commission to study library support? Here lies the knowledge and the leadership to grasp the opportunity to work as a team with the Governor's Commission on Study of Public Schools, and with the Commission on Local Government.

The education bandwagon is rolling. I have been heard to say, "Let's get on it". I now change my admonition to "Let's get out and push".



ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS — Members of the Resources and Technical Services and College and University Libraries sections of NCLA held a joint session at the October conference. Major speakers were Leslie R. Morris, *head cataloger*, East Stroudsburg State College (Pennsylvania), and William Pullen, *director*, Georgia State College Library, Atlanta. Above are (l to r): Morris, Doralyn J. Hickey, *president* of Resources and Technical Services section, Pullen, and Merrill G. Berthrong, *president* of the College and University Libraries section.



LIBRARIANS AND TRUSTEES — This quartet participated in a panel at a joint session of the Association of Library Trustees and Public Libraries Section October 27. From left to right the gentlemen are: James D. Blount, Jr. of Rockingham, and George M. Stephens of Asheville, both *trustees*; *state librarian* Philip S. Ogilvie of Raleigh, and *Charlotte librarian* Hoyt R. Galvin. The fifth panelist — David Stick — was absent when this photo was taken.



EX-DEAN AND SUCCESSOR — Principal speaker at the first general session of the conference was Dr. Walter A. Sedelow, *dean*, School of Library Science, UNC at Chapel Hill, who attended his first NCLA conference. Shown above with Dean Sedelow is Margaret Kalp, faculty member and acting dean of the School of Library Science until Dr. Sedelow's appointment in 1967.



BOOK DEALER-LIBRARIAN CONFAB — The future of libraries might well be the subject under discussion by the two men shown above. Author and book dealer David Stick (l) of Kitty Hawk confers with Ray L. Carpenter (r) of the UNC-CH School of Library Science between conference sessions. Stick was a panelist at the joint meeting of the Association of Library Trustees and the Public Libraries Section.