LIBRARY EXHIBIT TIPS

By John Ellington*“

Purpose

Exhibits are used to sell. Whether the use of the exhibit is to provide knowledge or enjoyment, or both, unless it accomplishes this purpose by making an appeal to the public, it is useless.

The following are examples of specific purposes:

1. Circulation of books: Either new books or slow moving books brought to the attention of the public through attractive, simple exhibits.
2. Information
3. Civic group displays

Techniques

After the selection of the theme to be used, the selection of appropriate materials should be considered next.

There are certain objects, colors, and materials that are associated in the public mind with special days and events. Silver, red, and green combinations, and plastic foam for example, are associated with Christmas; orange and black with Halloween; and cherries and hatchets with Washington’s birthday. Pastel shades are usually asso-

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Materials which are available in most libraries would be construction paper, crepe paper, book jackets, books, letters, photographs, twine, and newspapers. With these basic materials plus imagination, glue and pins, an endless variety of attractive exhibits can be achieved. The exhibits should be in harmony with their surroundings. When making an exhibit, the place it is to be located, the color of the room, and architecture should be considered. The exhibit should not, however, blend into the background.

One very important point to remember at all times is that exhibits should be simple. Do not clutter or overdo a display, and keep the wording short, eye-catching, and to the point. Exhibit labeling is an art and should be carefully considered.

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BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

For several years the Arkansas librarians have been chartering a bus and travelling as a group to attend regional and national library conferences. They seem to be most enthusiastic about the idea and explain that the bus driver knows, as they pass through communities, that the librarians are looking for library buildings. He seeks out these buildings where they stop for a few minutes for a quick tour. This, added to the comradeship which develops through travelling as a group, suggests the possibility that such a chartered bus idea might be used by North Carolina librarians for Southeastern meetings, the A.L.A. meeting in Washington next year, and the A.L.A. meeting in Toronto in 1960.

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WOULD IT WORK IN NORTH CAROLINA?

The July issue of Montana Libraries had an announcement on a central exchange for gift books. The question naturally arises — Would it work in North Carolina too?

"Out of the two library workshops held this spring . . . has come a plan for the exchange of worthwhile gift books that duplicate volumes already in the receiving library's collection. The [Montana State Library Extension] Commission will serve as the coordinator for such an exchange. When a library gets gifts of books that ordinarily it would be glad to add to its collection but which duplicate titles or material it already has, it may offer these gifts to the Commission to be added to a Central Gift Exchange Stock. The library may either send a list of the books to the Commission or send the books, all of which should be in good condition and should not be 'dead wood.'

"From this stock, participating libraries can draw books to fill in lacks in their own collections. They may send the Commission want lists for specific non-current titles or may make requests from lists that the Commission will send out from time to time of the books that are in the Exchange Stock. Surplus books will be used to supplement the stock of beginning libraries. This will be a truly cooperative venture by which the libraries of Montana may share their resources, one with another."

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