

## THE NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY—COMMUNITY PROJECT

By PATRICK R. PENLAND\*

The North Carolina State Library has been awarded a two-year grant by the Library-Community Project of the American Library Association. The award of \$12,000 to each of two grant states was announced on July 17 at the 77th annual conference of the American Library Association in San Francisco, California. The grant states, North Carolina and Oklahoma, were chosen by the Special Projects Committee of the ALA Adult Services Division on the basis of the merit of their applications.

The grant is to be used by the North Carolina State Library to plan and develop a long-range library adult education program in cooperation with librarians, citizens' groups, organizations, agencies and institutions in North Carolina. The grant period is from September 1, 1958, to August 31, 1960.

The pilot library for North Carolina is the Cumberland County Public Library in Fayetteville. The librarian is Mrs. Dorothy Shue. The pilot library, in cooperation with citizens of Fayetteville and Cumberland County, will make a community study to determine the nature and extent of the educational resources for adults, and the educational needs and interests which are not being met. It will have the assistance of the State Library staff and of the consultant staff of the American Library Association. A library self-study will also be made to identify the scope of activities which the pilot library can plan. An adult education program based upon the findings of the self-study and a continuing identification of community interest will result.

In addition to its assistance to the pilot library, the North Carolina State Library will develop a broader adult education program. It will assist individual libraries or groups of libraries in North Carolina to develop their adult education programs, with plans for strengthening library adult education on a state-wide basis through state library association activities, special workshops and institutes. The State Library has already begun to give greater emphasis to adult education activities with the addition to its staff, July 1, 1958, of an adult services specialist who has begun to plan the execution of adult services programs with interested librarians around the State.

On August 8-11 an Orientation Meeting was held in Chicago by the Library-Community Project headquarters staff. The following people attended the meeting: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Hughey, State Librarian; Miss Elaine von Oesen, Extension Services Librarian; Mr. Patrick R. Penland, Project Director; Mrs. Dorothy Shue, Librarian, Cumberland County; Mrs. Harry Stein, vice-chairman Cumberland County Library Board; Mr. W. D. Snider, Greensboro Daily News; Mrs. C. C. Oates, Jr., Flat Rock. Mr. John Harden, Chairman, State Library Board, scheduled to attend found it impossible to be present.

One basic purpose of the Library-Community Project is to develop a background of experience at the state and local level which will serve libraries throughout the state after the ALA Library-Community Project terminates on August 31, 1960. Considerable care was taken at the Orientation Meeting in Chicago to provide an understanding of the objectives and history of the Library-Community Project. Adult needs in a changing society were considered in order to develop an understanding of the library's role in meeting such needs. The roles of both state and pilot libraries were outlined as well as L.C.P. activities appropriate at both levels.

The Library-Community Project takes the public library out into the community, and involves an ever expanding group of citizens in library activities. If the public

\*Director, North Carolina Library-Community Project, and Field Librarian in charge of Adult Services, North Carolina State Library.

library is to become a service institution for a larger proportion of the population than those who voluntarily seek it out, it will have to express its democratic function by making programs and activities a part of the community life. Success today, in public library service is measured in terms of the degree to which the library's programs meet the needs of the population at large.

A cooperative program gets underway as soon as the librarian actively joins the civic and social family. The Library-Community study has been developed to help the staff of a library devise methods for understanding the unstated needs of adults and of supplying the proper materials and programs. The North Carolina Library-Community Project has two phases. The first is the development of a long-range adult education program in the Cumberland County Library. The Fayetteville community will make a study of its resources in adult education. This study involves an inventory of the community's needs and resources. On the basis of this analysis a long-term plan for community centered adult education can be developed. In the second phase of the project appropriate activities will be commenced — programs that reach an ever widening circle of residents in the county.

The public library has a prime responsibility for the education of adults. Librarians teach by providing informal learning situations for individuals as well as groups. The public library not only collects and organizes materials in well administered collections but it collects and organizes information on the educational resources of the community. The modern public library is not content to perform its collecting function only. It is always eager to publicize and make easily available whatever materials and information are considered essential to the educational objectives of the library.

Contemporary functional public libraries, however small or large they be, devise and sponsor activities for individuals and groups. It is by these activities that libraries are recognizable as educational institutions. To satisfy community interest becomes the determining motivation as well as the goal. Community analysis of community needs is a major prerequisite. For many years librarians and others have made studies of library service and the community. Certainly such studies do benefit the person doing the survey. Rarely, however, do they make much impact upon the community because no group of citizens is involved in the actual study.

Public Libraries are no longer individualistic institutions. They value the team work approach to problems. The public library confers with other educational agencies and organized groups in the community. Through its program-planning service it helps create programs which meet interests and needs. It is often not sufficiently recognized that the program planner is, in this group-conscious society, creating the very environment in which the nation lives and works.

The Library-Community Project is designed to test the three following hypotheses about the contemporary functional public library. Activities should be planned to meet needs identified through communal, self-study of the community structure and its educational resources. Any library's ability to meet such needs should be determined by a study of library resources in relation to interests indicated in the community's self-study. Over a period of two years, the project should leave the local and State Library personnel involved better prepared to continue activities in library adult education.

Upon the background of experience gained in a two-year period the local and State Library will be better prepared to promote activities in library adult education. The Library-Community study is interested in the development of the public library as a major adult educational institution in the community. The resources and ex-

periences of the headquarters L.C.P. staff are available to any state through consultant service. Consultants are available for any kind of activity which will strengthen library adult education, especially in those areas that emphasize the educational objectives of adult service. Consultant service is offered to local libraries only at the request of a state agency, and when more than one local library is involved. The Library-Community study in the Cumberland County Public Library will leave the State Library in a better position to promote, through its Extension Services Division learning situations in adult education techniques for all librarians in the state. This training will be based upon intelligent identification of problems and scientifically controlled solutions.



Microfilming 25,741 author cards from the Sondley Reference Library to be added to the North Carolina Union Catalog at the University of North Carolina Library. The entire task of microfilming was accomplished in two hours. *Left to right*, Amos Campbell, Supervisor of the Bookkeeping Department, Wachovia Bank & Trust Company; Elizabeth Shepard, Head of the Sondley Reference Library; and Mrs. Arline Campbell, of the Library staff. This work was done at no cost to the Library as a public service of the Wachovia Bank & Trust Company. Asheville was the first city in the state to complete this task.