

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

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MID-CENTURY CONFERENCE SOUTHEASTERN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

October 11-14, 1950

The Southeastern Library Association opened its 14th biennial conference on October 11, 1950, at Atlanta Biltmore Hotel. The registration for the conference was about 650 with North Carolina librarians well represented.

The first general session was called to order by President Clarence "Skip" Graham on Wednesday evening the 11th. Mayor Hartsfield of Atlanta welcomed the assembled guests in the ball room of the hotel and John Mackenzie Cory, Executive Secretary, American Library Association, extended greetings from that organization.

The speaker of the evening was Dr. Allen D. Albert, Jr., Professor of Sociology, Emory University, who was introduced by Miss Evalene Jackson, also of Emory. In his address on "Leadership in the South," Dr. Albert cited the implications for this region in the revolution which has taken place in the agricultural world. Among other significant facts he noted the growth of factories and of city population, the increased value of farm produce with resulting higher incomes, and the creation of great potential markets of our own. These developments, he reminded us, offer challenge in

the fields of education, housing, health and citizenship.

Conceding that education and literacy are not panaceas for all of our problems, Dr. Albert nevertheless emphasized that education is a tool, and books are necessary fuel in the development and extension of citizenship.

Following the first general session the Atlanta Library Club and the Georgia Library Association jointly entertained at a charming reception at the Atlanta Biltmore.

General business sessions of the conference were held on Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings and were devoted almost entirely to discussions which culminated in the formal adoption of plans launched at the Louisville Conference whereby the Southeastern Library Association becomes a legal entity (incorporated in Georgia March 13, 1950) with a number of related purposes for ultimately improving library service of all types throughout the region.

Toward this end a constitution was adopted which authorizes the establishment of a headquarters office, employment of an executive secretary, issuing a quarterly journal and permits a wide variety of activ-

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ities for this new, unified and strengthened organization which replaces the loosely organized but affectionately regarded old "South-eastern."

At the closing general session on Saturday morning the following officers were elected: President, Dr. Louis Shores, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida; Vice President, Mrs. J. Henry Crosland, Georgia School of Technology, Atlanta; Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Robert Alvarez, Nashville Public Library.

One of the brightest hours of a well planned conference program was the closing banquet at which Samuel Gaillard Stoney of Charleston, South Carolina, was the speaker. Introduced by Miss Emily Sanders of the Charleston Free Public Library, Mr. Stoney entertained his large and appreciative audience with a series of Gullah readings.

There were so many helpful sectional meetings that lack of space prevents reporting on all of them. Prudence warns that we refrain from commenting on any since all cannot be described fully, but our personal enthusiasm for some leads us to risk mentioning a few.

Mrs. Frances Cheney of George Peabody Library School, speaking before the Reference Librarians Section, reported on a unique informal survey which she had recently conducted. Following unorthodox methods of refreshing originality Mrs. Cheney found Southern educational institutions extremely lax in giving students instruction in the use of libraries. However, she noted a helpful sign in the increasing number of faculty members who, themselves, sought information about reference

books from reference librarians. She expressed the belief that the general reference librarian "is definitely not on the way out," notwithstanding the increase in subject specialists. She likened present circumstances in the library field to similar conditions in the medical profession where the general practitioner holds his own regardless. She advised against spoon-feeding students who should learn library processes for themselves. Mrs. Cheney closed by warning that because of the increasing complexity of human knowledge the general reference librarian's job would become tougher and tougher but that the satisfactions would be proportionately greater.

At the same session of the Reference Librarians Section Miss Louise H. H. Patrick of the University of North Carolina Library speaking on "Interlibrary Loan Problems," cited facts and figures from many libraries which should form the basis whereby her hearers may determine the wisest course to pursue in solving this problem of growing seriousness in their respective institutions.

Another largely attended and enthusiastic sectional meeting was that of the School and Children's Library Section, the first session of which was attended by more than 125 librarians. In the absence of the invited guest speaker, Miss Marguerite Vance of E. P. Dutton & Company, a panel discussion, "Librarians Talk About Editors," was conducted by Miss Frances Cox. Head of the Boys and Girls Department, Atlanta Public Library and Secretary of the Children's Library Section of A. L. A., Miss Fannie Smith, School Library Consult-

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ant, Alabama State Department of Education, and Miss Evalene Jackson, Associate Professor, School of Library Science, Emory University. Miss Roxanna Austin, Chairman, Town-Union Regional Library, Young Harris, Georgia, presided at the session and acted as Moderator for the Panel. Miss Susan Caldwell, Librarian, Winthrop College Training School and Chairman South Carolina Committee to Study Standards for Elementary School Libraries, was elected Chairman of the School and Children's Library Section of Southeastern for 1951-52. The group then joined the Public Library Section to hear Mrs. Sidonie Gruenberg, an Associate Editor of the Junior Literary Guild, and author of "Favorite Stories for Boys and Girls" and "More Favorite Stories for Boys and Girls," discuss the modern woman's dilemma in obtaining equal and identical opportunities with men.

At the luncheon meeting of the School and Children's Section Miss Mae Graham, Library Adviser, Maryland State Department of Education and President of the Division of Children and Young People of A. L. A., spoke on "Common De-

nominators of Service to Children and Young People." She was introduced by Miss Sarah Jones, Georgia State Department of Education. Miss Roxanna Austin presided. Important meetings of the section were the pre-session review of books for children and young people with reviews being given by Mrs. Agnes Gregory, Florida State University Library School; Mrs. Martha Neal Warth, Cataloging Staff, Charleston Free Public Library, and Mrs. Ruth Schaeffer, High School Librarian, Ozark, Alabama.

Fruitful meetings of the Catalogers Section, Public Libraries Section, and College and University Libraries Section were well attended as were a number of social affairs. These included a tea on Thursday afternoon given by President and Mrs. Blake Ragsdale Van Leer at the President's house of Georgia Tech, a tea on Friday afternoon, given by the Trustees of the Decatur-DeKalb Library at the library in Decatur, and tours to various libraries in the Atlanta district.

More than thirty commercial exhibitors contributed a great deal to the enjoyment of the conference both educationally and socially.