



CUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, FAYETTEVILLE, N. C.

A NEW BUILDING FOR THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Moving from a building constructed in 1838 as a Town Hall and Market House into a 1952 structure of contemporary design, planned only for library service, is quite a leap, but the Staff and patrons of the Cumberland County Public Library took it all in stride when such a move was made last February. Indeed the pains and problems of transporting 20,000-odd volumes into their new home were submerged in the thrill of anticipation at the prospect of plenty of space, light, and equipment—and no stairs.

These and many more advantages were happily included in the new building erected for the Cumberland County Public Library. A building effective for the most complete library service within the realm of available funds was the aim of the planners of the program, and the end toward which Library Board, architect, and librarian worked continuously. Each phase of the Library's service was examined, both separately and in its relation to the whole, and the desirable percentage of the building's space for each, and relative position to each other, was worked out accordingly. These studies served as a guide to the architect who supplied the technical know-how, translating library ideals of service to those architectural lines and measurements known as plans and specifications.

Because funds were limited it was decided that every dollar spent must count toward making available complete library service. Two plans were drawn—one on strictly functional lines and one according to colonial architecture which many felt was desirable because of Fayetteville's colonial history. It was found that the former would provide one-third more space than the colonial for the same amount of money; hence, tradition bowed to functional economy and the contemporary design was adopted.

Chief departments of the Library are the Adult Reading and Reference Room, the Stack Room, the Children's Department, Bookmobile Department, and a "Multipurpose" Room. In addition there are the librarian's office, workrooms, staff room and the boiler room.

The front lobby leads directly into the large reading and reference room, in which is also located the main circulation desk. This room has a ceiling sixteen feet in height and the front wall is of glass. Very high clerestory windows are on the opposite wall and there are no windows on the side wall, thus giving unbroken shelving space on two walls. Spaciousness and light predominate in this room, with the severity of functional lines softened by the use of full length draperies at the front windowed wall, sectional lounge furniture arranged in curved groups, and the use of end and coffee tables in addition to the regular library tables. The large seven-unit, U-shaped circulation desk, which has the workroom and librarian's office at its rear, is located between front entrance and stack room for convenient returning and checking out of books. The walls of the room are a soft rose-tan, with woodwork a darker blending of the same color.

This color is carried into the stack room which is 70 feet in length and 23 feet wide. Fifteen double-faced twelve-foot stacks were purchased for this room. There is space for two additional such stacks and for 75 feet of wall shelving.

Three doors lead from the stack room—one into the children's room, another to the multipurpose room and the third to the bookmobile department at the rear. The children's room, with walls of soft yellow, also has large window areas on the outside wall. This is probably the spot in the Library which appeals to most people and which brings forth most expressions of delight. Six-foot shelving lines the walls and atop this are colorful book characters made by Lelia Humble of the Library Staff. Parchment-colored draperies appropriately printed with ships, whales and maps hang at the windows.

A picture book nook is formed by the use of a six-foot double-faced counterheight shelf placed perpendicular to the wall shelves. Here are the two smallest tables with 8 tiny chairs and low stools. It would be amiss to neglect mentioning a highly popular item in this room—an electric drinking fountain.

The side entrance lobby has one door leading into the children's room and another into the multipurpose room, thus providing access to both of the departments without disturbing readers in the adult reading room. The multipurpose room has high windows which allow wall space for art exhibits. It is equipped with a motion picture projector and screen and a combination radio-record player. Three large closets are used as storage space for 100 folding chairs and other equipment. Since the opening of the building on March 1, 1952, three exhibits of paintings and one of sculpture, in addition to film-showing and meetings, have been held in this room.

Accessibility and convenience are the keynotes for the bookmobile department at the rear. Because it is on the same level with the remainder of the building, books may be easily transported from stack room to bookmobile. The garage also has wall shelving on either side for quick replenishing of books on the bookmobile. A workroom for bookmobile staff is separated from the garage by glass windows. Opening also from the bookmobile room is the comfortable staff room, and the storage room for cleaning equipment which leads into the boiler room.

The Library is equipped throughout with Library Bureau shelving, tables and chairs of birch finished in softone. With the rose tan of walls and woodwork, the effect is one of harmony and beauty. One grouping of lounge furniture in the main reading room is of green plastic and the other of beige. The full-length draperies are of luxurious green interspersed with black, white and gold.

The task of moving into this new home was lightened not only by the pleasures of anticipation but also by a situation of unexpected humor caused by our mode of moving. It was found that for containers of books nothing was more ideal than the empty whiskey boxes which, in addition to being just the right size and shape, were available in practically unlimited supply at the local ABC stores. As load after load of these cartons were brought into the Old Market House and stacked to the ceiling, almost blocking the doorway, patrons thought the whole idea very amusing indeed. Staff members survived many and varied witticisms on this count, and learned to make some pretty good ones themselves.

Although it required a thousand whiskey cartons, plus the combined muscles of six library staff members and a crew of four of a local moving van, the transfer from the old to the new was accomplished in five hours. The packing of the books in the cartons, which were carefully labelled and stacked in as correct order as was possible, consumed a week, and the unpacking, placing on new shelves and arranging of supply and workrooms, another five days.

The move was the culmination of a long period of planning, waiting and "making-do." For almost forty-five years the library occupied the Market House. In 1907 it opened there as a subscription library and operated as such until 1932, when it became free to Fayetteville residents and to the County in 1933. Under the sponsorship of the W.P.A. a bookmobile began operation in 1941 and in 1942 a Negro branch was organized and opened as the James Walker Hood Library. In 1945 the County voted a special library tax, making 5c on the \$100 dollar valuation legal for library use. The book collection began to grow, increasing from 8,000 volumes in 1941 to 27,000 by the end of 1951. Space was becoming an acute problem. Attempts at various times has been made to secure money and location for new library quarters, but had not met with success.

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

In October 1949, the estate of Miss Emma Hollingsworth made \$45,000 available to the city of Fayetteville for the erection of a new library building. The City Council of Fayetteville immediately allocated an additional \$75,000 for this purpose, and a property exchange with the City Board of Education provided a lot on Anderson Street, 75 feet wide by 212 feet deep. This lot is ideally situated, being only 1½ blocks from Hay Street, the center of the business section.

Basil G. F. Laslett, architect of Fayetteville, was asked to draw plans for the library building, and on March 8, 1951 the City Council opened bids for the construction of the building. Contracts awarded were as follows:

General construction, L. P. Cox Company of Sanford	\$81,350.00
Electrical work, Economy Electric and Supply Company of Charlotte	11,250.00
Plumbing, Standard Plumbing and Heating Company of Fayetteville	3,350.00
Heating, L. H. Bramble Company of Fayetteville	8,582.00
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	\$104,532.00

In August 1951, equipment contract was awarded the Fayetteville Office Supply Company, who agreed to furnish Remington Rand shelving, desks, tables and chairs, and in addition a motion picture projector and screen, combination radio-record player and 108 folding chairs for \$13,512.70. At a later date, "extras" such as lounge furniture and draperies were purchased by the Library Board.

Construction of the building proceeded with dispatch. To prevent long periods of delay, the architect had wisely avoided when possible specifying materials known to be scarce or on priority lists at that time. A six-weeks wait for steel at the beginning was the only work stoppage encountered during the construction period. Undoubtedly, the highly successful library building is the result of the combined efforts of architect, contractor and employees, who cooperated in every way with Library Board and librarian.

Construction of the building was completed January 31, 1952 and the Library opened for service March 1, 1952.

—MRS. DOROTHY EVANS SHUE, *Librarian*
Cumberland County Public Library, Fayetteville