

CLINTON-ESSEX COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICE SYSTEM  
NEWSLETTER

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Vol. 4, No. 2

With all Annual Reports in and evaluated, it has been possible to take stock of the System's first year of full operation. The picture is most encouraging.

The twenty-one member libraries, the Bookmobile, two book stations and the Book Pool, circulated a total of 288,740 volumes to the residents of Clinton and Essex counties. This represents an increase of approximately seventy-five percent over 1954.

The inter-library loan service offered by the System has proven most popular. Nearly ten thousand volumes were processed through the headquarters as loans to and between member libraries to fill special requests. This is in addition to the rotating collections of light fiction which are furnished to each member library automatically six times during the year.

Every member librarian has taken advantage of the professional advisory service maintained by the Headquarters Staff. Miss Walter is the consultant for problems of administration, Mrs. Manwell assists librarians with problems of cataloguing and classification, while public relations questions are referred to Miss Ingalls.

We are happy to welcome a new staff member. Miss Marie Chauvin joined the Headquarters family on February 15th. Marie works part time, assisting Mrs. Llewellyn in the processing department.

On Saturday, February 16th, the Bookmobile participated in Saranac Lake's Winter Carnival Parade. Miss Esther Mirick, President of the Saranac Lake Friends of the Library, issued the invitation to the System. Miss Walter and Mr. Harnden accompanied the Bookmobile, which was on display prior to the parade.

The Trustees of the Plattsburgh Public Library will hold an Open House on Monday afternoon, March 4, at 4 o'clock, in the Reading Room of the Library, in honor of Frank A. Cooper of Plattsburgh. Mr. Cooper is the author of "Mr. Teach Goes to War," a teen-age historical novel just published by McGraw-Hill.

The Bible in Braille is available at the Plattsburgh Public Library, and may be borrowed by any member library. It was presented to the library by the Plattsburgh Lions Club.

Since Lent will begin on March 6th, we suggest that librarians who are planning Lenten Reading Shelves set up their displays soon. The Headquarters staff will be glad to suggest titles, as well as fill specific requests.

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BOOK NOTES

LAURA INGALLS

A book that interested us very much is, "The Iron King," by Maurice Druon. Philip IV of France was a terror. His good looks were equalled only by his utter cruelty to those unfortunate enough to incur his wrath, which was easy to do.

The action takes place during the last few months of his reign, immediately following the suppression of the Sovereign Order of the Knights Templar.

As might be expected, King Philip's court was a seething mass of intrigue, hatred and malice. To his daughter, Isabella of England, and his cousin, Robert of Artois, belongs the dubious distinction of sowing the seeds of a war that lasted more than a hundred years. No one could call this a soothing bedtime story. It is vigorous and lusty.

Isabel Smith fought a long war of her own here in our northern New York. In 1928 she arrived at Saranac Lake on a stretcher, expecting that in two years at the most, she would be "cured." The two years stretched to twenty-one, most of which was spent in bed.

How anyone could remain as cheerful as she did is incomprehensible to us, especially since she was plagued with serious financial problems. Being human, she had her moments of bleak despair, but on the whole she developed a contentment that any of us might envy.

There is nothing "Pollyannaish," about "Wish I Might." It is a well-told, dramatic story of a woman who loved every minute of life, and had no intention of leaving it. We are sincerely glad for her that her story has a happy ending.

Shirley Jackson's "Raising Demons," is one of the most amusing books we've read in a long time. Like "Life Among the Savages," this is an account of life in the Jackson menage, where there is certainly never a dull moment. Everything that happens there apparently happens in technicolor. For example, how many of us ever caught a mouse by its tail in a kitchen drawer? In all fairness, we must admit that this happened only once, even to Mrs. Jackson, who, in private life, is Mrs. Stanley Edgar Hyman.

In some ways, Paul Wellman's "Jericho's Daughters," is a rather chilling book. Had Mrs. Simon Bolivar Butford and Mary Agnes Wedge been poverty stricken, they would undoubtedly have been disagreeable, but comparatively harmless. As it was, between them they had practically the money in the world, which, with the power it bestowed, enabled them to be cruel, ruthless, and, in Mrs. Butford's case, sinfully stupid. Whatever it might think of them privately, most of the town fawned on them publicly, which, of course, they considered only proper.

We are pleased to report that there are a few very likeable characters in the book, who bring up the town's average considerably.

"Jericho's Daughters" portrays mostly the seamy side of life and society, but it is a well written and significant novel.

Another unusual book is, "The Last of Britain," a novel about the last stand of Roman civilization in Britain. It tells the story of several noble Briton families, struggling against the Saxon invader, but defeated before they began by the decadent and corrupt society in which they lived.

The central figure is Lucius Candidian, last ruler of Bath. He had never wanted to be a prince, but, since he was, he did his best to uphold the once proud Roman traditions. Unfortunately, his worst enemies were in his own family, and household.

The author is Merial Trevor.