

STATE LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Very little is known about the earliest libraries in New Mexico or about their administration, but from the figures of the censuses taken in the territory, there were more libraries than public schools. The libraries were sponsored by clubs and churches who were, in essence library committees or trustees.

In 1860, there were listed fifteen public libraries, and in 1870, there were eighty-three private and thirty "other than private ." One of these 'other than private' was the Territorial Law Library, and one was the St. Michael's College library founded in 1859 by the Christian Brothers under the direction of Bishop Lamy.

The first public library in New Mexico about which anything definite is known was established at Cimarron in 1881, by the director of the Maxwell Land Grant Company.

In 1908, Mrs, Julia Brown Asplund, Chairman, voiced the hope that libraries established in the schools might eventually be given into the custody of a state library commission.

In 1915, Senate Bill No. 156 was passed which provided for the management of this library. Section I reads: "There is hereby created a Board of Trustees which shall consist of the Chief Justice and Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New Mexico, who shall have the management, control and supervision of the State Library."

Chapter 199, Laws of 1929, Section I, created a State Library Extension Service for New Mexico. The purpose of this service was to give advice and counsel to all public libraries and to communities desiring to establish free libraries.

"Section I. There is hereby created a State Library Extension Service for New Mexico with headquarters at the Museum of New Mexico at Santa Fe. The Board of Regents of the State Museum of New Mexico shall appoint a director of the State Library Extension Service who shall have professional training and experience."

In October, 1948 the Trustees Division of the American Library Association urges all State Library Associations to organize their library board members into affiliated divisions. The New Mexico State Library Commission, believing that such an organization would be of great benefit to the libraries of the state, authorized its chairman, who was also a Director of the A.L.A. Trustees Division, to make the necessary preliminary arrangements.

"All members of library boards and committees in the state were invited to attend the session of the New Mexico State Library Association which held its annual convention in Albuquerque, October 15th and 16th of that year. October 15th, there was a meeting of the board members, at which time a state organization was made.

In 1932, Mrs. Asplund, Director of New Mexico State Library Extension Service,

published the first New Mexico Library Bulletin in which she states:

“I wish to make this little periodical for the Extension Service - - but also a source of information and help to all librarians and members of library boards.”

In 1949, Mrs. Asplund, Chairman of the State Library Commission received the American Library Association Trustee's Award for her contribution to the growth of State Libraries.

Recommendations for citation for trustees of both large and small libraries was made at the A.L.A. Annual Conference at Minneapolis-St. Paul in 1954. It was suggested that awards be mailed to the Jury on Citation of Trustees, American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago Illinois.

Recommendations were to be accompanied by a full record of the candidates achievements, and could be submitted by any library board, any individual library trustee a state library association, a state trustee organization, a state library extension agency or by the Trustees' Section of the A.L.A . Public Libraries Division.

In July 1955, Library trustees took action to revitalize their activities by adopting a new set of by- laws:

1. To study and encourage the development of libraries and library service in the United States and Canada.
2. To study the library programs of the several states and Canada and to disseminate the information gained from such study; and to strengthen state trustees organizations .

In 1956 there was established a State Assembly of Library Trustees, designated as a place where the States could bring their problems for discussion, and carry back to local and regional groups the experiences of other states, Delegates from State Assemblies were to meet in a National Assembly of Library Trustees at the Kansas City Conference the following summer.

The State Assembly of Library Trustees Action Program of 1956-57 was for the purpose of developing State Trustees Organization, helping develop State Plan for new revised standards, proper use of Federal funds, establish a 5-year time table of accomplishments to educate the public - - via “Operation Library” and other publicity, to plan State and Regional trustee meetings, to build membership in ALA (at least one member per trustee board), to prepare a new bulletin - “The Library Trustee” and to prepare a handbook for library Trustees.

The Marion W. Dorroh Memorial Scholarship was made available in 1961 to promote the library profession of New Mexico Library Association. Five area workshops for public library trustees were sponsored by the Trustees Division of NMLA and the New Mexico State Library Commission.

Recruiting for librarianship, long range aspects, was the general aim of The Public Library Trustees in the winter 1964.

The New Mexico Library Bulletin summer 1966, gave as one important duty of a Library Trustee, membership in State and National organizations.

The State Library Commission met nine times during the year 1967- 68. Its Policy Manual was completed after many months of work and revision. It heard the review of applications for Federal funds and building plans for two public libraries, and approved the Federal grant for their construction. The Commission, as the Board of Librarian Certification, approved professional librarian certification for six candidates. One candidate was certified Grade I Librarian by examination, and five candidates were granted temporary certification.