

HISTORY OF THE NEW MEXICO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION--PRESENTED BY  
Miss Wilma Shelton, at the 14th Annual Meeting of the Association.

Miss E. Sue Goree, former librarian, Santa Fe Public Library, Evlyn Shuler, Librarian, Raton Public Library, Mrs. N. F. Dixon, former librarian, Albuquerque Public Library, and Miss Shelton met at the home of Mrs. Dixon in December 1923 to talk over library problems. During the course of the afternoon the New Mexico Library Association was organized with Miss Shuler as President, Miss Goree as Secretary, and Mrs. Dixon as Treasurer. The first meeting was held in Santa Fe on August 24, 1924, in connection with the Southwestern Library Association's Third Biennial meeting.

The second meeting was held at Albuquerque on November 8, 1924, in connection with the New Mexico Educational Association. At the library round table Miss Goree presented the subject, "Training High School Students for more Joy Reading and less Joy Riding," which included, in part, books from babyhood, the introduction of the book world to the students, the choice of books for school library and the joy of reading. Miss Shelton talked on the "High School Debating League and the Library" taking up the purpose and nature of such an organization telling how greater interest in public questions, and more efficient citizenship could be fostered, explaining how, the League could be effectively carried on in New Mexico and how the Library could render more adequate service through such an arrangement.

At the third meeting held in Albuquerque on November 7, 1925, Mrs. Mary H. Snobarger, then librarian, New Mexico State Teachers' College, spoke on "Teaching the use of reference books to students," and Miss Shelton spoke on "The Library Laws."

Nine teachers and librarians of the state met at the Santa Fe Public Library on November 6, 1926 for the fourth session of the Association. A business meeting was held at the home of Miss Goree, newly elected president. It was voted to draw up a constitution, for which Miss Shelton was chairman, Mrs. May Holt Snobarger and Miss Elizabeth Cooley were other members of the committee. Plans for a survey of library conditions in New Mexico were discussed and it was voted, as a preliminary to this and also to arouse and crystallize interest and desire for libraries, to appoint Miss Goree chairman of a publicity bureau, Miss Goree to appoint a reporter in each county to gather news items of local libraries, these were to be edited and combined in a monthly bulletin which should be sent to the libraries and local New Mexico newspapers. At the request of the New Mexico Library Association and through the efforts of Miss Goree and Miss Bedinger, plans were made for a New Mexico field trip by Miss Julia Wright Merrill, the American Library Association field worker, who visited Roswell, Gallup, Albuquerque, Santa Fe and State College from April 20<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 1927. She spoke on "Library Needs in New Mexico" and quoted what had been done in other states, and showed that it was perfectly feasible for New Mexico to follow their example. She demonstrated that a system of county libraries unified under the guidance of a state agency, was what worked best in the rural states. She then outlined the steps in getting this state agency. The first was to arouse interest and a desire for libraries. The New Mexico Library Association had been doing this with success. The next step, which was what we were ready for then, was to decide the form of help needed. The final step was to get action from the legislature.

After Miss Merrill's speech and the discussion which followed, it was moved that the President appoint a library council to consider plans for promoting library service in New Mexico. It was decided that the name of this council should be the New Mexico Library

Extension Program Council. The purpose of the council was to further library service in New Mexico. Miss Goree asked ten men and women representing different organizations to be on the council. The duties of the council included:

1. To make a survey of libraries in New Mexico
2. To study the library systems of other states.
3. To be prepared to give publicity to the subject of libraries as often as the occasion presented itself--through the press, at local, district and state meetings of the organizations of which they were members, and whenever called upon to talk on educational topics.
4. To determine the system best suited to New Mexico and to further legislative action when the members of the Council think that it is time to establish a unified system.

The fifth annual meeting was held in Albuquerque, November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 1927, the public library. One meeting was devoted to the public libraries the other to school libraries. The following constitution as submitted by the committee and approved by the association:

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One of the significant parts of the fifth annual meeting as the report of Miss Goree. As chairman of the publicity committee Miss Goree reported news of New Mexico libraries and book lists being published at regular intervals by the state papers, radio talks over the State College broadcasting station every two weeks, as well as articles in several monthly publications having large circulations in the state. The present county library law which was secured in 1925 through the efforts of the association and the New Mexico Federation of Woman's Clubs was published in pamphlet form by the Association and was distributed to school superintendents and club women.

The sixth annual meeting was held. in Albuquerque November 1-2, 1928. Effective methods of library advertising, Spanish and Mexican literature, and library extension for New Mexico were some of the subjects emphasized. The Library Association, together with the legislative committee of the New Mexico Federation of Woman's Clubs secured the passage of a law in 1929, which created our present State Library Extension Service .

The seventh annual meeting was held at the State University October 31 - November 1, 1929. Librarians were greatly encouraged by the number in attendance at their meeting. The president's address, "Forward steps in New Mexico Library Service," by Miss Wilma L. Shelton, sounded the keynote of the meeting. She spoke in part of the need for working for high school libraries and the desirability of a union catalog of New Mexico material. Dr. Arthur Campa, who is doing research work on the folklore of the state gave most interesting talk on "Folklore of New Mexico." Mrs. Rupert Asplund, the first director of the State Library Extension Service, in a talk on "The New Mexico Extension Program" told what had been done by the newly organized extension service of the state and what could be developed from these beginnings.

New Mexico was very fortunate in having Mr. Milton J. Ferguson, then State Librarian of California, meet with them. His visit came at a most opportune time, when New Mexico was just beginning her state extension service. Both in his talk "Successful library extension methods" and in open discussion later, Mr. Ferguson gave many valuable and practical suggestions for the development of our state extension service.

The eighth annual meeting was held November 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 1930 in Albuquerque. Library extension, adult education, small libraries round table and a high school library section were featured in the program. Mrs. Asplund reported on the entertainment of the American Library Association group which stopped in Santa Fe while en route to the A.L.A. in Los Angeles.

The ninth annual meeting was held in Santa Fe on November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Miss Helen Kennedy, second library assistant of Los Angeles Public Library, talked on the "Country Library System of California:", Malcolm Wyer, librarian, Denver Public Library, talked on "Training for Librarianship," and Mary Austin, author, Santa Fe, presented a talk on "Literature of the Southwest." The auditorium of the museum was filled with teachers, librarians, and others interested in Mary Austin.

The tenth annual meeting was held in Roswell , November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 1932. Through the generosity of Mr. Bagshaw the programs for the meeting were printed and through the courtesy of Colonel Pearson, superintendent of the Military Institute, the librarians were luncheon guests at the school. Library extension as the theme with emphasis on state library extension department, county library law, book service to the Indians and the sick people of our state.

The eleventh annual meeting' as held in the High School Library November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1933 in Albuquerque. Miss Harriet Howe, director of the Denver Library School spoke on "School Library Standards." Miss Frances Gillmor talked on "Southwestern Literature." Mrs. Catherine O'Connor, Albuquerque, reviewed the outstanding plays of the year

The twelfth annual meeting as held in the Santa Fe Public Library on November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1934. Mrs. Elizabeth DeHuff, Mrs. Ruth Laughlin Alexander, Mrs. Alice Corbin Henderson, and Miss Roberta Robey, and Mrs. Van Stone spoke on Southwestern Literature and Southwestern Artists. Miss Shelton reported on the joint meeting or the Southwestern Library Association and Regional Conference held at Memphis. Miss Goree, director of the County Library organization in Texas, talked on state and national library planning.

The 13<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Association as held in the Albuquerque High School Library on October 31 and November 1, 1935. Adult education and library extension and a literary program with Haniel Long and Dr. Pierce were the chief features of the program.