

VANPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

VANPORT CITY BRANCH
PORTLAND - 17 - OREGON

REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 1945.

The marriage of one of our typists, and her decision to accompany her sailor husband to Bremerton, left us short of staff during February and left the schools without a cataloger. It bothered us to see the new school books standing on the shelves, so we suggested to Miss Heyerdahl that this would be a good time for the school librarians to assume responsibility for their own cataloging. Typewriters and shelves were moved out of our workroom promptly, and we now feel as though we have a new and much larger room to work in. We have not as yet been able to find a part-time person for clerical work and this has sometimes made our evening schedules rather hectic, but we do not believe our routines have suffered.

The Girl Scouts, as part of their community service project, have offered to try to bring in our overdue books. We have given them names and addresses of borrowers, but so far we have not had any response. We are still hopeful, however. Part of our spring house-cleaning program will be another staff tour of the project for the same purpose. The housekeeping department, in response to our impassioned pleas, this week sent in some extra janitors to clean our shelves and wash the soot off our walls. We are truly grateful, even though we are afraid the janitors are not exactly book-minded. We found dozens of books upside down on the shelves after the workers had left:

Mrs. Sallila, the clerical assistant at East Vanport, reports that "it has been especially interesting to note the influx of Negro borrowers since another Negro person has been added to the staff of the community building. These new people ask particularly for books on their own race." During February, we went over to East Vanport

to inspect the room in the store which we have asked the Housing Authority to let us use for a library. We feel sure the location will greatly increase the circulation of books so we hope that we may be able to move in during March.

Amazing incidents occur frequently, and we were quietly convulsed by the woman who asked us for poems by "Rockefeller." But too many of our contacts with patrons seem to us to border on the pathetic or even tragic. For example, last week a woman came in with cuts all over her arms. The assistant jokingly asked her if she had been in a fight. She replied soberly, "Yes, and these cuts were made with a razor blade!" Another girl who has been a library borrower for more than a year asked to use our large dictionary the other day. Soon she called the librarian over and asked her to read a definition. The word was "hypo-mania", and she said, "I went to a doctor yesterday and when he went out of the room, I read what he had written on his chart. This is the word. Does it mean that I'm crazy?" We talked to this girl for a long time and concluded that, while she was badly upset emotionally, there was nothing wrong with her that a good environment and a little personal happiness would not cure. We hesitated to recommend a book but finally gave her "Be Glad You're Neurotic" and a book of cartoons!

During the month the librarian spoke in Portland at a meeting of the professional women's group of A.A.U.W. The column which we are now doing for the Vancouver Sun and the Shipbuilder, in addition to the one we write for the Oregonian, has been appearing in both papers regularly. We have had excellent response from Vanport people who have read it in the Shipbuilder and the books mentioned are often asked for.

Respectfully submitted,

Eleanor Touhey
Eleanor Touhey, Librarian