

## INFORMATION ABOUT

## THE YAKIMA VALLEY REGIONAL LIBRARY

## WHY DO WE NEED A NEW REGIONAL LIBRARY BUILDING?

The present library building was built in 1906 with funds provided by Andrew Carnegie. It was built to serve a population of 10,000, it now serves a population of 127,850. The building is a firetrap; it is overcrowded; it is outmoded and outgrown. Even a small fire would result in the loss of the book collection by water damage. The loss of the book collection to the Yakima community would be disastrous. Years and large sums of money would be required to replace the thousands of books accumulated over the years and most of them could never be replaced.

The library now operates from three buildings, the Carnegie building, the Grange building on "A" Street and stack storage space in the City Hall. The lack of space to expand to meet the demands of a growing community, the lack of space to shelve the growing book collection, lack of seating space (a total of 23 seats for adults and young people - 8 seats for children) and the great inefficiency of the working operation under the present situation should be apparent to all.

The staff has done wonders in carrying on a high level operation and has miraculously kept up with the expanding library needs of a growing and vital county and city. The circumstances under which the branch, bookmobile, cataloging, technical processing and mail service operations are carried on border on the inhuman and would not be tolerated in private business. To attempt to continue to respond to demands for service with the present overcrowded three-building plant would be unrealistic. The present Carnegie building is beyond remodeling and any such attempt to solve the problem would be self-defeating since the old building has long outlived its usefulness. Adding to the old building would be too costly and would condemn the new building to concepts of service of fifty years ago.

## WHERE WILL THE NEW REGIONAL LIBRARY BUILDING BE LOCATED?

On the corner of Third and "A" streets in Yakima. The boards of trustees of the Yakima County and City Libraries have held in trust for the people of the community eight lots comprising 200' by 140' feet on the corner of Third and "A" streets in Yakima. The first four lots have been in the custody of the City Library Board for fifty years. The next four lots were purchased by the city and county library boards in 1948 with the purpose in mind of combining to operate a regional library and erecting a combined library headquarters. The deeds to these properties are held by the two library boards. State law does not grant library boards of trustees the power to sell property held in trust for library purposes.

The people of Yakima and the Valley are more fortunate than those in most communities facing the need for a new headquarters building, thanks to the foresight of the founders in choosing a site and its enlargement by later boards of trustees. Most libraries face the agonizing decision of sacrificing building or location since the costs of the site generally must be found in the building fund.

Exactly the same criteria must be used for choosing the library site as for a business which seeks to serve the whole community. The most favorable site for business is also the most favorable site for the library.

The library that is near the center of the business district is not only an expression of the thoughtful concern of the library board for library patrons but also an asset of major importance to the business district. The library should be located in the center of things, on the main traffic stream with the leading stores, banks and office buildings. It should contribute to the business as well as the intellectual and cultural progress, to the enjoyment and satisfaction of the community. The boards of trustees have given the matter of location of the regional library headquarters long and serious study. They have received the advice and recommendations of many libraries all over the United States that have built new library buildings in the last ten years.

They hired one of the best professional library consultants in the country to make an independent survey of the Yakima Valley Regional Library. He arrived at the same choice of the present site as the best possible available site for the location of the new library. The long experience of successful libraries and the bitter experience of unsuccessful ones has shown over and over that the best sites are at or near a traffic intersection or where there is some other reason for the consistent maximum flow of pedestrian traffic.

#### HOW MUCH WILL THE NEW REGIONAL LIBRARY BUILDING COST?

It will cost each taxpayer in the county and the city about a dollar a year. Less than one third of a cent a day. The proposed bond issues of \$400,000 each will be submitted to the voters in both the county and the city at the general election November 6th. The total cost of the building will be \$800,000. This figure was determined after lengthy studies by the boards of trustees of the cost of library building construction today. Visits were made to new library buildings and plans of many others were reviewed.

The space requirements needed for the efficient operation of the regional library were carefully considered. The sum of \$800,000 will build a modern, functional but attractive library building that will take care of the needs of the regional library today and allow for expansion and growth for the next twenty years.

#### WOULDN'T IT COST MORE TO OPERATE THE NEW BUILDING?

The regional library must operate within a set budget each year. The library board may not exceed these sums. There is a ceiling tax limitation set by law that provides the county's share of the operation of the operation of the regional library. The city's share is determined by an appropriation made by the City Commission. The present set-up that necessitates the library's using three separate buildings, one of which is rented, is costly to administer, in maintenance and in staff time. The new building will accomplish wonders in the improved efficiency of operation, and will not increase these costs materially.

### WHAT WILL THE FEATURES OF THE NEW LIBRARY BE?

It will be a modern, functional, two-story building. The main floor for public services will be at street level; the basement floor will house stack shelving for books and materials used less frequently, staff accommodations and maintenance operation.

The most important feature of the new building will be that all parts of the library will be under one roof, instead of being scattered in three locations blocks apart.

On the main street floor will be the general circulation and open shelf area, with both informal and conventional types of seating to accommodate readers. The public service areas at the street level will include:

The information or reference, technical and business area; the main desk for the lending of books; the public catalog; a separate room for the service to boys and girls - a special area set aside for the teen age group to house the books provided for them; a periodical and newspaper area equipped to care for these special materials; an audio-visual room with films, records, projected books and sheet music with a listening booth and shelving to house the art and music collection; the reader's advisory service, which provides guidance in adult reading toward some definite, self cultural goal.

Also located on the main floor will be the bookmobile and branch departments which give service to outlying points; the technical processing area for preparation of books and other materials for public use and the general work area. Public rest rooms will be provided. The librarian's office and meeting room for the board of trustees will be convenient both to the public and staff.

Provision will be made for a small, multi-purpose auditorium seating, 150 people, which will serve not only for the library's adult education services and story hour program for children, but as a meeting place for community activities.

At the rear of the building, near the alley, will be the garage to house the bookmobiles and branch delivery station wagon. This will be convenient to the work areas of the departments.

A drive-in book return, similar to the drive-in service of the bank, will be a feature of the new building.

### HOW LARGE AN AREA DOES THE REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVE?

The regional library serves the city of Yakima and the entire rural area of the county, and also fourteen communities in the county. This represents a population of approximately 127,850.

### WHO WILL VOTE ON THE LIBRARY BOND ISSUE?

Voters in the City of Yakima

Voters in the unincorporated area of Yakima County

The contract to operate the regional library is between the County Library Board and the City of Yakima. Therefore, no other incorporated cities in the county will vote on the library bond issue or be taxed.

Incorporated cities in the county that are part of the regional library system pay for library service and provide and maintain their own library quarters. People in these cities will work for the passage of the library bond issue because better regional library headquarters will mean better service to their communities.

#### ARE THE SERVICES OF THE REGIONAL LIBRARY WIDELY USED?

People in all parts of the county and city use the regional library services extensively. In 1955 a total of 766,161 books were borrowed from the entire regional library system.

At the Carnegie building, in 1955, in the general circulation and childrens departments along the total number of books borrowed from just these two departments was one half as many as were borrowed from the large downtown central building in the Portland (Ore.) public library.

The bookmobiles made 124 stops every two weeks, 98 for adults and 26 at county and city schools. This was approximately 1612 stops for the year.

Twelve communities in the county were served by the branch departments on a regular bi-monthly schedule and by weekly mail service for specially requested materials. Two new communities were added to this service in 1956.

During 1956 all library patrons received new borrowers cards, due to the installation of a mechanical charge-out system. In ten months over 26,000 new cards have been issued and are still being issued at the rate of 1,000 a month.

A mail service for shut-ins convalescents and elderly people in a part of the library program and 9,046 books were borrowed from this department.

The circulation of records, and projected books were services that were widely used, totaling some 9,743.

Twenty-five to thirty films are available each month and were viewed by 56,810 people.

Materials to answer approximately 35,000 major reference questions were provided throughout the library system in 1955. The library maintains a collection of 235 different kinds of circulation magazines; and 23 newspapers from this state and from several major cities in the U.S.

Business men and agriculturalists used the Moody's Investor's service and

the related business and technical book collection extensively.

WHAT DID THESE SERVICES COST?

The per capita cost was \$1,34 $\frac{1}{2}$  in 1955, less than one third the present cost of one novel, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  the cost of a book of non-fiction.

WILL LOCAL LABOR BE USED TO CONSTRUCT THE NEW BUILDING?

Yes. As soon as the bond issue is passed bids will be asked for construction and local workers will be drawn from the local trades unions.

WILL A LOCAL ARCHITECT BE EMPLOYED?

Yes. Mr. John Villevsvik (AIA) has been retained as the unanimous choice of the library boards as the architect for the new library building.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OPERATION OF THE REGIONAL LIBRARY?

The regional library board is the operational board. It is composed of five members chosen from the county and city library boards of trustees. The city library board of five members is appointed by the Yakima City Commission. The county library board consists of five members and is appointed by the Yakima County Commission. The terms of all board members are staggered and are for five years. Membership on the regional library board alternates annually between 3 city, 2 county and 2 city and 3 county members.

The Yakima Valley Regional Library is a legal combination of the former city and county libraries operating under the Washington state library law that permits any two or more governmental units to combine to give library service to the people within those units. This combination makes better use of the taxpayer's money and wider use of all the library's resources.

All resources of the regional library are pooled together, the funds; the books and other materials; the staff. The headquarters library is the collection point from which all the library's services are distributed to all service outlets.