

VANPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Report for March 1945

The most interesting event of March to us was the arrival of our new outdoor display case on March 7th. Gradually it has been completed, and now it is painted to match the building and electrically lighted with shades to guide the light downward. So far the library has contributed all the exhibits, one featuring pamphlets, one advertising new books in general, and one for Easter with a special display of religious books. Next week, however, we are having an exhibit sponsored by Vanport craft classes, and with some specimens of local workmanship featured. We are urging the people of Vanport to consider this display case as a community project, and have offered to let anyone use it for any worthwhile purpose. We have already had some requests from residents who wish to exhibit their hobbies in it.

Interest has been widespread and much favorable comment has been heard. People waiting for the bus run over to take a close look even while they are keeping one eye peeled for the temperamental bus driver. At night it commands attention especially and we feel that in a short time it can become one of the key spots for the dissemination of publicity on the project. We have been amused by the people who think that we have something to sell and who ask if they can purchase some of the pamphlets. One woman, seeing the poster "Easter Greeting" asked us if we had any of the "Greetings" left for sale!

Two college students visited us during the month. One is a young woman from Eugene who is writing her Master's thesis on Vanport. We had a pleasant chat with her and lent her some of our reports. The other girl was from Seattle, and is a library school student. She was

quite impressed with our building, and enjoyed immensely accompanying Mrs. Gilmore on her weekly visit to the hospital.

The librarian feels that she had an unusually busy month, since she was called upon to write a fifteen minute radio script, prepare three book talks on different subjects, and write a paper to be delivered before a group of librarians. It was fun though, and she managed somehow to do her regular column for the Oregonian, and the one each week for the Shipbuilder and the Vancouver Sun. Since the Shipbuilder has not used the material for a couple of weeks, and the Sun has such a small circulation in Vanport, this column is no longer being sent to them as of the first of April. Every other week an annotated list of books is prepared for the Neighborhood Bulletin, and we have had very good response from this bit of local publicity.

We had a very illuminating talk with one of our Negro patrons during March. He asked us for some books on Brazil, and when we casually asked him if he were planning a trip there, he told us the story of his life. He lived in the South as a small boy, but racial discrimination brought him up North early in life. For most of his adulthood he has been seeking freedom from this stigma, for as he said, "We're all to blame. There's too much hatred and fear on both sides." He has lived in France and in Egypt where he saw no race prejudice, but he prefers the New World to the old, which has "too many other problems." So years ago on the advice of a friend who lives there, he decided that he would eventually go to Brazil and make his home there. He has studied Portuguese for years, and since the war began he has been able to save money, so as soon as the war is over he will be on his way there. He has already inquired to find out if there are

positions there for which he can qualify (he is an electrician), and the answer has been favorable. We hope he finds it to be the Utopia of which he is dreaming!

Respectfully submitted,

*Eleanor Touhey*  
Eleanor Touhey, Librarian