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**VICTORY  
BOOK CAMPAIGN**



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR OREGON

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Representing the American Library Association

Headquarters: Oregon State Library, Salem, Oregon

# Records of the OREGON STATE LIBRARY 1905-1976

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From the Oregon State Library Records, 89A-35

# OREGON STATE LIBRARY

## ADMINISTRATIVE OVERVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

Although the territorial legislature established a library in 1848, which continued to function throughout the nineteenth century, it was not until 1905 that the modern state library was established.

Presently, the mission of the Oregon State Library is to promote the establishment, development, and support of library services to the people of Oregon; to provide library service that assists informed decision-making by the personnel of government; and to encourage cooperation between units of government and among libraries. The library is administered by a seven member Board of Trustees which selects a secretary to serve as state librarian and to administer the state library.

The library was created by Chapters 24 and 44, Oregon Laws, 1905. The operation of the library and the functions of the trustees and the state librarian follow laws established by ORS 357.

### HISTORY

The history of a state supported library in Oregon began on August 14, 1848, when Oregon's legislative assembly funded the purchase of a territorial library and appointed the first territorial librarian. In 1852 the territorial legislature provided funds for an annual salary for a librarian to administer the territorial library and for the relocation of the library in Salem. A fire in 1855 destroyed the library's holdings, but under the direction of a new librarian the collection of books was renewed.

The first state legislative assembly established an annual budget for the purchase of books. Between 1868 and 1894 the State Library moved to different locations in Salem before finally locating in the state capitol. The 1878 legislative assembly appropriated funds to improve the library, to make it "...one of which the state might be proud." Although improvements were made, a wind and rain storm blew the roof off of the capitol building in 1889 and soaked the library's holdings.

The Oregon State Library in its modern form was established in 1905 when the Oregon State Library Commission was organized and provisions were made for

the separate care of law books and for the separate collection of documents and books. Cornelia Marvin was appointed as the first secretary to the Oregon Library Commission. The commission consisted of the governor, state superintendent of public instruction, president of the State University (University of Oregon), librarian of the Portland Library Association, and one appointee.

An annual tax levy was created in 1905 to fund book purchases for school libraries. The books purchased came from a list selected by the commission and provided to public schools. The commission also provided traveling and debate libraries and assisted study clubs, granges, and home study programs in selecting material for their use.

In 1913 the Oregon Library Commission formally became the Board of Trustees of the Oregon State Library. The trustees were given custody of all the books and publications under the care of the commission and all of the federal and state documents and general books previously held by the Supreme Court Library (Territorial Library). Functions and collection policies for the Supreme Court Library were now focused entirely on law. The Board of Trustees, created to "...keep the close connection between the library and other educational interests," inherited the responsibilities of the commission.

World War I led to the addition of war service responsibilities to the State Library's function. Educational courses, distribution of books and pamphlets to housewives and military camps, and the establishment of the War Libraries Fund were added functions of the state library. State Librarian Cornelia Marvin was appointed State Historian of Defense for Oregon and was assigned to collect and preserve the records of Oregon's war service.

In 1932 the Library of Congress designated the state library as a Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Legislation in 1933 changed the personnel of the Board of Trustees to consist of the governor, superintendent of public instruction, chancellor of the Oregon State System of Higher Education, librarian of the Portland Library Association, and three individuals appointed by the governor.

The 1930s also saw the need for a new library building. Economic conditions brought on by the Great Depression, however, left little room in the state budget for this building. In 1935 the Public Works Administration provided funds for a new building, but, because of limitations in its constitution, the state was unable to accept this money. The 1939 legislative assembly quickly passed legislation enabling the state to accept federal aid, including WPA funds for the

present day library on the capitol mall. WPA money also provided the library with the personnel to operate library centers, bookmobiles, and to repair and clean the holdings of the state's libraries. Legislation was provided in 1939 for the formation of regional libraries.

The state library's functions were expanded during World War II. Books were supplied to military camps in Oregon and reading courses were offered to the men and women at these camps. The state library coordinated the state's participation in the Victory Book Campaign.

Other library efforts included a 1942 recommendation to assign an official archivist to the library to maintain the documents being collected. The budget for the 1945-1947 biennium included funds for a full-time archivist. David C. Duniway served as the first State Archivist beginning in 1946. The responsibilities of the newly created Archives Division included the preservation and custody of basic records of Oregon's government, care for the administration of Special Collections for the State Library, surveys and appraisals of stored records of state and county agencies, and microfilming. The archives remained part of the state library until 1973 when it was transferred from the state library to the secretary of state's office which served as the administrator of public records.

In 1949 the state library's functions were reorganized to serve the public more efficiently. Legislation passed in 1953 removed authority from the state library for the pooled purchasing of books for public schools, improved the document exchange program at the state library, and simplified state library laws. In 1955 legislation changed the "ex-officio" Board of Trustees to a seven member board appointed by the governor. This was done to create a board to carry forward the interests of the library more effectively and to assure a larger geographical representation of ideas by appointing individuals from the various regions through the state.

The passage of the Federal Library Services Act in 1957 led to the appropriation of state funds to implement the state library's Plan for Rural Library Services.

Budget cuts at both the state and federal levels hampered state library programs during the 1960s and 1970s. The Graduate Library Scholarship Program was suspended and not reinstated until the 1969-1970 academic year. However, in 1969 the legislative assembly appropriated funds, in addition to federal funds received, for the library to increase its participation in the federal program for the blind and physically impaired.

Since the 1970s the State Library has made changes in its laws enabling the library to obtain and distribute state and federal funds to local libraries. The library was also given charge of appointing the State Advisory Council on Libraries and the State Aid for Public Libraries Advisory Committee.

### STATE LIBRARIANS

Cornelia Marvin, 1905-1928

Virginia C. Bacon, 1929-1930

Harriet C. Long, 1930-1941

Eleanor Stephens, 1941-1958

Eloise Ebert, 1959-1976

Mirpah Blair, 1913-1949 [Assistant and Acting Librarian]

Marcia Lowell, 1977-1983

Wesley A. Doak, 1983-1991

Jim Scheppke, 1991-present

**CHRONOLOGY**

- 1848 Five thousand dollars is appropriated to purchase a territorial library. Aaron Wait is appointed as the first territorial librarian.
- 1849-1851 Act passed to pay the territorial librarian an annual salary of two-hundred and fifty dollars.
- 1851-1852 Library is moved to Salem.
- 1855 Fire destroys the library and its holdings. Legislature provides new librarian and funds to replace lost books.
- 1860 State librarian (Act of 1860) is elected every two years by legislative assembly functioning under the direction of the governor (Page 64 Oregon Laws 1860; approved October 19, 1860).
- 1864 Secretary of state is designated as superintendent of the state library (Page 762 Oregon Laws (Deady) 1845-1864).
- 1868-1874 Library moves from Opera House (1868) to Old Grover Building (1870) and finally to the state capitol (1874).
- 1878 Legislature appropriates twelve hundred dollars to make library "...one of which the state might be proud."
- 1889 A wind and rain storm blow the roof off of the capitol and soak the library's holdings.
- 1905 Two state libraries are given recognition by the adoption of two laws. One replaces the secretary of state with the justice of the Supreme Court as the regulating body for the state library and authorized the justice to appoint a librarian to serve the needs of this library (Chapter 24, Oregon Laws, 1905).

The other act established the Oregon Library Commission to consist of the governor, superintendent of public instruction, president of the State University (University of Oregon), librarian of the Library Association of Portland, and one appointee. The commission is authorized to purchase books for schools

- and operate traveling libraries (Chapter 44, Oregon Laws, 1905).
- 1913 Library commission becomes the Board of Trustees for the Oregon State Library. What had been known as the state library becomes the Supreme Court Library (Chapter 149, Oregon Laws, 1913).
- 1935 Public Works Administration (PWA) building program's allotment of \$350,000 is not used because of Oregon constitutional limitations.
- 1939 Legislation allowing for the acceptance of federal aid is passed (OCLA Section 111-3509). The Works Progress Administration (WPA) provides funding for a new state library building.
- 1946 Legislation appropriates \$15,000 for appointment of a state archivist. David C. Dunningway is named to the position (ORS Chapter 358).
- 1951 Library is encouraged by the Oregon Library Association to appoint a library development committee.
- 1953 HB 157 removes from the state library authority for the pooled purchasing of books for public schools.
- SB 301 improves the library's document exchange program.
- ORS Chapter 357 is revised simplifying Oregon's Library Law.
- 1955 SB 140 provides for the appointment of a seven member lay board to replace the "ex-officio" Board of Trustees.
- 1956 Federal Library Services Act becomes law (Public Law 597).
- 1957 State Library Plan for Rural Library Services is approved (SB 135). Matching funds, to federal appropriations, are provided by the state to implement the rural library program.
- 1969 Graduate Library Scholarship Program is re-instated.
- Legislature appropriates \$80,000 to increase the state library's participation in the federal program for the blind and physically handicapped.

1973 State archives division is transferred to the secretary of state, administrator of public records (Chapter 439, Oregon Laws, 1973).

1973-present Library is more active in the distribution of federal funds (ORS 357.780).

State Advisory Council on Libraries and State Aid for Public Libraries Advisory Committee members are appointed by the state librarian.



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