

HISTORY OF MALABAR BRANCH,
LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The early years of Malabar history are shrouded in deep, dark mystery, delightfully to the heart of a detective story fan, but a trifle baffling to the earnest historian. The first report sheet in existence is dated May, 1923, and the first annual report is dated that same year. When one delves more deeply into the archives, statistical sheets come to light dated 1915-1916, but these are very little help.

However, just as the anthropologist builds up a convincing animal from a few bones, so we can reconstruct a rather sketchy portrait even from these figures. Bit by bit emerges the picture of a tiny station in a rented building on Wabash Avenue. Even this had not been the first book service to the community, for earlier a small collection of books had been housed in the church at Evergreen and Winter Streets. The Improvement Association and the very active Parent Teacher Association of Malabar School, (long since lapsed into desuetude) campaigned as energetically for a library as they had previously worked for a school for the district.

The first statistic sheet shows that the circulation for the year 1915-1916 was 3475, with a juvenile percentage of 61 and a fiction percentage of 62. Both of these tendencies are still

characteristic of the branch, which has always ranked high in juvenile work and has had a public interested in the best fiction. The name of G. Coolidge is signed to this first sheet.

The year 1916-1917 shows an increase of over 10,000. The circulation was 14,360, a gain of 313%. The juvenile percentage was 57, the fiction, 46. This sheet is signed by M.E.Vinton. 463 card holders are listed; and the book stock was 735.

In the next year, 1917-1918, little gain was made, The circulation was only 15,372; with 680 cardholders and a book stock of 742.

The year 1918-1919 shows a circulation of 15,883, with 420 card holders and book stock of 1293. This sheet is signed O.Miller.

In the ensuing year, 1919-1920, the circulation made quite a stride. It reached 22,563, a gain of 42%. The fiction percentage was 53; the juvenile, 52. There were 569 card holders, and a book stock of 1725.

The year 1920-1921 showed another increase of note. The circulation was 34,459; a gain of 52%. The juvenile percentage was 51; fiction, 57. There were 841 card holders, and a book stock of 2046.

In 1921-1922, the circulation was 42,738. The juvenile percentage was 51; the fiction, 60. There were 1147 card holders, and the book stock was 2314.

With the advent of the year 1922-1923, the mists begin to clear away, and we find ourselves standing on firmer ground. This annual sheet is signed M. A. Sharpe, who had come to Malabar in February, 1923. Her brief annual report states that when she came, she found no reports previous to her regime, except for the statistical sheets. She uses up most of her space in lamenting poor equipment and lack of really necessary books for the work. Meagre reference material is another sore spot. Already the ugly head of discipline rears its head, and the street in front of the branch is infested with "undesirable young men" who "make night hideous with their obnoxious conduct and conversation." One sighs to think that thirteen years later similar gangs still hover about Wabash Avenue!

Visits to schools are chronicled, and also a talk to the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church in the neighborhood. The circulation for the year was 43,031, a gain of only 6%. The juvenile percentage was 58; the fiction, 60. The card holders number 1370; and the book stock, 2559.

From this time on, both monthly and annual reports exist to make the task of the chronicler more simple. Already the notes of today's chords are being struck; ever-present is the problem of discipline, reference work is growing by leaps and bounds, and foreign readers make increasing demands upon the resources of the collection. Occasional visits to the schools spur on children's

work, and in December, 1923, a "Book Talk" was given to the Epworth League of the Methodist Church. Patrons were using books in Armenian, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and Yiddish.

The circulation for 1923-24 was 57,061, a gain of 33% over the preceding year. The juvenile percentage was 60; the fiction, 59. There were 1497 card holders, and the book stock was 3131.

In October, 1924, a children's librarian for one day a week was added to the staff, to the great rejoicing of all. Closer work was possible with the schools, and although the lack of space in the branch made it impossible to have classes in the library, lessons in the use of the library could be given to the children at school.

Lack of space becomes one of the loudest outcries in each report from now on. Along with this is the constant plea for more books, and for better books. Even this early the reader learns that there is an enormous demand for help and reference service; more being required because of the foreign homes and backgrounds for most of the children using the branch. The rapid decrease of the books under the hard usage is commented upon now and again, and in December, 1924, occurred the first of many campaigns to emphasize the care of books in the library and at home.

In January, 1925, Malabar come under the sway of a new branch librarian, Golda Thompson. In her first report, Miss Thompson reiterates the old pleas--

"Our needs might be summed up in one word, 'more', more room, more books, more assistance." The people of the neighborhood were beginning to realize some of these needs also, and a petition for a new building was being circulated.

In March, 1925, classes were held in the library itself for the first time for the school children, but the demand for books swamped the collection. Visits to the schools were regularly made.

May, 1925, saw active work for the bond campaign, with posters and distribution of campaign material through every available means. Personal interviews with the business men of the district, and a talk at the Methodist Church supplemented this material. Much enthusiasm is chronicled when the bond issue passed in June, 1925.

In June, 1925, a visit to Malabar School to present one hundred certificates for reading has a reminiscent sound. This is the first mention of what has come to be the high mark of the year for many of the children of the district. The proud possession of a certificate is almost a mark of nobility in the neighborhood, and year by year more and more children strive to win one. Miss Hovey gave out 454 in June, 1936.

The circulation for 1924-1925 was 78,852, a gain of 38%. The juvenile percentage was 63; the fiction, 58. There were 1946 card holders, and the book stock was 4378.

1925-1926

The branch librarian's summary for this year tells us sadly that no outstanding event or change came to the branch during the year. "We were unusually busy, and yet when we come to put our accomplishments down in print, we seem to be able to record only a steady growth of circulation as the main feature of the year's work." In a small, badly ventilated, poorly lighted room, the circulation reached 85,787; April, 1926, seeing a monthly circulation of over 8,000, for the first time in the history of Malabar.

The ever-present problem of discipline once more rears its ugly head with the re-opening of school, as it does each year. On busy evenings the tiny room was crowded, and two and three children would attempt to sit on one chair, with results not conducive to the best behavior. Policing the street outside was impossible, and time and again the police had to be called to quell noisy gangs in front of the library. Far too much time had to be given to policing the library inside.

The staff personnel began to be built up, and with new books appearing in larger numbers, greater service to the public began. Christmas, 1925, saw the first story hour at Malabar, and the attendance was most encouraging. Records were played, and stories told, and some of the Christmas spirit filtered through, even to a neighborhood which by its very nature does not

approach Christmas with any depth of feeling.

Work with the schools progressed under great difficulties. There was not room at the branch for visits to the library by school classes, and the smallness of the staff make school visits few and far apart. But a fine spirit of co-operation began to be built up between school and library. Story telling was the first point of contact, and the stories were as eagerly received as they have been ever since. The children's librarian hoped, in January, 1926, to prepare appreciation hours for the older children and lead them to better books.

The circulation for the year was 85,787. There were 2101 card holders, and the book stock was 4899. The only percentage given is the fiction percentage, 59.

1926-1927

This was Malabar's red-letter year. In May, 1927, the branch began operation in its own beautiful new building, and a perfect paean of joy resounds through the report. Though many blue notes sound in the monthly reports before May, there was always an undertone of hopefulness as the new building drew closer and closer. Insufficient shelf-room, crowded tables, and lack of light and ventilation could all be borne when one realized that they were but temporary evils.

Work continued to become heavier and heavier as the days and weeks

passed by, and the report for September 1926, mourns that there was so little time for school work or extension of any kind, and no time at all for creative work. The juvenile percentage remained about 60, and the librarian felt that Malabar offered the finest kind of field for intermediate work. The first Americanization classes in the schools are mentioned, and one of the really valuable projects of the year was the compiling of a list, "Easy Books for New Americans." This was the beginning of a work with the Americanization classes and with new Americans which has broadened and deepened through the years, and which is one of the really vital contributions of Malabar Branch to its community.

Circulation reached 9,000 for the first time in November, 1926, and the crowded conditions made the staff wonder if the use of the library ought not to be restricted. At that time, only children in the sixth grade and up were permitted to use the library at night, to help in the congested conditions. Illness on the staff and increasing work in the branch make school visiting difficult. Another story hour was held at Christmas time, and was well attended.

January, 1927, saw an increase in the book fund, which was most gratefully received. The problem about new books began to be whether to turn them over at once to eager borrowers, or to save them to make a showing in the new building. The constant strain of growing circulation and discipline problems kept the librarians on edge, with clerical work accumulating more and more.

In March, 1927, the circulation reached 10,000 for the first time. A library school senior came in this month to make a survey of the district for final paper. The branch librarian seized this opportunity to visit the schools in the district and learn more of the character of the neighborhood. The children's librarian found time in April, 1927, to visit fifth and sixth grades at Malabar School and discuss library routine as a preparation for the new building.

May, 1927, was the long-awaited opening of the beautiful new building. The moving was done the week of May 23rd, and the building was opened to the public on Thursday, May 26th. On the first day, the workmen were still hanging the lighting fixtures, and the mass of children surging into the place so hampered them that the branch had to be closed after four hours, to give the workmen a chance to finish. The lights were not finally completed until May 31st, and the library had to close at 6:30 every day until then.

The entire neighborhood received the new building with joy, and the Boyle Heights Property Owners's Assn. promptly asked permission to hold their meetings in the new club-room. Parents and children alike commented enthusiastically on the direct and simple beauty of the edifice, and there was great disappointment when no formal opening was held.

NEW BUILDING

Malabar Branch Library was built by the bond issue of 1925. The architect was William Lee Woollett, and the building has a capacity of 25,000 volumes. Building and equipment cost \$38,721. The branch is a building of simplicity and directness, with no rococo features to mar its impressiveness. The walls are white washed grey driftwood tones. The foundations of the front door are rough field stones, and the carving above the door is archaic. The whole effect is one of simplicity, with a primitive note. Construction was begun in October, 1926, and the building was thrown open to the public in May, 1927.

Circulation for the year 1926-1927 was 110,957. The fiction percentage (again the only one given) was 59. There were 2137 card holders, and the book stock was 7037.

1927-1928

The first year in the new building showed enormous strides in every phase of library activity. During this year Golda Thompson compiled a list of books called "The Jew in the Literature of the Last Decade", which is one of the most valuable and usable lists ever compiled. With the revisions and additions which have kept this list up-to-date, no single help in the branch is more active. This list is divided by subject into such groups as "Racial Backgrounds", "Jewish Problems of Today", and "Jewish Life in Fiction."

Miss Darlow began regular monthly book reviewing at the branch in October 1927, and her first meeting had an interested and enthusiastic attendance of 18. Her reviews proved very popular and were a real feature of the new building's first year.

The club room found many applications for use. The Boyle Heights Property Owners' Assn. met twice a month, and in the fall of 1927 many neighborhood clubs applied for permission to meet in the library. A Boys' Star Club and a Girls' Flower Club were granted the use of the room.

With added staff and facilities, school visiting became more important. Contacts were made with all the public schools, and also with Forsyth Memorial School, a boarding school for Mexican girls. From the first, the girls here were interested and their class visits to the library continued until the school closed in 1935.

Golda Thompson's final report, that for December, 1927, sums up the problems of the branch quite well. "Last year our problems were (1) lack of room, (2) scarcity of books, (3) shortage of help, and (4) the ever present problem of discipline. The first has been eliminated entirely; the second lessened considerably by the new book fund; the third also lessened somewhat; the fourth 'like the poor we always have with us.' "

January, 1928, saw the coming of Dorothy Pinneo to Malabar as Branch Librarian, and with her zest and enthusiasm a new note was added to the work of the branch. From the beginning her reports show an ardent and earnest study of the community and its problems and a

desire to do everything possible for the people whom she served. An analysis of the circulation statistics and a study of the discipline problems convinced her that the adult circulation could not grow until quieter conditions could prevail in the reading room at night. Efforts were made to keep the younger children out at night, and restrict them to afternoon hours. From personal experience, this seems almost a dream, for so many of the parents insist on bringing the younger children when they come themselves, and it is hard to draw the line.

Problems of discipline, of book mutilation, and of loss of books continue to loom large in each report, month by month.

The circulation for the year was 160,597, a gain of 44.76%. The fiction percentage was 59; the juvenile, 57. There were 2686 card holders and the book stock was 9426. Turnover was computed for the first time, and it was 14.68.

1928-1929

The chief problem of the year was how to tempt more adult readers into the library. It has never been any trick to build up juvenile circulation in the Malabar district, but Miss Pinneo felt from the first that she wished to cater to the parents rather than the children. She bought with a view to this, and when she discovered a gain of 42% in the circulation of books on religion she knew that she was advancing - the gain following a large

purchase of Jewish books on Jewish history and from the Jewish list.

On July 1, 1928, Malabar entered the first group branches, and felt very adult herself. There were many changes in staff during the year, but much was accomplished of real worth. The analytic file for biographies was started, and all the collective biographies in the collection were analyzed. This remains one of the most valuable reference tools in the branch; in late years we have broadened its scope to include all types of odd and unusual reference questions.

CLUBS AND MEETINGS

Mrs. Light, the first assistant, organized an Intermediate Book Club among the upper class Junior High students, which proved popular and received enthusiastic support.

A number of the women of the community planned to organize a club to interest the women of the neighborhood in "music, art, literature and education." (Surely a rather wide aim!)

The Boyle Heights Property Owners' Assn. continued to use the club room for meetings. The Los Angeles County Rifle Club held a number of meetings at the branch.

Mrs. Bernice Young founded a group of Camp Fire Girls in the neighborhood, which created much interest.

Attendance at Miss Darlow's monthly book talks decreased so much that they were given up. Instead, two talks were

given during the year: one by Miss Warren in December, on "Books for Christmas Buying"; and one by Miss Haines in March, largely on translations.

The Branch Librarian talked at Miss Strickland's advanced English class of foreign women at Sheridan School in June, and the women were so much interested that they asked if they could meet at the library during the summer for guidance in their reading, while school was closed.

The children's work grew steadily during the year, and an assistant children's librarian was added to the staff in July, 1928. This meant much more personal work could be done with the children, and also the work with the schools could be much expanded. In October regular class visits from the schools began, and proved very helpful to both staff and children. Regular story hours were begun at the branch in September, 1927, and the attendance averaged from 60-80. In May, 1928, at the final story hour for the year, 145 children were present. In April, 1929, large numbers attended the Girls' Day and Boy's Day programs at the branch.

The circulation was 167,513. There were 4469 card holders, and the book count was 10,805.

1929 -1930

At the start of this year, there was almost a complete change of staff at Malabar, with new librarian, children's librarian, assistant children's

librarian, and junior. The new staff soon shook down into their places, and a very energetic program was carried out.

The high lights of the year were the opening of the Wabash Playground, next door to the library; the survey of the district, made by Alice Burns, a library school senior; and the inauguration of the Willow Tree Reading Club.

PLAYGROUND

The Boyle Heights Property Owners' Assoc. had campaigned vigorously for a playground in the vicinity, and, although the fact of its nearness sometimes seems a very mixed blessing, it has been very valuable in the community. The Wabash Playground was opened in March, 1930, and from the very first there has existed a most friendly spirit of co-operation between library and playground. A great many of the special programs of the playground have been given on the Malabar lawn, and the library staff has come to expect to welcome the playground on every holiday. The directors have been most willing to aid in discipline problems and now and then invite the branch librarian to sit in on a staff meeting to consider common difficulties.

SURVEY

The survey of Malabar was made in 1929-1930, and although some of it is out-of-date in 1936, much is still applicable. The survey characterizes the Malabar Branch as a neighborhood library in an almost exclusively residential neighborhood. The district which it serves is much limited by both

natural and artificial barriers. The Pacific Electric tracks and the foothills to the north, limit any expansion in that direction. There are three other branch libraries near enough to hem in the district. One of these (Hazard) has since been eliminated; but Benjamin Franklin and Robert Louis Stevenson branches still offer formidable competition.

The greatest barrier to expansion in the Malabar district is the county line. The city boundary is only five blocks to the east, and hence expansion is impossible in that direction. Up to the time when service was limited to city residents, there were great numbers of borrowers living in the county, and many of them were the best borrowers of the branch.

Both registration and circulation are preponderantly juvenile. Systematic school visiting, and class visits to the library, offer the best field for library publicity in the district, which partially accounts for this.

There are no churches in the vicinity and only one Jewish synagogue. One small Hebrew school was in existence. In 1936 this can be amended. There are four synagogues in the immediate neighborhood; and three Hebrew schools are flourishing. One of these is just going into a very handsome new building. There was one club house listed in the survey; in 1936, there are three community centers in the neighborhood.

CLUBS

During this year, the use of the club-room increased a great deal. In September, 1929, a meeting was held under the auspices of the active Boyle Heights Property Owners' Assoc. to arouse interest in the establishment of another junior high school and another elementary school in the district. Superior Judge Elias V. Rosenkranz spoke on "The Wider Use of the School Plant"; Paul Freidman, assistant city attorney, spoke on, "Local Improvements on the East Side"; William Sanborn, of the City Council, spoke on the high speed boulevard to be constructed in the district. This was a large and successful meeting, well attended.

In the summer of 1929, some women of the neighborhood organized a group known as the "Los Angeles Women's Art and Music Club" which planned a very extensive program, with business meetings at the library twice a month and a speaker once a month. The branch librarian spoke at the opening meeting. In October, Miss Gladys Caldwell, of the Art and Music Room of the Central Library, spoke to the club. However, in February, this club felt that they would have better attendance if they were closer to Brooklyn Avenue, and moved their meetings to a clubroom there.

The Camp Fire Girls transferred their meetings to the Playground club-room, after meeting for several months at Malabar.

Miss Haines gave an outstanding book talk in February, 1930.

During the summer of 1929, the branch librarian held weekly meetings for the women of the Americanization classes. The attendance was not large, but the branch librarian felt that a

start had been made in community service, and that some valuable contacts had been made. The last meeting took the form of a tea on the lawn.

During the year the members of the staff spoke at a number of places: P.T.A. meetings, at Echo Park Branch and City Terrace School; a book club at Vermont Square Branch; and several talks were given to the Americanization classes at the Sheridan and Malabar Schools.

In March, 1930, new shelving was installed, and an entrance aisle made by low shelving. This gave room for the books, which were beginning to overflow their allotted space, and made supervision of exit and entrance easier. The rearrangement of the room was a great improvement.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE.

On April 14, 1930, Mr. Wardlaw arranged for a meeting at Malabar to discuss neighborhood problems. About fifteen people attended, and a committee was organized to try to improve conditions. The members of the committee were Mr. Irving Lipsitch, Executive Director of the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations; Mr. Tolchinsky, Principal of the Hebrew School; Mr. Schottland, Director of the Modern Social Center; Mr. Mosbacher, President of the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations; Dr. Saylin; Mr. Henderson, of the City Playground Department; and Miss Pinneo. The greatest problem seemed to be the collecting of unruly gangs on the streets, particularly about the library, thereby rendering the streets impassable by

young girls.

The difficulties were felt to arise from the highly congested character of the district and the fact that the population presented a great social problem. It is largely foreign, and consists of two main antagonistic groups: the orthodox Jewish group, and a very militant communistic group. The only constructive social facilities in the neighborhood were the Library, which was always overcrowded in the evenings; the Hebrew school, near the library; and a synagogue.

The destructive agencies were numerous. A pool room which served as a natural meeting place for gangs; a theater, which supplemented the pool room; the "Libertarian Center", which was an Anarchistic institution; and the Communist Center at Brooklyn and Mott, the communistic headquarters of the city.

As in any foreign neighborhood, the difficulty of adjustment to American conditions, and the break-down of parental authority, due to the superior adjustment of the children, added to the difficulties.

The Committee found that the greatest need of the neighborhood was a social center for social, cultural, and recreational activities. They planned an appeal to the Playground Commission to extend the facilities of the new Wabash Playground; and co-operation with the appeal to the Jewish community of Los Angeles to establish an adequate Jewish social center in connection with a Hebrew School.

view of the stacks and rear of the room. it is a great help in supervising the back of the room. Another problem was the opening of a pool room directly across the street from the library. Representatives of the Property Owners' Assoc. and welfare organizations of the neighborhood met with the proprietor and he promised to move; however, it was a long time before that halcyon day came.

In December, Miss Haines gave a very much appreciated book talk at Malabar. The Branch Librarian gave two book talks during the year, one over the radio, and in February and informal talk to the Junior Los Angeles Woman's Music and Art Club.

The Detroit Charging system was installed at Malabar in December, 1930, and was liked after the first newness had worn off.

A permanent collection of Yiddish books was bought for Malabar and the readers of Yiddish were highly delighted at the idea.

Menorah Center, the new Jewish social center, was opened in April, 1931.

Besides the regular story hours, class visits, and school visits, the Juvenile Department held a Doll's Convention during Book Week, which was attended by nearly 400 children.

The club room was used during the year by the Junior Los Angeles Woman's Music and Art Club, for meetings twice a month; and for the monthly meetings of the East Los Angeles Property Owners' Assoc., formerly the Boyle Heights Property Owners' Assoc. The lawn and club room were used jointly by library and playground for Book Week,

Both of these needs have now been met. The Wabash Playground has a clubhouse, which, although it is quite small, functions as a real center for all types of activities. The Menorah Center is an excellent center for Jewish culture, and does a tremendous amount of valuable work.

Children's work bulked as large as ever during the year. Classes came to the library in a steady stream, and a great deal of school visiting was done. Ambitious programs were planned for both Girls' Day and Boys' Day, and both were well attended. Mr. Amado Dino, editor of "Filipino Youth" spoke on the Philippines on Girls' Day; and Mr. Karst, an air-pilot, spoke on aviation on Boys' Day.

The book circulation for the year was 178,410, a gain of only 6.5%. The juvenile percentage was 54.87; the fiction, 62.07. There were 4955 card holders and the book stock was 12,519.

1930-1931.

Circulation dropped during July and August, due to three causes - Saturday closing; the new playground; and an infantile paralysis epidemic. However, the playground was welcomed with joy, for it was lighted at night and that was a great help with the gang problem. From the first, balls came over the side fence and boys either climbed over the fence, or, if they did come in, took the time of the librarian. The fence had to be made higher to eliminate some of this trouble.

In November, a mirror was installed over the doorway, which gave an excellent

Christmas and May festivals. On Girls' Day, Madame Grishina-Givago gave an excellent talk to the children. Special Olympic story-hour programs were given during the summer.

Circulation was 184,777, a gain of 3.56%. The juvenile percentage was 53.29; the fiction, 6185. There were 5369 card holders, and the book stock was 13,499. The staff turnover was 14.5.

1931-1932.

DISCIPLINE. In almost every month of this year there is a wail over discipline. There were several serious outbreaks of lawlessness, reaching a peak in January. In November, the branch librarian attended two conferences of social and welfare leaders. At both meetings she presented the problems of the library; and at the second of these conferences a permanent organization was formed to study the juvenile problems of the entire city. On several occasions, the branch librarian conferred with police authorities; and in February, the branch librarian appeared in Juvenile Court, when a gang of boys were tried for stealing. The Judge asked the co-operation of the library in the probation of the boys in question, and that had an excellent effect on the whole gang situation. Roosevelt High School gave the library splendid co-operation in another case of unruliness, and that aided greatly.

INVENTORY. Inventory showed a high percentage of loss, 8.02%. This gave Malabar the doubtful distinction of topping the branch list for missing and lost books. The installation of new aisle cases

and a rail and one-way gate gave hope that this might be reduced when stricter supervision of patrons was possible.

CLUBS

Five different organizations used the club room during the year: the East Los Angeles Forum, 5 times; the East Los Angeles Property Owners, once. Both of these organizations discontinued holding their meetings at the library because of the need for larger quarters and a place where they could smoke and talk politics. The Los Angeles Junior Women's Music and Art Club met twice in the club room; Le Cercle Litteraire, once; and United Veterans of the Republic, East Side Unit, Once.

In the summer, the branch librarian conducted the Willow tree Reading Circle, a group of women from Miss Strickland's English and Americanization classes, who met weekly on the lawn. This was considered by the branch librarian as one of the most interesting and successful adult projects she had ever undertaken. Beginning in June, 1932, the circle met for two summers on this lawn.

The branch librarian visited classes for foreign women at three schools during the year. Forsythe Memorial School was visited by both branch librarian and children's librarian.

"This year seems to have been one of statistical superlative. In August we had the largest percent of gain on record--15.62%; in February more foreign books were circulated--655; March brought our largest monthly circulation--17,434; May the largest daily circulation--1313, as well as the record in Nonfiction books-1803."

PLAYGROUND CO-OPERATION

Three programs were given by Wabash Playground on the library lawn during the year, at Christmas, Hallow'e'en, and on Washington's Birthday.

The important event of the year was the first Adult Spring Festival. This was given under the joint auspices of the Classes for adults at Breed, Bridge, Malabar, Muchison, Second, and Sheridan Schools; the Malabar Library; and the Wabash Playground. About 300 people attended a most interesting program, made up of dances, songs, a play, and a talk on books by the branch librarian. This was a most valuable contact with the community.

The circulation for the year was 191,655, a gain of 3.6%. The juvenile percentage was 52.67; the fiction, 62.48. There were 5745 card holders, and the book stock was 16,985.

1932-1933.

The first exciting event of the year was the winning of the Germain trophy for the best library grounds by Malabar, a matter of great pride for the staff as a whole and Joseph Apall, the janitor, in particular.

The discipline problem became acute once more when school opened, and the branch librarian visited the principals of the schools in the district and asked their co-operation. Roosevelt High school responded splendidly, and through its very fine student body president, Max Caplan, worked out a system of high school monitors to take over floor discipline in the library. During this year the system worked very well, but

unfortunately, it is the type of system which depends entirely upon the personality of the monitor. Under Max Caplan's strong direction, and with strong monitors it worked; but in the succeeding year, the student body president was much weaker and the monitors themselves were less forceful. Hence, after one term's trial, it was abandoned.

COUNTY LOSS.

The registration dropped for the year, due almost entirely to the loss of county borrowers. A survey showed that $15 \frac{2}{3} \%$ of Malabar borrowers lived in the county, and many of them are the very best type of borrowers. For example, the only school at this end of the city which has a P.T.A. at all is the Harrison Street School, which is just over the line, and which would offer a most fruitful field for extension if only it could be used. It is but natural that denying the use of the library to the county residents would hurt both circulation and registration at Malabar.

The Red Cross gave two courses of ten lessons each at the library during the year.

The Branch Librarian was asked to serve as Secretary of the newly formed Hollenbeck Heights Co-ordinating Council, which bade fair to do much to eliminate the juvenile delinquency problem of the neighborhood.

SPRING FESTIVAL.

The outstanding event in adult community work was the second annual Spring festival, held on the Malabar Lawn on May 25, 1933. Again library, schools

and playgrounds worked together to present a program of song, drama, and dancing. Miss Warren gave the address of welcome, and Miss Hickman was also present. Two members of the Board of Education attended and spoke, and also the Supervisor of Americanization classes. The principals of Malabar and Sheridan Schools, and three members of Malabar staff also participated in the program.

The Willow-Tree Reading Club met, with an attendance of over 2000 women in 11 meetings. There were three outside speakers and one trip to the Central Library, where Miss Warren addressed them and Mrs. Hyers told them about the murals and architecture of the building.

The circulation was 198,488, a gain of 3.5%. The Juvenile percentage was 49.02; the fiction, 58.75. There were 6190 card holders, and the book stock was 18,031.

1933-1934.

During the summer of 1933, the branch librarian conducted the weekly meetings of the Willow-Tree Reading Circle on the library lawn. The children's librarian also used the lawn as the scene of her summer project, which was an elaborate "Stunt" idea. All of the neighborhood children co-operated most willingly in the plan of sharing in the weekly programs, and recitations, playlets and book reviews won them places on the list.

October found a new branch librarian at the helm, when Miss Pinneo took up her duties at Arroyo Seco Branch. Much of the time during the fall and winter was spent in getting acquainted with the branch and the public.

DISCIPLINE

The first and foremost problem which confronts any new librarian at Malabar is that of discipline. The plan of student monitors, which had proved satisfactory under the able guidance of Max Caplan, proved but a broken reed to lean upon under the regime of his successor. The branch librarian visited Mr. Montgomery at Roosevelt High School, and found him most amenable to any plan. On two occasions, the branch librarian met with the student body library committee at Roosevelt, and after due consideration, it was decided to adopt the student card system.

The system of student admission cards has been used every since January, 1934, at Malabar, and has resulted in an unbelievable improvement in discipline. It has had full co-operation from the better element among the high school boys and girls, and the names of the constant offenders have been learned so that they can be eliminated. All boys and girls from the ninth grade on up are required to have the cards, and are not allowed to be in the library after seven o'clock, except just to take books out or return them. All who are in the library at seven are checked, and others are required to show them upon entering. There was some trouble at the beginning and some confusion about exchanging the cards, but they are now accepted as matters of course. A first offense means the loss of the card for two weeks; and only a few ever reach the status of second offenders. These were boys and girls who were on the verge of permanent expulsion from the library anyhow; so

that the use of the cards show that, the ringleaders once removed, discipline is much simplified. In the first three months alone, 783 cards were issued; 476 of these being issued to Roosevelt High School students.

No one can claim that the discipline at Malabar has become a thing of the past; but constant supervision and the use of the student admission cards have combined in an improvement which gives hope that under a strong librarian it can be kept to a minimum.

CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL.

Miss Pinneo was chosen as secretary for the Co-ordinating Council of Hollenbeck Heights, but had to give up the position because it took up too much of her time. Her successor attended two meetings during the year, and one meeting of the Character-building Committee. The children's librarian also attended two meetings. The Council seemed to spend much of its first year in theories and conversation, without any practical results.

PLAYGROUND CO-OPERATION.

One of the most delightful features of life at Malabar has always been the warm friendliness between the library and its nextdoor neighbor, the Wabash Playground. Each holiday season finds the two combining to present something for the community. At Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and so on, the playground gave some play or some other form of entertainment on the Malabar lawn, and one of the children's librarians always told stories on the same program.

SPRING FESTIVAL.

The Americanization classes, under Miss Strickland, and the playgrounds and library co-operated again in May for the third Spring Festival. Miss Warren, Miss Pinneo, and Miss Hickman, were the library guests of honor. The festival was well attended, and was a beautiful and inspiring occasion.

LOSSES

There were heavy losses both in circulation and registration. The loss of county borrowers continued to be a heavy drain, and the fact that with lessened book budgets, fewer new books were available also had a share in the losses. The branch librarian tried to build up the pay collection, and hoped to make up some of the fiction losses in this way, hoping to "gain on the swings what was lost on the roundabouts."

BOOK CLUB.

The second week that Mrs. Banes was branch librarian, several of the young women of the neighborhood came in to ask if a book review club could be started at Malabar. It was with diffidence that she undertook what has proved the unfulfilling joy of her entire stay at Malabar. Meeting every Tuesday, the club had an attendance of from ten to twenty during its first year, which seemed very good for this section of the city. During the spring, there were even two out-of-town visitors who attended every meeting, one of whom had to come clear across the city. No matter how blue the librarian has been, nor how much was wrong elsewhere, the unfulfilling friendship and loyalty of this group of women has never been lacking; and has made the branch one never to be forgotten.

During the nine months of the year, the branch librarian gave book talks to three outside organizations. One was a Jewish Girls' Club at the Modern Social Center; one, a club of Russian girls at the Pecan Playground. The most interesting was a talk on "Jewish Fiction", to the very exclusive Jewish woman's organization, the Hadassah, at a beautiful home on Maryland Drive. This made even the sacrifice of a Saturday afternoon worthwhile.

The circulation showed its first loss for the branch history this year. It was 169,953, a loss of 14.37%. The juvenile percentage was 50.01; the fiction, 57.12. The book stock was 18033, and there were 5685 card holders.

1934-1935.

WILL-O'-THE-WISP PLAYSHOP

The summer of 1934 saw the working-out of a joint library and playground project on Malabar lawn, which was in every sense of the word a community project. Eight different playgrounds, seven from the East Side, visited the branch and presented programs, the whole plan being an experimental playshop based on the play shop which operated so successfully at Barnsdall Playground. Each program was carefully planned, and the various playgrounds vied with each other to make the afternoon delightful. Each program included a play and a group of dances, given by the playground, and a story by a librarian. Mrs. Davis told six of the stories; Miss Hovey, one; and Mrs. Kilgore sang a charming solo at the Eighth program.

Each program was intended to be an

organic whole, and play, dances, and story were correlated. Even the exhibits in the glass case in the branch were based on the week's subject. The branch librarian brought a number of Egyptian souvenirs for the case the week that there was an Egyptian program; when the program was Danish, a fascinating exhibit of Danish pottery was borrowed from the A. Zacho Company. The most interesting and popular exhibit was the Russian one; articles for which were lent by members of the Tuesday Book Club. The page, Stella Kovacevich, scouted among her friends for another charming exhibit of Jugo-Slav handiwork.

The whole activity was a community project which brought the neighborhood together in an informal and friendly fashion which will have lasting results. Some 1600 people attended the series, and the last program had the largest attendance of all. Interest never flagged but rose continually. Malabar felt that the whole idea created an atmosphere of good-will among the people of this section which is of inestimable value. The one regret which marred the summer was that no one from Central Library ever found time to attend one of the programs. -Playground people came faithfully; including one of the Commissioners, Mrs. Hadlock, but never a librarian except our own staff!

Among the treasures of the branch librarian is a letter of thanks from Mr. George Hjelte, Superintendent of Playgrounds and Recreation, in connection with this activity. Even more did she appreciate the statement which Mr. Hjelte made at a meeting of the Hollenbeck

Heights Co-ordinating Council, when he cited the Will-o'-the-Wisp Playshop as an example of ideal co-operation between playground and library, mentioning the Malabar library by name.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline ceased to be the all-absorbing problem of the branch this year, but still occupied far too much of the time of the staff. There were many expressions from the adult public, who often mentioned how much quieter the reading-room was, 865 student admission cards were issued to Roosevelt High School students, and very few had to be withdrawn, even for a day or two. AS usual, the majority of the cards were issued to Roosevelt High School students, they obtaining 519 of the total number of 865.

One of the ^{Major} jamor problems at Malabar was the fact that on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays, groups of boys climbed the fence into the garden time and again, and have torn up shrubs and flowers and played football on the lawn. Our zealous janitor, James Thomas, made several trips to the branch on Sundays, and on two or three occasions was able to catch the boys and talk to them. This is a problem of vandalism which will have to be solved in some manner.

STAFF

During this year, there were many changes in staff. Jane Kilgore and Hazel Davis both took long leaves for ill-health, and the winter saw a constant succession of substitutes. Alice Taber was transferred to Cahuenga. She was succeeded by Hilda Levenson, who bids fair to develop

into a perfect librarian. She completed a thorough revision of the pamphlet file during the year, and was a perfect tower of strength in every branch of the work.

REGIONAL MEETING.

On January 17, 1935, the Malabar staff attended the regional branch meeting at the Robert Louis Stevenson Branch, and gained much refreshment and inspiration from the contact with others who share our common problems.

SPRING FESTIVAL.

Malabar had the honor to present its fourth annual spring festival in April, under the guidance of Miss Strickland, as usual. Miss Warren

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BOOK TALKS.

During the year, the branch librarian gave book talks at two other branch libraries, in Los Angeles, at Wilshire in September, and at San Pedro in January. Both were interesting for the entire difference of the audience from that at Malabar. The branch librarian also gave brief book talks at two meetings of Miss Stricklands Americanization classes: at Sheridan School in December; and at Malabar School in June.

The most interesting talks of the year were given to quite large audiences of chapters of Hadassah, the exclusive Jewish women's organization. In September, the branch librarian spoke at the membership tea of the Los Angeles chapter of Hadassah; and in January, at a meeting of the Henrietta Szeold chapter. About 50 women were present at each meeting. The branch librarian also gave a book talk on "Jewish Authors and their works" at Menorah Center, the Jewish social center on Wabash Avenue, in June. She had to decline three other invitations to speak at other places on account of illness.

ROUTINE

The checking of the subject-headings of the Library of Congress list was completed in 1934, and that work has been kept up-to-date. The pamphlet file has been revised and weeded out annually.

All of the lists of the branch have been kept up-to-date, and during the year, three very valuable lists have been made. The Jewish list has been kept up, and the additions for the year have almost made it a new list. The three new lists, which

are used very widely, are "Improbable Stories"; "Russian Titles in English"; and "Proletarian Literature."

The borrowers' card file has been counted and revised.

BOOK CLUB.

If there is one thing more than any other which makes leaving Malabar a wrench, it is the Tuesday Book Club. The club opened for its third year of meetings in September, and met weekly until June. This year the attendance has been 29 or 30 women present, and when one considers this neighborhood and the many calls which these women have upon their time, that is really quite remarkable. The club has been unalloyed joy ever since it began; and the friendships which it has brought to the branch librarian will be cherished always.

SUMMARY

Malabar Branch Library is in a neighborhood which is still predominantly Jewish, although each year sees more and more Mexicans coming into the district. Since this is true, it is natural that there should be a very great demand for books in Yiddish. At the first, this demand was satisfied by borrowing from the Central Library and from Benjamin Franklin Branch. In 1926, some 200 people in the district signed a petition to request more books in Yiddish at Malabar; but it was not until 1931 that a permanent collection was housed in the branch itself. At that time, 422 Yiddish titles were bought for the branch.

Since 1931, no new titles have been

added to this collection, and the titles which Malabar has been able to borrow from the Foreign Department have not been satisfactory to the public. In April, 1936, three different groups of Jewish people approached the branch librarian about the question, and a special report was drawn up and submitted to Miss Warren. A committee was appointed, and we hope that something can be done to hold these really worth-while readers. With a book stock absolutely static for five years, it is no wonder that the Yiddish circulation has dropped.

The only other large foreign group which Malabar serves is the Mexican group. In 1924 the reports note that patrons of Malabar are using books in Armenian, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and Yiddish. A little later, Czecho-Slovak was added to the languages. But in 1935, the foreign circulation included French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Hebrew, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Yiddish. There is quite a demand for Hebrew books, which never is satisfied by the few titles of the Central Library loans.

DISCIPLINE

Laments over discipline run like a vivid thread through all the monthly, quarterly, and annual reports of Malabar. In May, 1923, we read that "undesirable young men" "made night hideous". Police aid was summoned again and again in those early years. In October, 1925, and again in September, 1926, police were summoned to disperse gangs. In March, 1928, "the outstanding problem is discipline"; in October, 1929, "the discipline problem is acute"; in January, 1932, there was a "new outbreak of lawlessness."

It is this which makes the librarian's lot a hard one at Malabar. It is not the actual book circulation, nor even the heavy reference work of the branch, but the constant strain of policing the room every minute. There can be no golden rule for keeping Malabar quiet: the high school admission cards have helped mightily, but there is still much to be done. Constant vigilance is needed and a firm hand must be kept on the situation at all times. The Jewish boy and girl is accustomed to a great deal of noise at home and abroad, in school, office and home, and especially in Hebrew school. Hence one must be on guard all the time. Yet a firm and kindly maintenance of discipline is possible, and is respected by the better elements of the district.

QUALITY OF READING .

There is no part of the city where better books are read, or better books requested, than at Malabar. The people are well acquainted with the older classics, and they ask for the best in late books, both fiction and non-fiction. Books in the fields of literature, economics, and current events, lead all others in demand. They like sophistication in both style and content. It is a joy to buy for a public like this, and a joy to find books for them.

In line with this is another subject which all who have ever worked at Malabar have noted. The turnover does not give any idea of the work that is done. On Monday nights, for example, every seat in the room will be taken, and there is a constant stream of questions, yet many of these boys and girls never take a book out of the library. It is impossible to show the real

amount of work that is done by figure, for so much of it can not be measured by any such yardstick.

COMMUNITY CO-OPERATION.

From the first, pleasant contacts have been preserved with the playground. The many playground programs which have been presented on the lawn; the annual Spring Festivals; and the two years of the Will-o'-the-Wisp Playshop, have all been real services to the community of which Malabar is a part.

"LAMENTATIONS".

There are several dark spots in Malabar history, which seem to be ineradicable. Among these may be counted the sad fact that the Jewish people are ceasing to move into the district, and the Mexicans are moving in, which means a decreasing use of the library.

Publicity is almost impossible in the neighborhood. Paper after paper arises, and paper after paper passes. They are sporadic and short-lived, and while each new editor welcomes library contributions, one has hardly become adjusted to having a paper once more when it draws its last breath. Also, there is no P.T.A. in any of the schools served by Malabar; the only one in the section is the one at Harrison Street School, which is just over the county line, although most of its children come to Malabar. There are no clubs or culture groups, and except for the library's own Tuesday Book Club, no groups of women to be reached. There are no churches, except five orthodox Jewish synagogues.

The nearness to the city limits is another very sad side to the story, for

that forbids growth and expansion.

Another phase which ought to be taken into consideration is the very strong Communist element in the neighborhood. The center of Communist propaganda for the entire city is only a few blocks away, and there are many signs of Communist influence evident. One can but keep this in mind.

But the present branch librarian leaves Malabar with warmth in her heart for the many friends that have come to her during the three years of service here; and with real appreciation of those of her staff who have borne "the heat of the day" with her and have upheld hands when it was necessary.

GROWTH

YEAR	CIRCULATION	
1915-16	3,882	
1916-17	14,360	90% 370%
1917-18	15,372	07%
1918-19	15,883	03%
1919-20	22,563	42%
1920-21	34,459	52%
1921-22	42,738	02%
1922-23	43,031	toothan 1%
1923-24	57,061	33%
1924-25	78,852	38%
1925-26	85,787	08%
1926-27	110,957	29%

- Myrtle
- Boris
- Harold
- Bernice
- Minnie
- Thelma
- Bernice
- Eva C.
- Minnie
- Marcia
- Jane
- Audrey

STAFF SUMMARY.

BRANCH LIBRARIANS.

Margaret A. Sharpe...Feb.1923-Dec.1924.
Golda Thompson.....Jan.1925-Dec.1927.
Dorothy A. Pinneo....Jan. 1928-Sept.1933.
Louise Parks Baner...Oct.1933-June 1936.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS.

Miss Matchette, one day a week, Oct.1924-
Feb.1925.
Lucile Berggren.....Mar.1925-Sept.1925.
Frances Kilcourse....Oct.1925-June 1926
Doris McWhorter.....Oct.1926-Aug.1928
Alpha Perkins..Sept.1928-Aug.1929.
Florence Hovey.....Spt.1929-

LIBRARIANS.

Edith Paxton.....Oct.1925-Dec.1925.
Ethel Doxsey.....Dec.1925-Sept.1927.
Margaret Light.....Oct.1927-June 1929.
Alice Taber.....June 1929-Sept.1934.
Hilda Levenson.....Oct.1934-

CLERICAL LIBRARY AIDS.

Myrtle Gravenbrock...1924
Doris Langford.....May1927-Aug.1928.
Hazel Porter.....Oct.1927 -Nov.1935.
Bernice Young.....Sept.1928-May 1929.
Minnie Reitzen.....May 1929-Sept.1929.
Thelma Baker.....Sept.1929-Nov.1929 .
Bernice Gibbs.....Dec.1929-Aug.1930.
Eva Camley.....Sept.1930-May 1931.
Minnie Pott.....Sept.1931-Oct.1932.
Marcia McGrew.....Sept.1932-Feb.1933.
Jane Kilgore.....Mar.1933-Sept.1935.
Audray Latham.....Sept.1935-

ASSISTANT CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS.

Frances Widick.....Jul.1928-May 1929.
Helen Ludwig.....Sept.1929-Aug.1930.
Florine Mentzer.....Sept.1930-June1931.
Carolyn Palmer.....July 1931-July 1932.

PAGES.

Philip Lord.....1925-Aug. 1927.
Ben Plax.....Sept.-Oct. 1927.
Phil Erenberg.....Nov., Dec.1927.
Earl Henderson.....Jan.1928-June 1935.
Stella Kovacevich.....Oct.1932-
William Martin.....Aug.1935-

JANITORS.

Theresa Bors.....1924.
Corinthian Taylor 1925-Aug. 1927.
William Peters.....Sept.1927-June 1930.
Joseph Apall.....Jul.1930-Oct.1932.
James E. Thomas.....Oct.1932-

HISTORY OF MALABAR BRANCH,
LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The early years of Malabar history are shrouded in deep, dark mystery, delightfully to the heart of a detective-story fan, but a trifle baffling to the earnest historian. The first report sheet in existence is dated May, 1923, and the first annual report is dated that same year. When one delves more deeply into the archives, statistical sheets come to light dated 1915-1916, but these are very little help.

However, just as the anthropologist builds up a convincing animal from a few bones, so we can reconstruct a rather sketchy portrait even from these figures. Bit by bit emerges the picture of a tiny station in a rented building on Wabash Avenue. Even this had not been the first book service to the community, for earlier a small collection of books had been housed in the church at Evergreen and Winter Streets. The Improvement Association and the very active Parent Teacher Association of Malabar School, (long since lapsed into desuetude) campaigned as energetically for a library as they had previously worked for a school for the district.

The first statistic sheet shows that the circulation for the year 1915-1916 was 3475, with a juvenile percentage of 61 and a fiction percentage of 62. Both of these tendencies are still

To trace the ups and downs of a branch as far as circulations is concerned is not difficult, but to find the causes for fluctuations and changes in a library's patronage is quite another matter. So many factors enter into the latter picture that generally no one cause is to blame.

Malabar in 1929, Under Miss Pinneo, was a first group branch with a circulation of 167,000. The book count was 10,805, and the book budget was \$3,800. Seven years later the branch under Louise Banes reports a circulation of 131,208 for the year 1935-36 and quotes a book-budget of \$1247.00. The year's loss was 6,909 and part of this loss was attributed to the \$2.00 charge for the county residents using the branch. Fifteen percent of the branches' borrowers lived outside the city and during this period the registration dropped 10%. Miss Larson reports in 1937-38 a loss again in adult of 67 in registration but a gain of 28 in juvenile due to a new regulation of lifting the charge of \$2.00 for the children. At this time Mexican children were entering the schools in increasing numbers, this and a shortage of books were the causes for the losses. Miss Moyle in her 1939 report states "It is hoped that the nadir of circulation has been reached and that the County ruling with its attend \$2.00 fee will cease to be a factor in registration losses. Although the schools report a high percentage of Mexicans each year, Malabar continues to be 99% Jewish. We believe that Malabar reached bed-rock in 1938 with an annual circulation of 117,305, a tremendous drop from its all time high of 198,488, in 1933." Juvenile percentage jumped from 53% to 56% at this time.

In 1940 war was declared and as the population around Malabar was foreign it was natural that the circulation would suffer heavy losses. Many had relatives and

friends in the war zones so radio broadcasts

Community Contacts

The Schools

Malabar's community contacts have been varied and informal but its greatest contact has been with the schools. East Los Angeles College, Roosevelt and Wilson High Schools, Evergreen, Sheridan, Harrison, Malabar and Murchison grade schools are all in our district. All have been contacted for booktalks, for visits to the branch for instruction in the use of a library and for the younger group the story-hours.

Malabar this year is thirteenth in juvenile circulation. This we think is very good for a small branch.

Beginning with the 1936 report of the children's librarian we read that twenty visits to the schools a month was the minimum and as many classes visited the library for instruction. This indicates the heavy work carried by the children's librarian at Malabar.

1937, Murchison school asked for library service. Malabar responded and this weekly visit of the children's librarian and a clerk-typist to help is part of our routine. The children of this district really live on the other side of the tracks, in homes that most of us would hesitate to enter. They are truly the underprivileged. The only bright places in their lives are their school and playground activities. So if the library can contribute its share by supplying good books it seems almost imperative that it do so. At times when book losses seem very large and parents and even teachers are indifferent we have wondered if the work was worth while.

With the older boys and girls contacts have been made through book talks and of course through the help we have given them with their studies. Reference work has always been very heavy at Malabar and as a new member of the staff working with a small collection of books, it is doubly hard not to have the books one needs.

Boys' Day has always been featured at Malabar. During the war patriotic motifs were used and lists of books boys would be interested in were stressed. The past year the librarians of the eastside branches entertained them with lunch first and then initiated them into the routine of library work.

Summer work at the branch has been varied, a book circus with Mr. Leo Politi meeting 400 children, to weekly matinees from the various playgrounds holding forth on our back lawn. A play was given with appropriate dances and story told by the librarian all tying in with the subject chosen.

The Playground

The Wabash playground has from the beginning been very closely allied with the library. Sometimes as at present too closely allied. We can hardly think today, while the energetic pianist is playing dance pieces for the children.

Each Spring a festival is carried out by the playground and is participated in by all the children. The parents of course are the interested spectators. The whole personnel of the playground enters into the spirit of the entertainment and trucks are sent over with decorations and men to put them up. This has been given for years on the front lawn of the library, and is very colorful. This year the new librarians

watched with fear and trembling, hoping that the grass would not be ruined, and strange to say next day one could discover no damage whatever to the lawn.

Co-ordinating Councils

Sometimes we have felt it rather irksome to attend the meetings of the co-ordinating council, especially if the work was rather heavy, but on the Eastside of town the meetings are so informal and jolly that members look forward to going to them. Each group entertains once during the year, serving coffee to those attending. Each member is requested to bring his own lunch. Annual reports generally mention attending and at times booktalks have been given before the group.

Jewish Centers

There are two Jewish centers in our district, Menorah Center with a membership of 1200 and Michigan-Soto Center with an enrollment of 1400. Mr. Moses and Mr. Joseph Esquith serving as the leaders respectively. Here Yiddish and Hebrew classes are held, athletics, arts and crafts, and drama lessons given to Jewish members. Recently Michigan-Soto Center has let in the Mexican youth. Book talks have been given to these groups but not often.

Americanization Classes

The library has close contact with these new Americans. Miss Spencer, the class teacher preferred to use our clubroom to a room in the school, for her pupils. She thought the library was quieter. Every morning during the school year these men and women would come for their lessons. All were Jewish, some were new to our country others had been in the country but had not

the time for study. Now that their children were married or at work the parents were learning the language of their adopted country. Some could hardly say goodmorning at first, but when their course was finished they could all talk and most of them could read simple books.

Discipline Problems

Miss Banes's 1936 history of the branch ends as follows, "Laments over discipline runs like a vivid thread through all the monthly quarterly and annual reports of Malabar." "As early as 1929-30 the annual report records a meeting of representative citizens meeting with Mr. Wardlow and Miss Pinneo to discuss means of eliminating gangs on the streets surrounding the library, rendering the streets impassable to young girls. The difficulties to be met were the two elements: the orthodox Jewish group and a very militant communistic group. The only constructive social facilities in the neighborhood were the library, the Hebrew school near the library and a synagogue.

"The destructive agencies were numerous. A pool room, which served as a meeting place for gangs; a theater which supplemented the pool room; the "Libertarian Center", which was an Anarchistic institution and the Communist Center at Brooklyn and Mott, the Communistic headquarters of the city."

The Committee recommended a social center for social, cultural, and recreational activities. They appealed to the Playground Commission to extend the facilities of the Wabash Street Playground. Appeal was also made to the Jewish Community of Los Angeles to establish an adequate Jewish center in connection with a Hebrew school.

Menorah Center was established at this time and the Wabash playground was enlarged and a clubroom added.

The five years following this report is the beginning of our history and we will endeavor to follow the changes through to the present time.

Discipline Problem.

Miss Larson followed Miss Banes as branch librarian at Malabar and her report of 1938 complains of serious trouble with gangs of boys throwing stink bombs and lighted papers into the library. The juvenile authorities were called but the trouble was quelled only temporarily.

Miss Moyle, branch librarian in 1939 says, "The general unrest of the war and the heat wave aggravated the usual discipline problem. When it was discovered the incorrigible boys of all the eastside schools were responsible, the Juvenile Detail was called. We feel that when the schools with all their machinery of truant officers have given these boys up, a librarian has a poor chance when coping with them alone. Our next step will be to require admission cards from students after 7 P.M."

In 1940-1945 Los Angeles woke up to the fact that it had a juvenile delinquency problem and local committees bestirred themselves to see what could be done to eradicate it. At this time \$250,000 was given to the Youth project. This was the period of the gang riots and of the Mexican zoot-suiters, or Pachuco as they called themselves. The gang spirit among underprivileged youngsters is generally caused by bad housing, poverty, economic and social discrimination. Some youths of Scotch-Irish, Jewish or Italian, Russian or Negro backgrounds have joined the Pachuco gangs.

These boys and girls assumed the dress and talk of the zootsuiters.

Probably the organization doing the most to help the young Mexicans is the Community Service Organization of Boyle Heights! Edward Roybal, our new councilman from the ninth district, and several energetic leaders gathered about sixty interested men and women as a nucleus and meeting weekly, planned a program of civic and educational betterment for the Mexican-American youth.

The Los Angeles Youth Project was organized as a delinquency prevention program for underprivileged areas throughout the city. This group has been very successful with young children. The Catholic Youth Organization has probably reached more of the Mexican-American boys than any other agency and has been so successful with the boys that as one group leader expressed it, "It is a temptation to turn the Mexican youth problem over to them." However the work with one quarter-million Latin Americans is much too large for that.

Another successful group working with the boys is the division of the Los Angeles County Probation Department, organized and directed by Steve Keating, who has battled most of his years for the Mexican-American boys and girls. After the 1943 riots Tom Garcia, Doctor Camilo Servin and later John Brewer under the direction of Steve Keating set to work on some of the fundamental social and personality factors causing maladjustments in Mexican-American youth. Now it is estimated that through their efforts 2,000 Mexican teen-agers meet bi-weekly for dances in school auditoriums, mountain and beach trips, sewing classes, crafts, motion pictures, discussions of anything that appeals to them. Their leaders are Mexican or

Negro, with some university students helping out.

Last but not least of the projects are the Lou Costello Jr. Foundation and the Variety Boys Club of Boyle Heights. These clubs for the boys are open to all and afford every kind of entertainment imaginable as well as opportunities to learn crafts and trades. When we were told at the Variety Boys Club that since their opening in March of this year that arrests of delinquent boys had dropped from 75-100 to four or five we realized that all that most of these boys needed was well directed activity for their exuberant spirits. With all this civic interest in the youth problem let us turn back and see what had been accomplished as far as the library was concerned.

Mrs. Nicholas's 1948 report: "Within the branch, discipline is vastly improved over our first years here. We have only occasional outbursts and bands of rowdies trying to take over. Conditions in the community are rather bad, with gang wars, purse snatchings and assaults too close to the branch for comfort."

1948-1949 we have had practically no disturbance at all. One night a few rowdy youngsters came in, but the playground director escorted them out and that was all we heard about it. I believe that the "vivid thread" has worked itself out and that discipline as the other branch librarians knew it, is a thing of the past.

Mrs. Eunice L. Watkins, who retired as Senior Librarian of the Mulholland Branch in 1952(?) died on Saturday Feb. 16, 1963