

*Michael*

## MOSES GREELEY PARKER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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### LIBRARIAN'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES FOR JANUARY-DECEMBER 1978

The year 1978 signaled both a beginning and an end for the Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library. Many Dracut citizens will cherish the memory of the Parker Library as a small quaint brick library on Arlington Street; yet by the end of the year, construction on the library addition had progressed to the point where the vision of the library, quadrupled in size, was clear. Even though 1979 will mark the first year of operation of the expanded library, the library construction project dominated this department's services, programs, and personnel in 1978. At the same time, this project will not have been achieved without cost to and commitment from the Dracut community.

With the focus on the library addition, a major concern in 1978 was the hiring and retention of trained qualified personnel. Only one new full-time position, Circulation Manager, was developed, and it was funded from federal Anti-Recession monies received by the Town. Susan Torres began her duties as Circulation Manager in August 1978. Also Dorothy Isherwood's position of Technical Services Manager was expanded in July from a permanent-part-time position to full-time. Assistant Director, Constance Griffin, started her coursework at Simmon's College leading to the Master's Degree in Library Science, and she has completed one-third of her requirements. Dorothy Isherwood and Helen Niemaszyk participated in subregional workshops aimed at improving public-staff relations and at gaining experience in operating various pieces of audio-visual equipment. Although the C.E.T.A. program has been of support in funding two Library Aide positions, additional C.E.T.A. support will be necessary to staff the expanded library. Whereas 1977 saw the permanent employees in the library join the National Association of Government Employees as their collective bargaining agent, 1978 marked the first negotiated contract. Henceforth permanent employees' salaries, benefits, and working conditions will be subject to collective bargaining procedures governed by a contract with the Town of Dracut. However, with the opening of the expanded library anticipated in mid-spring 1979, an obvious need remains for additional qualified personnel.

Even though the library was closed the last six weeks of 1978 and the books kept in the library's stacks were removed from circulation due to construction, the Parker Library circulated 36,587 books. Included in this figure are 22,094 adult titles and 14,493 juvenile titles. In addition, patrons borrowed 5,281 paperback volumes; 3,562 magazines; and 1,448 records. Requests for materials which the library could not supply were provided through 464 inter-library loan receipts, and this library was able to help patrons of other libraries by sending 14 books to these libraries. Book deposits to the Dracut Council on Ageing and the Dracut Housing Authority were also part of this department's book services. All total this library circulated 47,509 items including these deposits.

With the construction of the addition, the library's program of service in and out of the library was continuously interrupted. However, the Parker Library was able to present programs of interest and value to the Dracut community. These programs included a speed reading course offered by Santa

Associates of Brookline, Mass., the "Roots" film series, and the initiation of Special materials' collections through the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System. These collections included the BASICS collection, a high interest-low vocabulary collection of materials designed to aid in exploring day to day issues and problems. Also, a special collection of paperback materials, Paperback Power, was available at the library. Librarians gave presentations at a Parents Advisory Council Meeting, visited the Greenmont, Dracut Centre, and Goodhue schools, and librarians also presented programs for local civic organizations as well as at other libraries.

Children's library services continued to expand both in and out of the library. Assistant Director, Constance Griffin, conducted preschool story hours throughout the year with a total attendance of approximately 900. The weekly film series for children started last year continued in 1978 with an attendance of approximately 1,000. Sixty-six children completed the summer reading program held at the library, and concluded with a program attended by approximately 100 friends and relatives. Puppet workshops were once again a popular feature at the Parker Library with fifteen children presenting a puppet play to an audience of over 100. Unfortunately, such special events as the Halloween and Christmas parties were cancelled due to construction. Ms. Griffin was also very busy in taking the library outside of its walls. Throughout the year she was in the schools introducing the library and its services to Dracut children. Visits to and from classes at the Goodhue, Dracut Centre, Parker Avenue, and Greenmont schools were part of this program. Highlighting this introduction to the library was the production of a slide-tape presentation which may be taken on school visits or may be loaned for use. Ms. Griffin also presented a highly successful program at the Adams Library in Chelmsford in March where she was also invited to participate in the Adams Library summer program. Given such enthusiastic responses to children's activities both in and out of the library, what was the original Parker Library has been designated entirely for children.

The library's materials' collection continued to grow with the addition of 2,452 volumes to the book collection. The magazine collection will be expanded in the coming year in anticipation of the addition as well as the start of a microfiche collection of back issues of periodicals. This library's recordings collection increased with the addition of 321 recordings. Registrations continued to increase with 1,323 new patrons registered to bring the total number of registrations on file to 11,076.

The most visible and dramatic area of change in the Parker Library this past year has been the construction of the library addition. Construction of this addition affected all the library's programs, services, and personnel. With the anticipated opening of the addition scheduled for mid-spring 1979, for the first time in recent history this library will have the physical capacity to meet minimum national standards for library service to a community of Dracut's population.

However, construction of this project has not been without delay. The area of greatest concern occurred with the controversies surrounding the expenditure of Town funds voted at Annual Town Meeting to "finish and furnish" the addition project. The resolution of this controversy added weeks to the construction

project. Also, with the delays in obtaining a quorum for a Special Town Meeting, scheduled originally for mid-October, weeks were again added to the time to connect the existing library and the library addition. Consequently the Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library had to close the last six weeks of 1978. With the number of inquiries concerning the closing, public interest in this library does not appear to be lacking.

Special mention must be made of support which this library has received from inside and outside the Dracut community. With the support of Dracut's Board of Selectmen, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners awarded \$20,000 under Title I of the Library Services and Construction Act (L.S.C.A.), a federal source of library funding, to the Parker Library for the expansion of Children's services and the initiation of Young Adult services. Also, the library received an additional \$2,000 under L.S.C.A. through the Board of Library Commissioners for the improvement of the reference collection. Private foundations and businesses offered substantial support. The \$5,000 donated by the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation has been designated for use in developing an audio system to support the Young Adult service project. The DeMoulas Foundation donated approximately \$1,500 to buy a microfiche reader-printer and microfiche in order that this library may begin use this media for storage of back issues of periodicals. Alexander's Supermarkets donated \$500 for the construction of three tables to be placed in the Children's room, and the George Brox Paving Company donated thirty-two tons of hot top to pave the library's parking lot. In total approximately \$24,700 were donated to this library from grants, foundations, and businesses. All of these donations will enable the Parker Library to more effectively serve the Dracut community.

The Dracut community has also been a source of support to the Parker Library. The Friends of the Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library deserve special recognition for their efforts in support of the library. Through such activities as the annual book sale, a bake sale, and a flea market, the Friends not only donated a slide projector, they donated \$1,000 to make the completion of the stairwell connection between the addition and the existing library possible. Highlights of the Friends' year also included the first annual Book Worm Bash held April 15. Finally, there must be a sincere thank you to the citizens who have donated materials to this library. Only with such support and donations can this library truly claim to be a community supported agency.

The construction of the library addition which affected the Dracut community as well as the library in 1978 serves as a signal to the future of this library. With the opening of the expanded library in the immediate future, the Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library has grown to offer the Dracut community the potential for an active dynamic program of library services. However, the library depends on Dracut citizens as the primary means of support to fulfill this potential.

MICHAEL F. GRAZIER, Director  
Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library