

Mary Parker

Side 1:

[1] She describes her house which was built after the Civil War and called Camp Patton. It was considered out in the country. The street was unpaved and stepping stones were needed to cross the street (see undated early newspaper clipping) [Kosta Rantzos, Robert Bunn]

[33] She attended the Grove Park School for Girls and describes her early life - "Charlie Iceman" giving chunks from his wagon and riding horses 8 abreast down Murdock and up Kimberly - all unpaved. They had a cow, chickens and a horse.

[54] Montford and Pearson Drive were considered stylish. Then the Manor and Grove Park were developed. [Jane Bingham]

[75] Her brother Frank was with the N.C. Court of Appeals. James was a physicist with Enka, responsible for the Colburn Mineral exhibit in Pack Place and is currently working with UNCA students. [Frank Parker, James Parker]

[121] Her grandfather and great grandfather built a church on the site of the Presbyterian Church - about 1800 - one of the first churches on Church Street.

[135] In the 1950's she was so enthusiastic about the films shown at the library she sent \$10 to the Friends of the Library - the dues were then \$1 a year [50 cents in 1946]. She was immediately "ordained" chairman. The Friends started as a committee of the AAUW and became officially an auxiliary of the city library. It was kicked around politically and was periodically threatened to be removed from the budget depending on the financing of city water! [Charlie Chaplin]

[165] State aid for the library depends on local support. It is part of the county system now and can't be used as a political football. The State prefers to deal with one county. Black Mountain, however, still receives funds from Black Mountain town. It has a club like the Auxiliaries and holds meetings every month with volunteer activities and programs. South Buncombe had a big drive which, when achieved, reduced current activities. Weaverville has a board and a lucrative book sale. Pack Library and the city branches belong to the city but operating expense comes from the county. West Asheville branch is over crowded and needs funds to expand. Oakley was developed 30 years ago as an annexation plan and took time to develop. [Rob Neufeld]

[262] The Sondley Collection was never a public library collection and facilities to house it properly were never available. It was first stored in the City Hall and then the Library. An over-eager librarian stamped each volume on page 50 which lowered the value. The North Carolina portion of the Collection has been retained and is stored in the Library Vault. [Tony Lord]

[354] She discusses her involvement with the YWCA which served self-supporting women of good character. [Leo Finkelstein]

[376] The Pen and Plate Club Papers which portray the history and development of Asheville are in the N.C. section of the library. [Thomas Raoul]

[380] Her father was involved in Social Services. She describes the Lindley Home (unwed mothers - no longer existing), the Mission Hospital (the Flower Mission, a self-perpetuating board was run by the WCTU). [Haywood Parker]

[447] The development of the hospitals - War Memorial called Memorial Mission, Asheville Normal School property and Norburn Hospital merger...cooperation with St. Joseph's - the development of MAHEC.

[500] With Vatican II, nuns left the orders and Catholic schools could not afford to continue. [Tom Polskey, Mother Potts, Sister Winters]

[528] She tells about the Polskey Family. The Polskey store was the largest in Akron, Ohio, which became the Allied stores. Tom's interest was in the arts and he started the Chamber Music Society here. It was his idea to have foreign films from the Museum of Modern Art. He worked with exhibits in the Library Art Gallery (see clippings) [Tom Polskey, Bert Polskey, Tony Lord]

Side Two:

[2/5] She tells about the circulating print collection. These reproductions are in the South branch and the Pack Library.

[2/17] The Junior League took pictures to schools on a 6-week rotating basis, 40 years ago. [John Bridges]

[2/34] The film programs are being phased out due to VCR and TV. Before the Chamber Music Society was formed, artists were brought to the city and there were summer series also. [Tom Polskey]

[2/64] The chamber music group met in the old High School, and ACT building, the Lipinsky Auditorium and the Unitarian Church. Literary programs were also sponsored. [John Bridges]

[2/76] The purpose of the Friends of the Library is to supplement and enrich the Library program - the extras not in the budget.

[2/105] Two thousand children attend the two-day story-telling festival. Friends act as guides and serve lunch to the story tellers.

[2/136] The Library Friends meet 4-5 times a year and the board is self-perpetuating. They pay for the newsletter "Happenings" with money from the book sale. [Rob Neufeld]

[2/165] Twelve years ago with photographs from the North Carolina collection, a quality book called Asheville was produced and sold for \$20. There is a vendor who is interested in selling the

unsold volumes and more income will be produced for the Friends from this. Enough sales were made in the past to cover expenses.

[2/209] Membership drive is passive today but 45 years ago, when she was education chairman of the Jr. League, she suggested that each member join at \$1 each and they did.

[2/231] Members receive copies of "Happenings." Both husband and wife join under one fee of \$5 but are counted as two people. There are therefore, 5000 mailings today. It is important, when going to the county commission and the city council, to know the membership number. Last summer there was danger of losing the State grant because the budget office had not budgeted matching funds. The Library board got in touch with the commission and \$50,000 arrived.

[George Stephens]

[2/263] Ours is the only large system in the state that doesn't have an automatic check-out system. One is expected here by the end of the year.

[2/273] Her family has always been associated with Chapel Hill. Her father was on the executive board of the University in 1924. [Haywood Parker]

[2/309] Funds for the Friends came largely from the book sale. Most books are derived from library withdrawals and these belong to the county. An arrangement was made whereby these books could be purchased in bulk and, when sold the proceeds would go to the Friends. Some libraries do not have this agreement with the county and, since the library cannot keep proceeds, do not have sales. Books are donated by individuals and in some cases entire libraries are donated. Last year \$14,000 was realized. People like to work on the sale. It is a one-shot, three-hour stint, and one hundred or so volunteers work. The sale used to be held in the corridor but this is physically difficult. It is held in Lord Auditorium and volunteers have a week to set up.

[2/453] When Bele Chere started it was a local street festival and the sale was held outside very successfully; however the crowd has deteriorated over time.

[2/480] At one time the Rhododendron Festival and Brigade of Guards was a civic event but the real fun did not extend to the people who underwrote it. With cultural changes in the community it was not continued.

[2/533] When the Library moved from Pack Square to Haywood Street, children formed a children's parade (see photos). A pamphlet entitled "Is Pack Library Obsolete" was distributed by the postal office to every one in town.

[2/568] Donations are made to the Library though the Library Trust Fund. The Friends donated a piano (see photo). The Community Trust Fund of Western Carolina on Biltmore Ave. contributes to the Library. [John Bridges, Dr. Sprinza Weizenblatt]