

Oct 26th 1936

SOCIAL EVENTS

Five Rural Free Libraries Established in Rockland As Part of N.Y.A. Program

Long dark evenings, the dread of many men and women in rural communities in Rockland, who live too far from the bigger centers of population in the county to enjoy the privileges of libraries established there, will find those evenings less lonely this Winter because of the rural library service program put into operation by the National Youth Administration.

Five libraries have been established under the direction of Mrs. Edith Switz of Naurausaun, library supervisor for District No. 3 under the N. Y. A.

The first of these was that established at the New City School. The New City Parent-Teacher Association and interested individuals in the community have given it its fullest support. Funds have been raised for the purchase of books and on September 1 there were 865 volumes in the library. Miss Rita Pantol is in charge.

Doodletown's was the second to be set up. Miss Beatrice Rose, a member of one of the oldest families in that section, is the library worker. The library is housed in the school. The evenings are especially long and dark in this community for kerosene lamps are still used for lights and Doodletown is more isolated than some of the other rural sections of the county. Reading matter is especially welcomed.

Monsey, which through its Parent-Teacher Association, has become especially interested in affording residents within its boundaries means and ways to enjoy their leisure time, is the third in which a rural library has been established. It is still very new. Mrs. Robert Jessup, wife of the school principal, is in charge of the work and is assisted by Loretta Straut. The library, like the others, is housed in the school.

Mrs. Mowbray-Clarke in Charge

A fourth is to be opened at the Sloatsburg School on November 1. Miss Maria Trischita will be in charge of the library and is now cataloguing books and preparing for the opening. A fifth is in Naurausaun.

Mrs. Mary Mowbray-Clarke is Rockland County chairman for the N. Y. A. rural library service program.

A book drive is being carried on in the county to obtain a greater number of volumes for these libraries and for others which may be established. Persons having volumes for which they have no further use, which they feel they will never read again, and which are taking up space they would rather use for some other purpose, and persons, who from a purely unselfish standpoint, would like other people to enjoy books which they have enjoyed, are being asked to donate volumes for the drive. The drive is being carried on under the National Youth Administration.

Books by popular authors such as Grace Livingston Hill, Grace Richmond, Temple Bailey, Mary Roberts Rhinehart, Faith Baldwin and Kathleen Norris, will be especially welcomed. Children's books are also desired.

The Suffern, Spring Valley, Haverstraw, Nyack, Piermont and Pearl River libraries will act as depositories. Volumes left in these libraries will be collected by workers for the National Youth Administration. In instances where the volumes taken in are not to be found on the shelves of the depository libraries, they will be kept in those libraries. The other volumes will be distributed where needed.

Open Ten Hours Weekly

Each of the five libraries with an N. Y. A. worker in charge is open ten hours a week. The hours in Doodletown are from ten to twelve o'clock and from two until four o'clock, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Under the N. Y. A., the first consideration has been to give an opportunity for youths to do library work. But the results have been far more beneficial to the communities where the libraries have been established than to the workers themselves.

Not only have N. Y. A. library workers been put in charge of library service to rural communities having no public library, but they have been placed in established libraries where these libraries have been enabled through extra workers to extend their services to the public beyond their former limitations.

These workers, of course, are not trained librarians but they have been taught how to keep book records in alphabetic order, to repair books and to be of help in every possible way in enabling people to get reading material. The Congers High School gives a course in library work and some of the workers have received their training through this course.

Hope has been expressed by many who have benefited by the service extended by the NYA that a traveling library can be established in the country. Before the depression a movement to have one set up met with favorable response and without a doubt would have been established if it had not been for the depression. The need for such a service has been demonstrated in the eagerness with which the NYA libraries have been received.