

An Oral History Interview
with
George B. Moreland
Past Director of Montgomery County Public Libraries
by
Norman Finkler
for
The Marie Bennett Library of Local History
Sponsored by
The Memorial Library Fund
of the
League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc.
in Cooperation with
The Montgomery County Department of Public Libraries

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League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc.
Memorial Library Fund

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
(in cooperation with the Montgomery Co. Dept. of Public Libraries)

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON GEORGE B. MORELAND

PRESENT ADDRESS: 700 Melrose Ave., Apt. H-34
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BIRTHPLACE: Edgewood, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania - July 25, 1901

RESIDENCE:

childhood: Edgewood
Montgomery County, Maryland: 1951 to 1969

EDUCATION: Edgewood High School 1918
Mercersburg Academy 1919
Princeton University 1923
University of Pittsburgh 1926
Carnegie Library School
Carnegie Institute of Technology 1936

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Various positions in Washington (D.C.) Public Library 1936-1942 - 1946-1948
Librarian U.S. Merchant Marine Academy 1943-1946
Librarian Cambria Free Library, Johnstown, Pennsylvania 1948-1951
Director, Department of Public Libraries, Montgomery County 1951-1969
(On leave 1956-1958 serving as Library Advisor to the Government
of Pakistan, Karachi Pakistan)

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:

Frequent appearances as speaker at civic groups (Allied Civic Group,
Montgomery County Civic Federation, etc.)

PUBLIC OFFICE: Past President Maryland Library Association 1956
Past President District of Columbia Library Association 1963
Past President Association of Montgomery County Administrators

SPECIAL HONORS & AWARDS:

Honorary Member Maryland Library Association
Honorary Member Association of Montgomery County Administrators

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NORMAN FINKLER: This is Norman Finkler interviewing George B. Moreland on October 26, 1974.

You were saying that the Montgomery County Library Law was passed in 1950 and the Library Board was appointed in September of that year. I assume that shortly after that there was an advertisement of some sort announcing the opportunity as Director of the Department. How did you manage to see that?

GEORGE MORELAND: At that time I was looking through the library literature for a position that might be more challenging than the one in Johnstown where I was.

NORMAN FINKLER: Is that Johnstown, Pennsylvania?

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where I had been for three years, and there were two advertisements which took my eye. One was for Midland, Michigan, and the other was for Montgomery County, Maryland. I had lived in Montgomery County in my earlier days -- 1941.

NORMAN FINKLER: Were you working in the District then?

GEORGE MORELAND: Working in the District. The District of Columbia Public Library as a children's librarian. So I knew something about it. Particularly inasmuch as, when I came back to the U. S. Maritime Service Headquarters in Washington during the early years of the war, I found a place to live in Montgomery County, in Takoma Park. Interestingly enough, I think, it was an apartment in the home of Mrs. Robertson, who was the founder of the Takoma Park Library. At that time, and for some years later, she did the cataloging for all the books in the Takoma Park Library. So, I heard from both Montgomery

County and Midland. I went up to see them at Midland and had been invited back by the City Manager of Midland, to a final interview by the City Council in November. At the same time, I had sent this application to Montgomery County and heard from them that eventually I might be called in for an interview.

NORMAN FINKLER: Did you know when the interview would take place?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, sometime later the interview took place. I thought it was very interesting that there were sixty-nine applicants and only ten were called in for interviews. At the suggestion of my wife, who said, "Why don't you figure out what you would like to do in Montgomery County, and, if you can, propose how to establish a library system?", I made a plan and had it mimeographed. I finally got in to see the interviewing committee which was the Library Board and Irving G. McNayr, the County Manager.

NORMAN FINKLER: Do you remember where the interview took place?

GEORGE MORELAND: It took place in what at that time was the quarters for the weekly County Council Meeting in a basement of the County Courthouse. I was the last one interviewed. The one preceding me was a woman. I didn't see her but I could hear the laughter from the County Library Board and Irving McNayr, and I thought to myself, "My gosh, someone is really laying them in the aisle. I won't have a chance." So, out came Mr. McNayr who is at least six feet five inches tall and here was I five feet four inches -- barely. It was quite a conference! I must say that, in the next week's Sentinel, a columnist wrote the following:

"More than 69 applications came to the County Council for the position of Librarian for Montgomery County. We don't believe one came from a resident of this County.

"The field was narrowed to about ten for personal interviews. All of those who came had fine records, good qualifications and no doubt any one of them would have served this County well.

"One young lady was excellent. She almost stopped the show. One man who had all of the natural talents plus a fine appearance was good. It looked like the choice was between these two. However, Mr. McNayr knew there was one more applicant yet to be heard from. He went to the hall and quite by accident stumbled onto a little fellow who could have doubled for Charlie Chaplin in his best role. He asked his name and invited him to have an audience with the Library Board. He obliged.

"Mr. McNayr, and probably everyone on the Board present, must have wondered why this little man took the time to come all the way from Johnstown, Pennsylvania, for an interview. From an outward appearance he would never make Calvert's Man of Distinction Advertisement. But when he sat down! It only took two minutes for the Council and everyone concerned to realize that they had found their man in George Boulton Moreland, Jr., to be the Librarian for the County.

"Mr. Moreland, formerly with the District of Columbia Library System, had taken the trouble to make full and complete plans for the establishment of a system for this County. He knew what he was talking about. He had theory plus practical experience. He got the job at \$7,200 and from the good reports, he'll earn every penny of it."

NORMAN FINKLER: Do you remember some of the things you said in your interview?

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes, I said that they would have to have an adequate professional staff, and many more books and periodicals, and they should establish a film service. They should have a bookmobile service, not only for the outlying districts but for schools, in order to establish rapport between the schools and the County Library

system and also, the main thing, to give every parent of the County some visible return for their tax dollar. I also said it would cost about \$1.50 per capita, and the first budget, when it eventually came out, was \$235,000 which was about \$1.50 per capita for the 150,000 people who lived there at that time. There was one other service which we never did institute and that was the service which we had in Johnstown: ceiling projectors so that, when a person was an invalid and couldn't move, he could have books to read projected overhead. We got around that (not having it) by the fact that projectors were available to us to borrow from the National Institutes of Health Library.

NORMAN FINKLER: When you were appointed you set up an office somewhere; where was that?

GEORGE MORELAND: That was in a former sheriff's office on the upper floor of the County Courthouse, where I had four desks and two telephones. I bought three books, the World Almanac, Roget's Thesaurus, and Webster's Intercollegiate Dictionary. My secretary for the next six months was the secretary to the County Manager. Since this happened to be the middle of February, we still had about five and a half months to go in the current budget which had no provisions for a library department.

NORMAN FINKLER: Then I assume that one of your first concerns was to work on that budget which you referred to earlier.

GEORGE MORELAND: One of my first concerns was to find out what the heck was in all those libraries.

NORMAN FINKLER: Okay, there were seven of them?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, there were nine all together, but there were only seven that eventually came into the County's system within the first five years.

NORMAN FINKLER: Would you like to talk about them now, one by one, whatever you recall from your experiences, the quality of the buildings, the collections, and so on?

GEORGE MORELAND: I guess we can. Shall we take them alphabetically?

NORMAN FINKLER: Anyway you know how to!

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, the first one I went to was the biggest one, and that was the Silver Spring Library which had quarters in the Blair House, at the very southeastern part of Montgomery County, in a park at Georgia Avenue and Blair Road. The library occupied an addition to the building. They had two rooms in the main house which also served as headquarters for the County Draft Board. And then there was an annex where they had about 20,000 books. They had three of the four professional librarians in the public libraries in the County. Mrs. Louise Ferguson, the Head Librarian, was prepared, fortunately, for the establishment of the County Library system, and she had prepared her Library Board for going along with such an idea, inasmuch as she felt at the time, and I think she continued to feel, that in this way there would be better service for the libraries under her direction. Silver Spring had not only this main library in Blair Park, but one at Wheaton and another -- a little tiny one -- at Four Corners. The one in Four Corners was in a room in Marvin Memorial Church where you had

to go down steps to the basement, up some steps, then turn three times, and finally enter a small room which served as the Four Corners Library. The branch in Wheaton had just been opened in a store in the Wheaton triangle -- in a narrow fifteen foot by sixty-five foot room which was not particularly attractive.

NORMAN FINKLER: So there was one library and two small branches?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. Those libraries were supported by an area library tax, at four cents per hundred dollars of assessed valuation. I had said in my proposal that we could establish a library system at approximately four to five cents per hundred dollars of evaluation for the entire county, so this was right in line with that. This was in a sense a contrast to the Bethesda Library which was also supported by an area library tax, but their area library tax was six cents per hundred dollars of assessed valuation, and they were withholding part of it in order to build their own building, which Silver Spring was not doing. The Bethesda Library had already set aside part of the amount of money they had collected, approximately \$60,000 for capital investment. Their library was in the basement of the Bethesda Chevy Chase High School, and they had about 20,000 books.

NORMAN FINKLER: Now, you indicated that Silver Spring came in more or less immediately, probably because of the professional approach of their Librarian. Was that true in Bethesda as well?

GEORGE MORELAND: No, Bethesda was reluctant. I think the reason they finally came in (this was at least a year later, July 1, 1952) was because under the new library law, unless they came in, they would get

no support from the County library tax. Now, if they remained independent, they would still have to pay the tax but they wouldn't get any County money; they would still have to be supported by their own local area library tax. And they came in for another reason, too: it was that they didn't have enough money to complete their building which they had already started. They were in a bind really. Fortunately, they had some smart people on their Library Board, including John Reid, their chairman, who did a magnificent job of selling this new concept to his people, as well as to the County authorities.

Well, those were two active libraries, and they both had professional librarians.

First, of course, to do all these things, I had to go around and meet all the people and try to sell certain ideas of a system to the individual library areas. With some it wasn't difficult because they had nothing to lose, because they didn't have much except the desire and determination to have library services. The first one I went to was Garrett Park, where I went to the Garrett Park Citizens' Association and was introduced by Mr. Ralph D. Remley who was on the County Library Advisory Committee appointed to find out whether they needed a library system. He was also the first president of the Montgomery County Library Board and for years was a great supporter of the library system. Garrett Park had a little tiny library, a project of the women's club, set up in a room of a community building which was under the supervision of the Maryland Park and Planning Commission. They had only about 450 books, they could not give very much

service, and we didn't have to do much to offer them a lot more than they had. They had a couple of volunteers; there was no custodial service; they were open about ten hours a week. There was no great difficulty in getting them to come into the system. Then the Sherwood Library out in Sandy Spring was interested, and they also didn't have anything to lose because their library, such as it was, took up about five sections of shelving in the school library and the only time one could have service was when school was open. They had a volunteer and they had about, say 600-700 books, and that was it. They were supported, as the Garrett Park Library was supported, by candy sales, etc.

NORMAN FINKLER: And bake sales

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right, but also one of them -- I can't remember the name of the library -- was supported by subscription (a subscription library).

NORMAN FINKLER: In other words, one had to pay a nominal fee to use the library.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right, consisting of a dollar or two dollars, something like that -- nominal, minimal. In Gaithersburg, there was a library that, at that time, was in the town building which housed the fire department and also the headquarters for the town council and town clerk. Their collection was about 250 books. Again, there was no argument about it: they would be better off if they came into the system. In my book they might as well get something for their money, because they were going to have to pay anyhow. And they also were

volunteers, and they also were supported not by the many city funds but by voluntary contributions or by individual subscriptions.

NORMAN FINKLER: Now, I think we have one small library that is a very important one and that is the library in Kensington. There may be more but I

GEORGE MORELAND: There is. The library in Kensington was the only library that had its own building. It was supported, however, by bake sales, etc., and by a very small contribution of \$400 a year from the city funds. It was, though, an unusual library because it had been built in 1893 by Mr. Warner, a local developer, who named the library for his good friend Mr. Noyes. Then, Mr. Noyes, in turn, gave \$5,000 as an endowment.

NORMAN FINKLER: Wasn't he associated with the Washington Star also?

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes, Mr. Noyes was an editor of the Star.

Again, of course, it was a little difficult because what we were trying to do was to get these libraries to give it all -- everything they had. We had hoped that the County Council or the County authorities would promise to give equal support or equal services, in exchange for the gift of whatever the libraries owned. The Noyes Library really was the only library that had anything to speak of. The others had books and maybe a little equipment, but the Noyes Library had books and equipment and a building. So, it took more time, but they did come in. The treasurer was a Mr. Menke who is still quite active in Montgomery County up in the northwest, and his son is on the present County Council. There were several librarians from the District

of Columbia on its library board which was, and still is, a self-perpetuating board of trustees.

Now, there was another one; that's Rockville, which is in the County seat.

NORMAN FINKLER: Right, I think there is still another one, and we will come back to it.

GEORGE MORELAND: All right. Rockville was a toughy! They had been in existence for about twenty years. They had a professional librarian and they believed, as did Takoma Park, that they were sufficient unto themselves and they didn't want anything from anyone and they didn't need it. So, they didn't come in and Takoma Park didn't either as they were even more adamant with respect to their economy and everything else and there was no feeling that they were going to come in.

NORMAN FINKLER: We are going to jump ahead while you are thinking of Rockville because I know from reading the history of the Department that Rockville did come into the system, sometime in 1957 I believe. The obvious question is

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, by this time -- that's 1957, six years after the beginning of the County Library System, almost everybody could see that these other places were really getting some library service, and, like Bethesda, Rockville also had to pay the county tax. Of course, the Rockville City Council gave \$6,000 a year to that library for their service and they weren't getting any service from the County, except our bookmobile service to their schools. All they had to do was give their library over to the county system and they wouldn't

have to pay their own money to the Rockville Library, and they would get better service from the County Library System.

NORMAN FINKLER: Now, the Takoma Park Library, as of now (1974) still has not come in and there is a provision in the law which provides a rebate to the city of Takoma Park to support its library. Do you think that may be one of the reasons that perpetuates their independence?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, that could be a reason. That is if they didn't look at the values of the services. For instance, I think the last I remember, the amount of money rebated to Takoma Park for their tax was about \$7,000. The city of Takoma Park was paying at that time at least \$35,000 to run their library. Now, if they had come into the system then, they would not have gotten the \$7,000 but they wouldn't have had to pay the \$35,000. So, if they wanted to be adamant about it, they were paying about \$28,000 to \$30,000 more for their library service, and not as good, if I may say so, as if they had joined.

NORMAN FINKLER: We can now get back to this period when you were visiting all these libraries and negotiating with them. Were you still working on the first budget for the Department, and what was the general situation for library support at that particular time?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, of course, the two largest areas -- Bethesda and Silver Spring -- had been accustomed to public support by taxes (for example, area library taxes), so we had something to go on. But in some of the other places, for instance, out in the County where I think I spoke to maybe six or eight farm discussion groups, they all

said they certainly would like a library system but they didn't want to pay any more money. Well, you can't have something for nothing. Really! So, it was a matter of convincing the County Council with respect to the outlying county districts where they had very little library support. Also, we had to figure out how many books we were going to have, how many people we needed, etc., etc.. I had to meet with various civic groups: the Montgomery County Civic Federation, the Allied Civic Group, the Garrett Park Citizen's Association, and many others. There were a lot of them. But anyhow, I did meet with them all including the Bethesda Library Advisory Committee, which was made up of about fifty people who elected a library board, and they were reluctant to give up control of any of their books. If they came into the system, they didn't want their books going to anyone else, any place in the County. Because they, well, these were their books, you know. I never thought they would yield. As a matter of fact, they didn't the first year. What happened was this: we made tentative agreements with these library associations and library boards whereby they would relinquish control of everything they had -- for instance, in the case of the Noyes Library, a nice little building which was worth \$50,000 and their books which numbered 10,000 from donations and purchases over the last sixty years. In return for these assets, the County Council would promise to give the people at least equal facilities and services. Well, again, the guarantee of facilities didn't mean anything because what they had they would continue to have, and the services would naturally be improved, we were sure. From these

tentative arrangements, we then figured out a budget which would include those libraries which had indicated their willingness to come in. Now, Bethesda was not included in the first budget because they had decided not to come in. The budget was drawn up as I indicated and came out to about \$233,000, I think. Included in the budget was the purchase of three bookmobiles, because, unless we gave service to all of the County, they would be unwilling to pay taxes for something they weren't getting anything out of. So, our budget was turned in with those of the other departments, and, as I think it still does, the County Council had discussions about the budgets before the final approval. At this time, they had a meeting and made a tentative decision about the library budget. Next morning after the meeting, Mr. McNayr, the County Manager, called me in and said: "George, I'm sorry to tell you, but the County Council disapproved any kind of budget at all for the County Library except your salary for the coming year. They are not ready to have a library system." Well, that was kind of a blow, you know. Anyhow, he said, "Don't worry about it. I'll keep you on as a research assistant." (A quick end of my library career?) About a day later he said, "What about you and I going out to the country to see Mr. Lathrop Smith, a member of the County Council? He voted against having a library, so we'd better go out and talk to him. I think it may do us some good." So we did go out the next day to Mr. Smith's farm and there was Mr. Smith on a caterpillar tractor up on the hill. He came down and dusted himself off to see us. We sat around for about two and a half hours. Mr. Smith really

did almost all the talking. Mr. McNayr and I didn't say much and, after we left, I asked Mr. McNayr, "Is he going to change his vote?" And he said, "Yes, he is going to vote for the library system." You can imagine what the next three weeks were, while the Council was making up its mind. I was on pins and needles waiting for the final budget decision. Mrs. Moreland and I were in our single rented room waiting for the news, and about 11 o'clock our phone rang. Mr. McNayr was on the phone and said, "Mr. Moreland, you're in. They have passed the budget, buy the beer." So, we celebrated over a big glass of beer! That was that. And Mr. Smith was always a great supporter of the library after that.

NORMAN FINKLER: Now, in the first budget you mentioned that you had to support the salary of the secretary and wages to pay bookmobile staffs coming in, and how about processing? You had a program to purchase a number of books and

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, we had to purchase enough books to be able to give a little bit of something to each one of the libraries that came in. Plus the fact we had to have at least 10,000 books for each one of the bookmobiles. However, each one carried only about 3,000, but we still had to have three times as many books behind us as we had in the bookmobile, to refill them after each day's run. Therefore, the budget should and did include monies to purchase and process in the neighborhood of 40,000 books (which weren't as expensive in those days as they are today). Also, staff at the new library headquarters, to process the books and to do reference work for all the libraries, and

then a staff for each one of the libraries that had already joined. Some of them weren't being paid at the time they came into the system (they were volunteers). Only Silver Spring's staff was paid. So, by joining the system, everyone received a salary (everyone, part time volunteers included, was put on the payroll) and salaries in Silver Spring were increased slightly. As a matter of fact, there was an error, I think, in judgment upon the part of the Director, because it took until the present time, I believe, to get the salaries of the librarians up to a level comparable to those of the people in the other departments of the county government. It was a long hard row, and I think if we had started higher it wouldn't have taken so long to get where we are today.

NORMAN FINKLER: Well, back to the processing problem. Maybe we ought to shift years again. You mention the fact that you were planning a roof over the heads of all these people that you were going to be hiring. Where were these books going to be processed?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, we couldn't do it in Rockville because there wasn't any available space as far as the County was concerned. As a matter of fact, there wasn't any space even planned for in the new County office building which had not yet been built. So the problem was to find a place which would be good for at least five years or so, and satisfactory, and centrally located, and inexpensive. Particularly inexpensive, because this was a new thing and you can't go overboard. At least maybe you shouldn't. Anyhow, we found a site in Gaithersburg, which fortunately is the geographical center of the county. It was an

abandoned auto sales place owned by Lawson King.

NORMAN FINKLER: How did you hear about it?

GEORGE MORELAND: Let's see, I think maybe Mr. McNayr told me, I forget. I don't know. Anyhow, I called Mr. Lawson King to arrange to see him but he was sick, ill in bed with a bad cold. He said, "Well, you come out to see me anyhow. I'd like to meet you. You are going to take all this money for these libraries; come on out, let's talk about it." I did go out to see him and he was in bed. We talked about renting his property, which was a rather large auto sales place. And we agreed on a reasonable figure which was approved by Mr. McNayr. So we were in business! That's where we were about the tenth of July, 1951. From there we had a lot of things to do. You know you can't process a book without some equipment. And you have to decide on a choice of books and order books before you can even process them. And you have to have a staff that's able to do it, so it took a little time to get this going. Fortunately, we were able to get a darn good staff.

NORMAN FINKLER: You were mentioning something about these people, who they were, where they came from

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, of course, we took Mrs. Ferguson from the Silver Spring Library to be Chief of Adult Services, to select books for the adults. I robbed the District of Columbia Library by getting Miss Charlotte Clark to be head of the Children's Services and do children's book selection and to be in charge of the bookmobiles. And from the Enoch Pratt Library of Baltimore, Mrs. Mary Dulany to be

head of the reference services. The new head of the cataloging service was Mrs. Reba Harris from the Silver Spring Library. They didn't need her any more since they would now receive their books already processed from the new system, so we really didn't rob them. And the rest of the staff were people from Montgomery County, including the bookmobile drivers, who were extraordinary bookmobile drivers. We had one PhD!

NORMAN FINKLER: Was he from Montgomery County?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well sure, he lived in Montgomery County. We also had a retired Lieutenant Commander of the Navy in Montgomery County.

NORMAN FINKLER: That was Mr. Weigel?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right, Daryl Weigel. We had an accountant, too.

NORMAN FINKLER: An accountant as a bookmobile driver?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. He was probably tired of figuring out figures. So we really had a high class of bookmobile drivers. Of course they also had to be clerks. I mean, they didn't just drive the bookmobiles: they had to check the books out and check them back in.

NORMAN FINKLER: They didn't have librarians for the bookmobiles?

GEORGE MORELAND: Indeed we did. Also, we had a bookmobile assistant, as well as a bookmobile librarian: we had three staff members in each bookmobile.

NORMAN FINKLER: Were you able to provide weekend services and late afternoon services without any great difficulty from the very beginning or were there special scheduling problems?

GEORGE MORELAND: No, there were special scheduling problems at the

miles of county: you really have a problem. I did talk to Dr. Broome, who was the Superintendent of Schools, a fine gentleman, about the possibility of serving the schools. Not for supplementary textbooks, but reading materials, literature, and he was very pleased. As a matter of fact, the school libraries in those days weren't too good. We did go to every elementary school in the County, including the private schools, once a month. And the children came out to the bookmobile. We couldn't let whole classes come in because the bookmobile wouldn't hold 25 or 30 people and all the books. So each class had a committee that came out and checked out the books for their class. With the help of the librarians, they chose one book for each member of the class. They took them in to the classroom teacher, who was responsible for keeping track of the books. So she acted as a local librarian by charging the books out to the individual children. Thus, if a bookmobile was there once a month and the class took out thirty books, you can figure, by counting the number of names written on the book card, that each book was read at least three times while they were there for one month. It was very helpful. What it really did was to give every family who had a child in school a demonstration of what a county-wide library system could do when they brought the books home in their little hot fists. "This is what the bookmobile gave to me," and so papa, who was a reluctant taxpayer, as all taxpayers are, can say, "Oh my goodness, this is something I got out of my money -- here is a book my child has." I think that was very helpful in selling the

services of the library and winning support for the system. Of course, we had stops at a number of other places throughout the County scheduled every week. We thought at that time, and I still am sure it is true, that a stop every other week is not good enough. I have been using the bookmobile in Smithfield now

NORMAN FINKLER: That's Smithfield, Virginia?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. Every two weeks is not enough. You forget it, and you don't know which week it comes. So we had it every week. And we were able to give night service, too, because we had three bookmobiles and they worked from 9 o'clock in the morning until 9 o'clock at night. Of course we didn't have a staff working that long, but we did have additional staff so that we could change crews at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon and that way were able to run the bookmobile at night. Sometimes a bookmobile breaks down, so we had a little station wagon and took the station wagon out to that particular stop when necessary.

NORMAN FINKLER: Did you have enough county cars to bring the crews out to bookmobile stops at that time or did they have to use their own cars?

GEORGE MORELAND: To begin with they used their own cars. I think we had only one library car. We had one station wagon to start with. It was a great day when the station wagon was received because we needed it to deliver the inter-library loans and deliver the new books to the various libraries.

NORMAN FINKLER: Did you have an inter-library delivery service from the very beginning or

GEORGE MORELAND: As soon as we got the station wagon.

NORMAN FINKLER: Okay, was it a daily service?

GEORGE MORELAND: Oh sure.

NORMAN FINKLER: It was a daily service?

GEORGE MORELAND: Got to be! And we also started the service which allowed borrowers to return a book to any library. The station wagon then delivered them to the library they came from.

NORMAN FINKLER: From the very beginning?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. The staff is not awfully keen about it and some are unhappy because it is a lot of work.

NORMAN FINKLER: Well, some of them are wary. Some of them feel that way but many of them, of course, think it is a great idea.

GEORGE MORELAND: Well it is. There is no question about it.

NORMAN FINKLER: Was there any great problem of a processing backlog -- was all the processing done in Gaithersburg or did any of it get farmed out?

GEORGE MORELAND: No, there weren't any farms to farm out to in the County. But, if you are going to do 30,000 or 40,000 books, you have an awful lot of paper work: book pockets, book cards, library cards for every one of the books, etc. It amounts to a very large job to have them printed. After all, you can't have them typed. You can't have them typed because it takes too long. You can't do it. So, we did have outside help. The County had a print shop, so-called, where

they had one printing machine, a Multilith, on the top floor of the old, real old, courthouse. I couldn't do it now because I couldn't walk up that many steps, but I used to walk up those steps to discuss the matter with the printer, who wasn't very keen about doing all this. We got to the point where we couldn't get it done, but those books kept coming in. Well, over in Baltimore County, a good friend of mine ran the Baltimore County Library and they had their own machine

NORMAN FINKLER: That was Richard Minnick, I think.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. They had their own machine. So he was good enough -- "We can't do it for you, but if you have your own people come over you can have the use of our machine to run off these book pockets and book cards." So, Mrs. Watson, our typist, and Miss Clark (after all, the majority of the books that came in were her children's books), and I went over there. And from 9 o'clock in the morning 'til 5 o'clock in the afternoon, we ran their machine to run off our book cards and book pockets for the books that were going to be coming in. So, when they did come in, we were ready for them.

We also did one other thing which I think was helpful. Some of the libraries which were in existence had books, but a lot of them were old, shabby, and/or out-dated, fifty or more years old, and many titles no longer useful. And they looked like the dickens on the shelves. It had been proven, and one gets this from library literature, that the New York Public Library and several others, found that books would last longer and look better if you put on clear plastic covers. So, from the very beginning in Montgomery County Public Libraries, we put clear plastic

covers on every book. Of course, it takes a little more accounting, but according to the records, and I think it is true, a book would last thirty circulations with the cover on it contrasted to about eleven circulations without. These covers look good, too, and can incorporate the original paper covers that come on new books.

NORMAN FINKLER: Have you had experience with plastic covers in the other library systems, for example in Johnstown, Pennsylvania?

GEORGE MORELAND: In Johnstown I did. I mean I started it there.

NORMAN FINKLER: But not in Washington?

GEORGE MORELAND: I think Washington has just done it within the last five years, but I am not sure.

NORMAN FINKLER: Right. Now one of the aspects of the Library Law was the fact that each library had its own local library advisory committee.

GEORGE MORELAND: That is correct.

NORMAN FINKLER: What were some of your early recollections of the way that system worked?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, each library as it existed then had a library board of anywhere from seven to twelve members, residents of the area served by that library. Upon the initiation of the system, in 1951, the Montgomery County Library Board appointed the existing individual library boards as the library advisory committees for the respective libraries. Their duties were to report to the County Library Board various things they thought were necessary to advance and improve the services, and to represent their own local library and their community

before the County Council and at the public hearings on the budget. This latter function was thoroughly successful, it seems to me, and I think they had a great deal to do with the increasing support of the department by the County government. I can remember one instance when there was a new library to be built at White Oak later on and the library advisory committee which had been appointed for this library got a great many of their residents -- I think at least fifty -- to come to the County Council public hearing for the library department's budget wearing an oak leaf on each lapel. It made quite an impression on the County Council. Here were these people who really wanted it, and they were willing to come out at night and fight for their right to bring forth support.

NORMAN FINKLER: It was a rainy night, too!

GEORGE MORELAND: Another case was that of the Sherwood Library in Sandy Spring. The library was then in the local school. Right next door on the next piece of property was an abandoned Friends' Meeting House. One of the members of the advisory committee had shown up out of the blue, without any schedule with anybody including the Library Board. He came down the first year to the public hearing on a library budget and suggested or recommended to the County Council that they purchase this old Meeting House and its beautiful grove of oak trees and use that for the library. It only cost \$8,000, and the County Council was smart enough, as they usually are, to take the suggestion and purchase this Meeting House, which we then renovated to become an

attractive little library. Renovations included installation of flush toilets to replace the "Chic Sales" facilities in the original building.

NORMAN FINKLER: I know we were involved in a building program about that time and weren't the advisory committees influential there, also?

GEORGE MORELAND: They were indeed. The Silver Spring Library was of course, the first building built by the County for the Department of Public Libraries. This was not completed until 1957, though it began in 1955. During this time, of course, the Bethesda Library had on its own, started a building which they brought into the County system when they joined it in July 1952, and it was half completed. The County Council, as part of their agreement, appropriated \$60,000 to match the \$60,000 that Bethesda already had, and the library was completed and opened in November 1952. This really was the first library building in Montgomery County since 1893 when the Noyes Library was put up with private funds.

The Silver Spring Library was finally opened in 1957. In the beginning, when the architectural plans were put out for bids, the new County Manager, Mr. Melvin Reese, objected to some of the things that had already been approved by the local Library Board and the former County Manager and the architect and the County Library Board and the Library Advisory Committee for the building itself. One thing which the Library Board went to bat for was the slate roof which they felt was necessary to be compatible with the other area public buildings, such as churches and so forth, as well, of course, as being an added

advantage to the building itself. But there were several things that I am sorry to say were knocked out by the new County Manager. One was an elevator from the basement to the first floor and another was a place in the basement for the housing of a delivery truck. Several other things were insisted upon by the County Library Board, including a fireplace and a smoking room (which, of course, may not be so good now because we are not going to have any smoking in the libraries. It's bad for the health.)

When the Bethesda Library was completed and opened in November 1952, it had been planned and executed by the architect without any help from any library building expert, with the exception of a few last minute suggestions from the new Director of the Department. Several rearrangements were made in the building to incorporate these suggestions. The one thing I remember distinctly about this was the question of how many parking places there should be, and I would have to say that I did not insist on as many as there could and should have been. Actually the site was not large enough. This was our first building and was in a very literate and appreciative community. We were overwhelmed. It was, I think, in the second year of operation that we had more than half a million circulation in the Bethesda Library. All concerned, including myself, had underestimated the demand.

NORMAN FINKLER: You were talking about Silver Spring. I think you mentioned the fact that you did have outside consultants there, did you not?

GEORGE MORELAND: Right, we did. This was the first library building to be built by the County. I suggested that the architect be requested to have a library building consultant. For this I recommended Mr. Ralph Ulveling and Mr. Charles Mohrhart, the Director and the Assistant Director of the Detroit Public Library, who had years of experience in building libraries. As a matter of fact, Mr. Mohrhart was the consultant to the American Library in Berlin. And their services cost only \$500, I think. I remember Mrs. Stella Werner, a member of the County Council and a long time proponent of public libraries, saying, when I made this suggestion to the County Council, "Mr. Moreland, we have already acquired you as a professional consultant at a considerable salary. I see no reason why we should employ anybody else to do it." However, they did employ Mr. Mohrhart whose comment, when he received the plans from the architect, Mr. Rhees Burkett, a County resident, was that he couldn't see any way he could improve upon the plans himself. We payed \$500 for that lovely compliment!

NORMAN FINKLER: Before we get to the Rockinghorse Library situation and the other libraries, I think just about that time -- wasn't it sometime just before that -- that the Library Board made a study of the need for facilities for the County over the next few years?

GEORGE MORELAND: The Library Board in 1954 appointed a committee of its members to make a study of the facilities needed for the County during the period 1956 to 1961, a five year span. Among the things they requested, suggested, or advised, was that the County needed an

addition or enlargement of the Bethesda Library which they hoped would be done by 1961. Eventually, in 1974, some 13 years later, there were ground breaking proceedings for the new Bethesda Library. It surely takes time, but the new building plans look great! One other thing: in 1955, one of the recommendations of the County Manager for the next fiscal year was to take over the elementary school across from the Bethesda Library, erect an administrative County Center on the property, and include an enlargement of library facilities. At that time it was estimated the property would cost \$90,000, and an extension of the library about \$150,000. The cost of the new Bethesda building and property in 1974-76 will amount to more than \$2,000,000. Delay in effecting improvements can be very expensive.

NORMAN FINKLER: Well, do you remember what some of the other suggestions of the Board were at that time?

GEORGE MORELAND: In 1954, we had begun the Silver Spring Library and we did make a study. The Library Board Planning Committee made a study with some help from the Director and many of the staff of what we really needed in the whole of Montgomery County with respect to library facilities. That's how we began, as did a number of other large county library systems throughout the country, evolving what is known as a regional library system where you have large libraries with all kinds of facilities themselves and which supplement the smaller community libraries situated within approximately three miles of each one. The regional libraries would be five to seven miles apart. Of course, in Montgomery County most of these would be in the southern part of the County where the larger part of the population is. Be-

cause it is not like a city where it is possible to have a large central library which is within reasonable distance of most of the people. In Montgomery County, with 525 square miles, you can't manage that way. So, we decided that for the County (and most other U. S. library systems with the same situation had decided) it is not reasonable or efficient or economical to have a large central library. The only one I know of, and it is in this area, is in Arlington County. But there you are talking about maybe 30 square miles.

NORMAN FINKLER: At the most.

GEORGE MORELAND: At the most, instead of 525 square miles.

NORMAN FINKLER: So that was the beginning of the regional planning as well as you can remember. Now another thing, if I might just change the subject for a moment -- one of the real contributions happened just shortly after that and when I say contributions I mean really important steps in the service. That was the beginning of the film cooperative. Do you remember how that all got started?

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes. One of the things which I suggested when I appeared before the County Library Board to beg for the job as the Director, as one of the things we should have in the beginning, was a film collection, with a projector to be loaned to various organizations in the County. And our first budget had monies to buy films, which were not inexpensive. We didn't buy too many to begin with. But each year we bought films until a point was reached where we were being overwhelmed by requests for them. We didn't have enough films to loan. At that time, also, the Fairfax County Library had begun a film ser-

vice. So, we got together with Fairfax County and Arlington County and Prince Georges County, which also had film services, wherein the films of each of the libraries were cataloged together, and they were loaned between each library with delivery service performed by the Montgomery County Department of Public Libraries.

NORMAN FINKLER: Was Alexandria in at the beginning?

GEORGE MORELAND: Alexandria was there. Right. I'm sorry I forgot it. Now this was really the beginning of cooperation throughout the whole system, throughout the whole Washington area, and it was -- even now is -- the only film cooperative in the United States which extends over county and state lines.

NORMAN FINKLER: Washington, D.C., was not a part in this as I understand.

GEORGE MORELAND: That is correct. I think it may be due to what is called the "organic law" of the District of Columbia Library system. This basic law which, of course, they could change, says that no film or book or anything belonging to the District of Columbia Library shall be loaned outside the District of Columbia. This is subject to interpretation. The interpretation so far has been very strict. I believe within reasonable time, maybe a year, two years, three years, it will be possible for the Washington Public Library to join these various cooperative movements, which would be to their advantage as well as ours. Formerly, it might not have been, but now the surrounding libraries are much better, with due respect to the District of Columbia Library. Their budgets are comparable. I think our budget is four

and a half million now, or something like that, whereas the District of Columbia's is in the neighborhood of seven or eight million -- that's pretty close.

NORMAN FINKLER: Well, the significant difference is that they are spending a lot more money for salaries and less money for books. We are spending for books, so obviously it would be to their advantage.

Later, Garrett Park Library got an increase in size, as I recall. Didn't it?

GEORGE MORELAND: That is a very interesting little town. I say that advisedly because I used to live there. It's one of these places -- as a matter of fact, it is about to become an historic old monument, or whatever you call it, of the United States because of its unique nature and, as it is unique, it also stands as a typical example of the libraries of small towns. It was started by the Women's Club of Garrett Park, just as most libraries throughout the country have been started by women's organizations. And it was housed in the club room of a women's club. Before they came into the system, there was a movement upon the part of the citizens of Garrett Park to enlarge their library. The only way we could enlarge it was to get permission from the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission which owned the building. And we couldn't get any money from anybody except from ourselves to do it. So they did get -- I think overnight -- in the neighborhood of \$4,000 in pledges and the County Council came through with \$1,000 and the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission

completed an addition which then gave a separate area for the library, no longer within the Women's Club room.

NORMAN FINKLER: Now, also around this period wasn't it at the same time or shortly afterward the Rockinghorse Library was developed as part of the county system? How did that library come into being?

GEORGE MORELAND: That was a dream of the then County Manager, Mr. Reese, that it would be economical, efficient, etc., etc., etc., to have a combination of health, recreation, and library in an elementary school, with the library supposedly serving as a library resource for the school system, for the public school itself. This idea had already been developed in the West, tried and rejected, and in a great many other places in the United States, tried and rejected. It was brought to the attention of the Library Board and, through the Library Board to the County Manager and the County Council, they were informed that this was not a good move as far as the Department of Public Libraries was concerned. However, they went ahead so we had a library in conjunction with a school. As a matter of fact, it was in the same building as the school. And the Recreation Department used the gymnasium and the Health Department had a small clinic in this Rockinghorse school. What the Library Board and the Department had said, happened in exactly the way they said it would, with the result that it was not a very successful or helpful development as far as a community library was concerned. It was eventually given up when we opened the Kensington Park Library, nearby, without any -- I mean to the best of my knowledge -- uproar from the citizens of Rockinghorse.

NORMAN FINKLER: The next part of that building program that was budgeted was for Little Falls and Gaithersburg. I believe that was in 1958 sometime.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. Little Falls -- if one looked at the report of the Library Board with respect to facilities in 1955 to 1961, they suggested that a library was needed in the area of what they called "Western Suburban." Of course, Western Suburban now is about twenty miles out from what it was then. A committee of people who were very interested in this area was appointed by the Library Board. So interested were they, the Library Advisory Committee really used a great deal of influence and pressure on the County Council and the County Manager to get a site and to get a building erected right away, without waiting around for five years to get it done, and they succeeded. I am not sure how it was done, but they did it. And there was a lovely library built on Massachusetts Avenue Extended, near the high school -- is it Western?

NORMAN FINKLER: Western Junior High.

GEORGE MORELAND: Western Junior High School. As a matter of fact, it was on property owned by the school and they couldn't use it themselves because it was on a hill, so it was made available to the library. It has been a very useful building or facility ever since.

Then Gaithersburg. Its library, of course, had finally started in the City Council's fire engine house in Gaithersburg and when the Library's Administrative Headquarters went into a little auto shop they moved in with us. They had about 150 square feet in the front of

this building. But they were a growing community and they had to have some kind of library themselves. It was thought at the time that it might be well, and maybe I am sorry they didn't -- it might be well to have a site for the Gaithersburg Library at Route 355 right next to the Gaithersburg High School where there was vacant land, which could have served as a library for Gaithersburg as well as a headquarters for the library system which was outgrowing its little store front but had no alternative. So a site was obtained reasonably near the then center of Gaithersburg and a library was built, which like most of the libraries we built, we built too small because no one would have the nerve to say that the County was going to grow so fast. As a matter of fact, if I had said when I first came here that the library system ten years from the time it started in 1951 would circulate two and a half million books a year and would have an annual operating budget of about two million dollars a year, I would not have been appointed the Director, because that was much more money than they ever thought of spending. That was much more money than any of the experts thought the County would spend on anything. I knew that, because when I was working at my little introduction to my interview I had gotten two books from the County; one of them was a study by the Brookings Institute of the Montgomery County Government and the other was a study by an expert of the County's financial potential. The latter said that in the future the highest assessed evaluation of Montgomery County would be four hundred million dollars. My golly, it was four hundred million by the time I got there. Nobody could tell

that the cost was going to be the way it was.

NORMAN FINKLER: We were talking earlier about the Board's influence in building, planning, and developing the regional concept. And sometime in that period, about 1959, the Maryland National Capitol Park and Planning Commission got into the act with something called the Preliminary Master Plan throughout the areas. We mentioned something about the regional concept also.

GEORGE MORELAND: The reason we mentioned it is because they consulted, as often times is the case -- in this case they consulted with the Department with respect to this kind of a plan because it had already been somewhat done by Baltimore County and Prince Georges County, our next door neighbors, and on a much greater scale, if I may say so.

NORMAN FINKLER: Well, I guess the next big building project was the new Wheaton Library which was again a regional library.

GEORGE MORELAND: Wheaton Library was originally begun as a fifteen foot wide half store front in a triangle of Wheaton. Then it was doubled in size in the same location to two half store fronts about thirty feet wide and going back sixty-five feet. The population growth was really stupendous in this particular area of Wheaton. Really, everybody could see that it was too small a place to do the kind of business that was being developed by the residents of Wheaton. So, the County Council and the County Library Board together recommended that a site be purchased nearby -- really north a little on Georgia Avenue -- so we could build a regional library. Silver Spring was a regional library and this was six or seven miles away. They did get this site

and we finally got the money to build the library, but we ran into difficulty. They discovered that, even though the site was on the very top -- I guess you call it the watershed -- of Montgomery County, where the water ran from Georgia Avenue west to the Potomac or east to the Anacostia, there was a plateau of water, which made it necessary to have what is known as a floating foundation. But that was just one of the problems.

NORMAN FINKLER: Made it a little more expensive.

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes, it made it more expensive. But, unfortunately, again we didn't build large enough for the future. It has a basement and it has a first floor. Both floors should have been completed at the beginning. But somebody, and I didn't know if it was the architect, or the Architectural Advisor of the County, or somebody who had authority, did not permit any finishing of the basement, except for a meeting room. And as a matter of fact, there is not a bit of running water in that basement of 20,000 square feet. It is just too bad. Well, anyhow, it was built and was a huge success from the first day. The first year it had the biggest circulation I think the County has ever had in any building: there were 600,000 books loaned in that one library. It was kept up. Now it is one of the libraries I understand that is opened on Sundays.

NORMAN FINKLER: Right, and one of the really important developments in the Library Department's history happened just about that time or shortly after that, in 1963, when we issued our first book catalog. Now I know a lot of work went into that on your part. How did you

first hear about the possibility of a book catalog?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, being a librarian, I do read, and I also peruse the library literature, in which I ran across an article with respect to a library out in the West. It was King County Library in

NORMAN FINKLER: Washington State.

GEORGE MORELAND: Washington, that's it. Also in that same article was reported the fact that the Los Angeles County Library was considering doing somewhat of the same sort of thing as the book catalog, using data processing. This was before computers, really. Therefore, it seemed to me that it would be useful and helpful in many ways to have a book catalog for Montgomery County. We had, at that time, twelve branches and the Central Headquarters, so that instead of preparing catalog cards, and filing them, unfileing them, and so forth, in and out of standard card files in each of these, we could have book catalogs, which would list the titles, authors, and subjects of the whole system and also indicate which libraries owned which books. In effect, even the bookmobiles would have a complete catalog of the holdings of the library system. Well, you can't do this without some background, so Mrs. Moreland (an experienced cataloger in another library system) and I went out to Los Angeles and I began to investigate their system. My expenses were paid, Mrs. Moreland's were not, I hasten to add, but we weren't worried about that. (We did sit up all the way out by train.) We had marvelous treatment from the Los Angeles County Library people. They went over everything. They said

they would furnish us with their catalog and with their cards for use in the machines that print the book catalogs. They also gave us full subject heading lists on cards. Then we went out to King County where we discovered the same sort of thing, but done in a much more simplified manner than in Los Angeles. So we came back, and let me put in here and now how much I appreciated the help of the man who at that time was assigned to go over the budget of the Library and now is a member of the Board of Education, Mr.

NORMAN FINKLER: Thomas Israel?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right, Tom Israel. He really did a job! Because he believed we were right in our ideas. Before we did this -- before we even started on it -- we got all this information together and had meetings of the staff. We had all kinds of staff committees, and each committee included a member of the professional staff and a member of the clerical staff, so that there would be a broad coverage of the County system. You can't force anything on a staff. As a matter of fact, you are more successful if you get their cooperation in advance. Well, I think the final vote was successful: it was much more than fifty-fifty that we should have this book catalog. From there on it took us the next year to get the thing set up, and to begin to publish our book catalog. It was the first book catalog published east of the Rocky Mountains. It took quite a lot of our attention, and we had people from Baltimore County, from the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore and the Philadelphia Public Library, from Fairfax County Library, from Prince Georges County, and from Arlington

County, come in to see what we were doing, what we were getting at. As a matter of fact, each one of these libraries now has a book catalog. They are different from ours: we are the only ones that publish our own book catalog in-house, so to speak. They put theirs out for publication by other companies. I think it has been a real success. Each library has one or more copies, each public school library has a copy, and neighboring library systems have copies. All are kept up to date every two months with supplementary volumes, and a whole new edition comes out annually.

NORMAN FINKLER: It has been proven successful -- in fact, even before you left.

GEORGE MORELAND: Oh, sure. You use a computer now which makes it much simpler to do. And, of course, it is much larger than it was then. Because you have now, what is it, around 100,000 titles or something like that?

NORMAN FINKLER: That's right. And one of the first ways that we used that book catalog was to put the entire collection of the new libraries in. And I think that was at the time you were working at the Davis Library, which is a very interesting and unusual building. You moved into Davis from Gaithersburg.

GEORGE MORELAND: In 1964.

NORMAN FINKLER: Right. March the first, I think.

GEORGE MORELAND: And that was the first time I ever had a private office in the Montgomery Public Library System -- thirteen years after I started!

NORMAN FINKLER: Now, that is an example of putting a whole collection of a new library into the book catalog, and letting every library user in the system know it was there, without going to the expense of developing a separate card catalog for that library. The Davis Library is the only library that developed while you were the Director that was actually named for somebody. All the other libraries' names seemed to indicate a location. Is there a story behind that?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, it's a story -- for instance there are a number of Carnegie libraries around the country. They were named for Mr. Carnegie because Mr. Carnegie gave the money to put the buildings up. Ours was named the Davis Library in honor of Mr. Davis who gave the property upon which the library is built, and it is a very valuable piece of property. It's more valuable now than it was when he gave it to us. It was given in memory of his father. He was the man who started the Goodwill Industries here in the Washington area.

NORMAN FINKLER: That's Floyd Davis, Sr.?

GEORGE MORELAND: Junior, he is the one that gave the property.

NORMAN FINKLER: That building was designed also to house a headquarters.

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes. It was specifically designed -- as a matter of fact, there was an article in the library journal about that time -- a '64 issue, and the headline was "Davis does double duty"; and that was its purpose. It was made so big, however, that when the population would come full circle around the Davis site, which it has now done, the Headquarters could be taken away and the Library itself would occupy

and use the whole building, top and bottom.

NORMAN FINKLER: One of the last things you did was to help plan the move out of Davis into the new Rockville Library.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right.

NORMAN FINKLER: And again, I think it was the only time that the same architect designed two libraries in the system.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right.

NORMAN FINKLER: Mr. Stanley Arthur?

GEORGE MORELAND: Stanley Arthur designed the Davis Library and I hoped for, and was able to obtain, permission to hire him as the architect for the new and larger building to house the Headquarters and the Rockville Library, in the center of Rockville.

NORMAN FINKLER: Then we want to look ahead to the development of the Chevy Chase Library. Could you tell me how that project got started?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, of course, Chevy Chase originally had many, many years ago a little library in their Community Center down around Connecticut Avenue. But now their closest County library building was in Bethesda, west of Wisconsin Avenue, miles from where these people were living. Therefore, it was decided to purchase a site along Connecticut Avenue which is not exactly inexpensive territory. We got a beautiful site on Connecticut Avenue, just south of Chevy Chase Lake. We had to accept the architect nominated by the Chevy Chase Land Company whose land we purchased. It was a good nomination. Anyhow the Chevy Chase Library was built.

NORMAN FINKLER: Was that because they wanted the library's architecture to fit in with the other buildings in the area?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right and it did. It is a kind of colonial architecture.

NORMAN FINKLER: An extreme difference in architecture, I would think, would be the libraries that come next in the program: Aspen Hill and White Oak.

GEORGE MORELAND: The Aspen Hill one is particularly unusual. At the time the plans were drawn, we called it our Indonesian Library because of the architecture. It resembled the roof line of Indonesian villages. Also, Mr. Sullivan was the architect. This, of course, went along with the rest of our building experience -- the fact that it was a new architect. For many years we were really instrumental in teaching a great many architects the needs of public libraries. But as usual in this kind of project, we developed a project for the architect to go along with, including the greatest areas, how many square feet, and so forth. Then he came down to show us his plans, and he had taken various areas and indicated their size and their relationship and from that he drew up this "Indonesian village." So, for instance, the circulation area and the magazines are under one roof, the reading room under another roof, the children's room under another roof, and so forth, and it all was then incorporated into this Indonesian village complex.

NORMAN FINKLER: But it's all one space with separate roofs.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right.

NORMAN FINKLER: It's one continuous space?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. What you really have is what you should have in most libraries and that is wide open space without any visible roof supports. This way he was able to support the roofs without any support in the center of the room.

NORMAN FINKLER: One of your trademarks, I would think, Mr. Moreland, is the closing off of the reference area in Montgomery County library buildings. Do you want to comment on that at all?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, we had to have that because Montgomery County is an unusual place where people really use libraries and they use them for serious purposes, from school children up to adults. Therefore, we should have some area where there could be quiet for concentrated study. That's the reason we separated the reference area from the other areas. In the Silver Spring Library, which was our first one, we did not, and we have tried, since that time, to get some money together to close it up. I hope it will be done, maybe it is now.

NORMAN FINKLER: Yes, it is one of the things we have recently done. Now, after Aspen Hill -- as a matter of fact, Aspen Hill and White Oak were neck and neck, as I remember. You had that problem involving two libraries built from scratch at the same time, which is quite difficult.

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, of course, we had that before when we were doing both Little Falls, Twinbrook, and Gaithersburg about the same time. They were opened within a year of each other.

NORMAN FINKLER: White Oak Library, which just happens to be one of my

favorites, has a very interesting design. The firm, I believe, who designed it, was Bartley Davis Associates.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. Mr. Bartley was the one who was particularly helpful in it.

NORMAN FINKLER: One of your most interesting projects was the last new library opened just before you retired. That was the Kensington Park Library on Knowles Avenue in Kensington.

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, the reason for that library was that there was a very large population which was served unsatisfactorily by the Garrett Park Library which was a little tiny library in a wooden building, the Rockinghorse Library which had never been really effective as a library, and the Noyes Library which was very small and did not satisfactorily serve that growing community of Kensington. Therefore, we purchased a piece of property on Knowles Avenue which was kind of in the center of a triangle between the existing small libraries. But we did then disestablish the Rockinghorse Library, which had never reached the pinnacle of success that the former County Manager had expected, and we tried to discontinue the Garrett Park Library. As for the Noyes Library, we did do something which seems to me a very effective use of this original old Montgomery County Library and that was to make it entirely for children, with special services for them. For the second time we did it over again, this time with carpeting. The first time we did it over we gave it running water which it had not had since it opened in 1893. And the Kensington Park Library, I think, proved very effective.

NORMAN FINKLER: There is one library that is very close to our minds now because our only library currently under construction is the new Twinbrook Library, that is going to take the place of the rented quarters in the basement of People's Drugstore on Viers Mill Road. Of course, you were in on the beginning of that situation, too. What was the special story about Twinbrook that you remember?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, Twinbrook Library to begin with was placed in rented quarters in the Twinbrook Shopping Center under a great deal of pressure from the residents of the Twinbrook area to have a library. The only facility they had at all was about two and a half miles away in the Rockville Library, which was in an old academy building and not very helpful. So, we did rent these quarters, and it had the distinction, such as it is, of being the only library in our system, maybe the only library anywhere, that didn't have a window in it. It was down in a basement underneath the People's Drugstore. It proved very effective, it was very useful, but not really satisfactory. Therefore, some years later, the County purchased a piece of property in that area just across the main street from Twinbrook Shopping Center to be used to develop a library. We got the appropriation to build it, we got the architect; he drew the drawings, all the plans, the working drawings, everything. We were ready to put it out for bids when the Citizen's Association of Twinbrook raised the point that it was across a busy street from the Twinbrook Shopping Center. Therefore, it wouldn't do, the children might get killed. Well, it just didn't seem to make sense because most libraries are across the street

from somewhere and the children crossing any street are in danger, of course. But they made such a ruckus about it, and they took it to the County Council, the City Council, everybody, that we just threw it out. After that there was a hiatus while they strove to find another location that was satisfactory to the citizens, and I think it finally ended up being in a shopping center across another street which the children also had to cross. So, in the meantime, while the cost of the property when we got it originally for the Twinbrook Library was \$10,000 for two acres and the building was going to cost approximately \$250,000, now the property cost I don't know how much it cost -- at least \$100,000 or so.

NORMAN FINKLER: More than that.

GEORGE MORELAND: And the building is being built right now at the cost of approximately a half million dollars. I don't know

NORMAN FINKLER: A little more than that.

GEORGE MORELAND: So, it is not as good a price, with all due respect to the citizens, and is costing considerably more of the taxpayers' money. And it is delayed at least seven years.

NORMAN FINKLER: That all makes for a very interesting story. I'm glad we got it down on this tape. Thank you very much. Are there any other recollections about the building program that come to your mind at this point?

GEORGE MORELAND: A great disappointment to me was the fact that I left the library system without seeing the beginning of the building of an extension, an enlargement, or a new building for the Bethesda area.

NORMAN FINKLER: We were talking about your feelings about the Bethesda Library at the end of the other tape.

GEORGE MORELAND: I hadn't quite completed what I had said, but I said that it was very disappointing, and I repeat, it was, that there was nothing done with regards to building that Library before I retired, although we had money in the capital budget for an addition to the building and also a new piece of property upon which to build.

NORMAN FINKLER: That pretty much wraps up the building program then. Of course, there are other important aspects of libraries. Two other most important aspects are personnel and the materials collection -- books mostly. In thinking about personnel, I think one of the obvious things to realize is that the staff of the Department grew tremendously during your period as Director, and I am sure there were a number of problems of organization and other problems as well, working with the government and so on. I wonder if you would like to reminisce about this aspect of work.

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, you are quite correct that the staff did grow. Of course, one doesn't think it ever grows fast enough. It certainly did grow, in order to take care of the tremendous increase in the business of the libraries. I think, as I recall it, we had about eighteen to twenty thousand transactions or loans per employee throughout the system annually, which is considerably more than the average recommended by the American Library Association and anywhere from one to two times the business that is done by most library systems, even around Washington, D.C. Of course, each time we put up a new library

we had to have additional staff in order to take care of business in that library, and that also raised the need for additional personnel in supporting services throughout the entire system. I think we had in the neighborhood of three hundred full-time equivalent staff when I left, which compares to approximately thirty-five, eighteen years before, when we started the system. We never did attain a salary schedule comparable with other Departments of the County government and comparable library systems throughout the State of Maryland, particularly in the urban centers. It was a long struggle. I think I said before that one reason was that we started low and it's a little hard to get up. I will say, however, that the staff itself was outstanding -- from an educational point of view and from a service point of view. We had fine people who really wanted to work, and who were service-oriented. A great many of them were former librarians who had married and had children, and others who had retired, and who now wanted to work for us because they could be in the area where they lived, plus the fact that they enjoyed the work. I wouldn't say they were old; they weren't youngsters; they were serious and experienced people.

NORMAN FINKLER: You had a lot of part time employees from the beginning.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's the only way we could do it with our budget. We didn't have enough money to have enough full time people to carry on a twelve-hour-day-schedule. But, if you have one position, and have \$5,000, which in the beginning was quite a big salary, for one

position, and you divided it in half, you were getting the same number of hours of services but you could split it up in a way to do the most good. For instance, two half-time people could cover the busiest times of the day for a whole week in one library.

NORMAN FINKLER: The clerical employees we have in the County also seem to be of very high caliber.

GEORGE MORELAND: They are of high caliber, because the people in the County are of high caliber. This County has the highest educational level of any county or city in the United States. Therefore, you are going to have people who are educated, who use libraries, and who like libraries, and some of them like to work in libraries.

NORMAN FINKLER: Did you particularly have concern about how the Department itself was organized? The libraries were decentralized. You could have had, maybe I'm just imagining this, but you could have had supervision problems. In other words, what assurance did you have that the basic policies set by the Central Headquarters were being carried out throughout the library system?

GEORGE MORELAND: The only assurance we had was to go out and see. It worked out that way. It was a very simple organization and still is. Very simple, compared to other Departments in the County Government, and compared to other county library systems. Right across the border in Prince Georges County, there is an example of quite a, I wouldn't say top heavy, but at least a really complex administration.

NORMAN FINKLER: A large percentage of administrative people versus people out in the field.

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right.

NORMAN FINKLER: One of the other and very, very important contributions in the development of the County library system was the growth in the book collection. There are certain standards, I know, to decide upon fairly early in the game. Do you remember how that came about?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, the very fact that we had to buy approximately 45,000 or 50,000 books in the first year in order to service the three bookmobiles established a rather large need for money for books to begin with. And we never wanted to let anybody down so we just continued to have at least that amount of money, even though we didn't have three more bookmobiles. But then as we developed the system, the use of the libraries increased many fold. It became necessary to have a great many books. One of the criteria for our minimum standards for book collections was the American Library Association's standard at that early time of one and a half books per capita. Our books were being used on the average of ten circulations a year, which was terrific, but we didn't have anything near one and a half books per capita. Therefore, the Library Board, particularly Mr. Joseph Reeve, who at that time was a member of the Budget Office of the United States Government, suggested we develop a formula whereby, at the presentation of the budget each year, we would have a method of asking for a certain amount of money to buy a certain number of books which would within the next five years perhaps, or six years, come up to that minimum standard of the American Library Association. Such a

formula was approved by the County and it was just fine. All I had to do was work on the formula and figure out how much money we needed for the next year and we got it. I will say, however, that the County Manager oftentimes reduced that amount of money. But I can't remember any time when the County Council did not restore that amount of money to the budget in order to have these books. Part of that was due to the great support from the citizens and part from the fact that the Library Advisory Committees and the Library Board stood up to be counted in support of it.

NORMAN FINKLER: In developing the book collection, the library system does have a book selection policy. Did you have any problems about adopting a policy or the administration of a policy?

GEORGE MORELAND: We didn't have any problems adopting a policy. I think we took the ideas of the American Library Association, and we had a written book selection policy approved by the Board, so that one could always turn to that if any question came up. And don't think that a question didn't come up. I recall one incident which still bothers me. One evening I was out speaking, as I often did, at a church organization, and during the talk I was speaking about the question of -- I can't think of the word

NORMAN FINKLER: Censorship?

GEORGE MORELAND: Censorship. As a matter of fact, that was the subject, censorship. And I made a bold statement -- "Thank God that censorship has not raised its ugly head in Montgomery County." The next morning in the Washington Post there was an article -- a news

report of a Montgomery County policeman having raided a drugstore and gotten a copy of *The Tropic of Cancer*, the paperback edition. The policeman had supposedly been on his coffee break, and he read a few pages and then arrested the salesgirl for having sold it in the store. That was a Saturday morning so I couldn't get to the County Manager until Monday morning. I called him up and said, "You'd better know what your right hand is doing as well as your left hand, or whichever way it is, because the Library Department has owned for a few months at least six copies of *The Tropic of Cancer*." The County Manager said, "My God"

NORMAN FINKLER: Who was that, by the way?

GEORGE MORELAND: That was Mason Butcher. I didn't hear anything more about it then for about three days. Then he called up and said, "The State's Attorney has recommended that we withdraw that book from circulation, and I am ordering you to withdraw that book from circulation." Well, he was the boss, so we withdrew it from circulation. Of course, this also happened to reach the papers. The next day two people came into the Silver Spring Library and requested the book. They were told that the book was no longer available. And they discussed the matter and reminded the person at the desk that we did own the book, it was in our catalog, and they demanded a copy of it. But they couldn't get it. So, they entered a lawsuit the following day against the County Manager and the Director of the Department of Public Libraries for withholding property, County property which taxes had paid for. And from there on it was a tough struggle. It went to trial, we had ex-

pert testimony, it was before a jury, naturally -- no, it wasn't before a jury, excuse me, a grand jury brought it in. The trial ended, the Judge came out of his chambers with a mimeographed copy of his decision. Two hours after the trial had ended he decided the book was obscene. It went on and on and on; we went up to the Supreme Court. Finally, I think the judgment was that it was not obscene and that it could be returned to the library shelf. But there was a long, long delay before that word ever came down to the Director. I think I was gone when it came down.

NORMAN FINKLER: That's true. To the best of your knowledge, that was the only real censorship problem the Department ever experienced?

GEORGE MORELAND: Oh, we had complaints every once in a while, but naturally you go through an awful lot of complaints. Some things are not everyone's cup of tea. But we managed to get through without any great difficulty. I wouldn't have made that statement in front of that church group if I had had any real difficulty.

NORMAN FINKLER: Didn't you find very often that people were complaining more about what the library system did not buy?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right, sure did. Of course, if I were there now, I wouldn't have any feeling of compunction about books because compared with the books out on the market these days *The Tropic of Cancer* is weak tea.

NORMAN FINKLER: You mentioned the great work that the Library Board did in helping you develop a strong book collection and you mentioned the name of Mr. Joseph Reeve earlier. This might be a good opportunity

for you to think about some of the other important members of the Board who were really influential in helping us develop a great system here in the County.

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, I hate to pick out any one because a great many of the members were very devoted to the work of the Library Board. Of course, the membership varied during the years. Though it is difficult to pick out any one, I would say an outstanding member was Mr. Ralph D. Remley who was on the original Committee to decide whether or not they needed a Department of Public Libraries here. He continued for a number of years on the Board and was the first county library board trustee in the United States to be given the award of Trustee of the Year by the American Library Association.

NORMAN FINKLER: Mr. Remley worked with you, I know on the State level as well. We haven't touched at all on State legislation affecting Montgomery County Department of Public Libraries.

GEORGE MORELAND: The original library law of the State of Maryland was such that the County, Montgomery County, could not participate in the goodies, such as they were, which came from the State Department of Education. Because one of the requirements was that the Library Board of the County must be nominated and appointed by the Governor. Well, you know enough about Montgomery County to know that doesn't sit very well here. So, when our County Library Law was passed in 1950, it stated that the County Council should appoint the County Library Board. Therefore, there wasn't any money coming from the State, since we didn't come up to their requirements. I think about a year after I

was here I felt out the sense of the Library Board, and they didn't want to have anything to do with the State. But it was kind of ridiculous to be paying taxes to the State, as we were. As a matter of fact, the County paid more taxes to the State than did any other place in the State. It was unreasonable not to get whatever we could back from what we put in. Therefore, I suggested to the Board and they recommended to the County Council and the County Attorney that the political delegation from Montgomery County should draw up an amendment to the State Library Law which would ease us into the goodies without our having to give up our autonomy. This was done and within a year it was passed. And, therefore, we began to receive the money from the State.

It was five or six years later when I was startled to learn that the law made it so that the tax, the Social Security tax, of the County Library systems in the State was paid for by the State Department of Education under a part of the State Library Law. And also that the retirement monies were paid for by the State.

NORMAN FINKLER: The employers' share

GEORGE MORELAND: The employers' share was paid for by the State Department of Education. Well, we weren't getting that. Therefore, we had to put in for a small amendment which also included the Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore which hadn't had this before or didn't know about it. We can say right now that whatever the salary amount is or the part of the public libraries' salaries paid for by the State Department of Education, which I think is about ten percent of what-

ever the salary is, was added to the monies given to Enoch Pratt of Baltimore. I know when we first got it, it was about \$100,000 and its probably double that now. Another interesting fact was that it was first suggested to the County Manager, Mr. Reese at that time, in 1956, that the County take advantage of this and, therefore, our employees of the Department of Public Libraries would come under Social Security for the first time. But he thought, and he probably was right, that it wasn't correct to allow the Department of Public Libraries' employees to come under Social Security when none of the other employees of Montgomery County did. Therefore, that was put in abeyance until, I think, in 1958, at which time all employees of the County Government went under Social Security.

NORMAN FINKLER: There were other cooperative efforts as a result of your working with the State library authorities. One of them was the daily delivery service. Remember how that got started?

GEORGE MORELAND: Yes. It was to our advantage to do it. I mean we were performing a service to other places, but we were getting something out of it, too. We do have, of course, our own inter-library loan service every day, a daily delivery service. But we also needed books from the Enoch Pratt and other libraries, and we finally got cooperation from Enoch Pratt and from the other major library systems in the area, Baltimore County and Prince Georges County, to loan us books. There was, of course, at that time, paid for by the State government, a telegraphic service. I forget the exact name

NORMAN FINKLER: Teletype.

GEORGE MORELAND: Teletype service with all the county library systems, which was developed at the urging of the Montgomery County Department of Public Libraries.

NORMAN FINKLER: There was also some talk, I think, while you were working on some of these cooperative efforts, about the honoring of library cards throughout the State. This is now being done, of course.

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, we tried real hard and I guess it's just like it was in the beginning of our own system. One reason the Bethesda Library didn't come in the first year was because they didn't want their books going out to anybody else. They had bought them and they thought they belonged to them and, if they wanted them, they should be there on the shelves. Well, the same thing is true in a great many libraries; they have their own books and they see no reason why they should loan them to other people, because they might need to use them some day. True, but, on the other hand, other libraries owned books that they would need and it's reciprocal. But it takes a little time to make people understand that.

NORMAN FINKLER: This idea eventually evolved in the Washington Metropolitan area which covered Northern Virginia, the District of Columbia, and the parts of Maryland contiguous to the District. It started under the umbrella of the Council of Governments?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right. There was a committee of the Council of Governments which, of course, is a council of all the governments of the Washington area. It was a library committee, and naturally every director or head of the library system in the area was a member

of that committee. The whole thing began really with a cooperative film service. Eventually we got around to having a cooperative agreement with respect to loaning books. The university libraries of the Washington area were included. So it really is true today that any book, including those of the Library of Congress and of the District of Columbia Library, is available to anyone in any one of the municipalities or governments of the Washington area.

NORMAN FINKLER: Through various agreements among these libraries?

GEORGE MORELAND: That's right.

NORMAN FINKLER: There were cooperative efforts involving the Montgomery County Library and libraries in other parts of the country, too, weren't there?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, it certainly began with the Los Angeles County Public Library helping us at the beginning of our book catalog; in the same line, our book catalogs, with materials, were made available to and used by the Tulsa City-County Library. We took all our subject heading cards, thousands of them, and had them reproduced and sent out to Tulsa so they could begin their operation without the tremendous initial time and expense normally involved. They did pay for the cards, but they didn't pay for the time originally spent by the Los Angeles County Public Library and ourselves. We had cooperation not only with libraries in this country, but with libraries of other countries, for in some years, say from 1951 on, we were used by the State Department (the United States Government State Department). We were visited by various library personnel of foreign countries who

were told by the State Department that we were an example of, let's say, high class library service in the field of county library service. The head of the Library Department of the Swedish Government's Education Department was here with his wife and, as we were driving out through the County, he turned to his wife and said, "This looks just like home." Well, eventually, I saw Sweden, too, and I could see what he meant. After entertaining and demonstrating our system to over fifty foreign librarians, I received an invitation to go to Pakistan as the Library Adviser to the Government of Pakistan. I accepted and was given a leave of absence for two years to do the job.

NORMAN FINKLER: What was your main work there in Pakistan?

GEORGE MORELAND: Assisting the librarians of Pakistan to develop their libraries, and establishing their first graduate library school. At the time we went there, there were only two professional librarians in all of Pakistan, which at that time had in the neighborhood of ninety-five million people -- it was the fifth largest country in the world. We were able to get scholarships for training in the United States for several of the staff of the library school which we established. Since that time there have been at least fifteen Pakistani librarians, all of whom we knew in Pakistan, who have come over here for further education.

NORMAN FINKLER: Do you ever get any visitors from South Africa, for example?

GEORGE MORELAND: We have had visitors from Russia, from Africa -- in fact, we have had every country in the United Nations. We did have a

charming girl who is the Assistant Director of the South Africa libraries, Julie Te Gruen, who came here and spent two or three days with us. As a matter of fact, my wife took her shopping in the Montgomery Mall, near the Davis Library. She was really interested in the place. One of our own librarians went over with her husband, who was a representative of the United States in Pretoria. I heard from Miss Te Gruen a number of times, about library matters, and she invited me and my wife to come to South Africa. She said, "Let me know in advance and I will arrange our schedules so I can drive you around all of South Africa to visit the libraries." It was a yearly trip that she had to make anyway. As a matter of fact, we thought we were going and she sent me a little published memorandum stating that Mr. Moreland was going to be on the program of the annual library meeting of the South Africa Library Association, but I didn't make it, I am sorry to say.

Another very interesting man was the Superintendent of Schools of a city in Sweden called Sodertalje and also was the Chairman of the Library Board of the public libraries of Sodertalje. He came here and we gave the usual sixty-four dollar treatment by taking him all around the libraries; he lunched with members of the administrative staff, and I asked him, after introducing him to my wife, to come for dinner at our home. After dinner we were discussing what we were going to do that next summer and said that we were going to Sweden. He said, "Of course, you are going to see Stockholm?" And I said, "Yes, we are." He said, "Well, my home is only twenty miles from Stockholm,

but unfortunately we won't be there because we go to an island for our summer vacation. But, I would be delighted to give you the key to our apartment and you can stay there." Well, there were four of us going together, but he assured us that would be all right. And sure enough, he sent the key to our friends in western Sweden and we spent five lovely days in Sodertalje, while we went to Stockholm and back from his place. And a year or two later when we were in retirement, we were over in Sweden and, of course, we saw him. He invited us to be guests of the Swedish Library Association for their annual convention, which we did at the Library Association's expense! He was the president of the Library Association at that time. There were a lot of interesting people attending, and we observed that library discussions in Swedish are easy to understand, because they are pretty much like our own.

NORMAN FINKLER: Also during your career, you were able to get a number of prominent American librarians to speak at the openings of our libraries. Do you remember some of these people?

GEORGE MORELAND: Well, the last one, of course, was Roger MacDonough, the speaker at the opening of the Kensington Park Library, who was at that time the president of the American Library Association. We had James "Ned" Bryan speak at one of the openings. I think it was Wheaton, but I'm not sure. And we had Verner Clapp who was an outstanding librarian and was Assistant Librarian of the Library of Congress for many years. Quincy Mumford, the Head of the Library of Congress, was another. Other names escape me at the moment, but there

are some names that don't escape me, names of those departments of the County Government and the names of those other associations throughout the County which were in great support of the Department's development. Among those County Government Departments, of course, was the Department of Buildings and Grounds or the Division of Buildings and Grounds which was instrumental in making our library buildings distinguished, by reason of the fact that they built all of the shelving and the special equipment in these buildings. Of course, it also reduced the cost of the buildings to the Government. I can remember Jimmy Todd, who was the head carpenter (really a fine cabinet maker), who was a wonderful help to the buildings. I hope he is still busy. Then, somehow or other, while I was mentioning other names of associations and organizations, I neglected to mention two of the very most outstanding supporters of the Department. One, of course, was the League of Women Voters which, from the very first hearing in June of 1951, came to each budget hearing of the County Council in support of the Department of Public Libraries. Another was the American Association of University Women which was also in attendance at each one of these public hearings in support of the Department. As a matter of fact, the whole county population, it seemed to me, responded to the desires of the Department to give better library service to Montgomery County. And always a representative of each Library Advisory Committee gave vocal documented support at the public budget hearings. The libraries

of the Department of Public Libraries are a testament to the devoted and determined efforts of all the people, the elected County Councils, the library staffs, and the Library Board and Advisory Committees.

