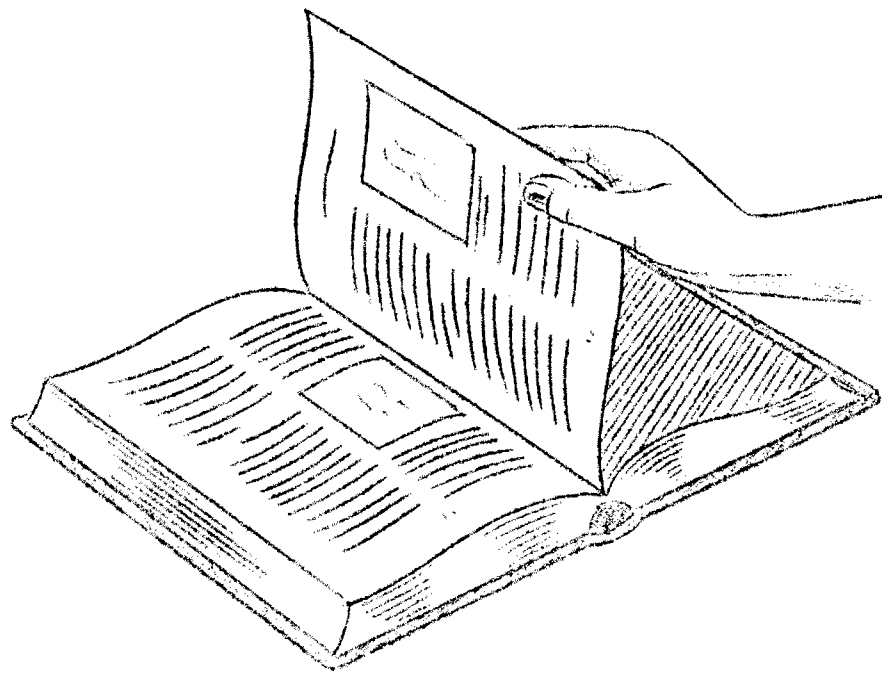


**BULLETIN**



**MANITOBA  
LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION**

MANITOBA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

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Panel discussion on regional libraries

News

## PANEL DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL LIBRARIES

MISS BUGGEY: This Committee was established last December to study the possibility of regional library development in Manitoba outside the Greater Winnipeg area, its report to provide the material for discussion at the 3rd in a series of meetings on regional libraries. At the first meeting in the series, February 1st you will remember, Miss Dafoe talked of regional library service in the United Kingdom and Miss Ashley outlined developments in other parts of Canada in the larger unit of library administration.

At the second meeting in March, a panel comprising members of the Committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Harold Moore, discussed the Metropolitan library plan for Greater Winnipeg.

Having heard these, you are, I am sure, convinced that the larger library area is the sensible plan of development for efficient library service, particularly in a province like Manitoba, with a large area, relatively small population, and limited resources.

What do we mean by efficient library service and under what conditions can it be provided? What are the objectives and what are the standards?

In "County and Regional Library Development," by Gretchen K. Schenk, we read that "present day library service carries educational activities into the community in whatever printed or audio-visual form may best serve the needs of patrons. Library participation and leadership is felt in community councils, chambers of commerce, youth centres, farm and labour organizations, church groups, women's groups and in schools..."

"Canadian Library Association Standards for Public Libraries" lists as "the prime library objective: the provision for its constituency of a sufficient number of books of quality, so housed and organized, with their use so promoted, that they reach the greatest number of people, thus making their local contribution to the education and to the cultural growth of the nation. The book stock must reflect these basic objectives of the public library: education, information, aesthetic appreciation, research, and recreation.

"To obtain approximately equal reading opportunity, library book resources should be organized on a regional basis..."

The Canadian Library Association report on Suggested Standards for public libraries goes on to say "Experience has shown that a population of 25,000 is the minimum that can support a library with professional direction; and for good service a much larger budget than 25,000 people can support is needed." Other authorities suggest populations of from 40,000 to 100,000.

Continuing to quote C.L.A. Standards we find that the joint goal of local and provincial governments should be the achievement of a minimum of \$1.50 per capita annually for public library service. The book stock should be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  books per capita up to 100,000 volumes and there should be one professional librarian for every 5,000 to 7,000 population. The number of clerical assistants will depend on the type of service and the extent of mechanization.

Having considered these standards and objectives of public library service as set forth by authorities in the field, we now try to apply them to Manitoba.

A brief word on existing legislation-

The Manitoba Public Libraries Act, Part 3, provides that the Councils of 2 or more municipalities may establish a regional library. Upon the receipt of a petition signed by not less than 8% of the electors, a bylaw shall be submitted by the council of each municipality.

If this bylaw is passed by the voters and authorized by the Municipal and Public Utility Board, the municipalities concerned shall enter into an agreement to provide for the establishment of a regional library, the appointment of a regional library board, and the apportionment to each municipality of its proper share of the cost. The act limits the amount of the tax levy to 1 mill.

Our committee has not attempted a detailed analysis of the act. Some years ago the M.L.A. recommended the removal of the limitation on the tax levy and a superficial examination indicates that certain other changes might be desirable. However that has not been included in our study.

Helen Harris, onetime librarian of the Tennessee Valley Authority, has said that "Standards of support must be expressed in terms applicable to regional situations." Bearing this in mind we have tried, in our statement of standards to suggest a compromise which would not fall too far short of adequate support but which would still be within the realm of possible achievement.

Standards for a minimum workable unit according to C.L.A. are a population of 25,000 and an annual income of \$37,500. Library service has been given with reasonable success with smaller financial support and we are suggesting that it could be done here for \$1 per capita, the money to be provided by local tax levy plus provincial government grants.

An initial budget involves capital outlay for furnishing, equipment, books; annual provision must be made for salaries, books, rent, supplies, transportation, insurance, telephone, light, heat, etc.

In the successful establishment and operation of a regional library, the professional librarian will be of vital importance. To staff the central agency there will be required a minimum of 2 trained librarians and 3 clericals. The need for this number is apparent when we consider that the central agency is responsible for administration and business details, finance, personnel matters, development of services, records, ordering, cataloguing and processing of all materials, reference service, book distribution and exchange, book repairing and mending, specialized services such as reading lists, publicity, maintenance of building and equipment. The larger unit library frees personnel in all outlying library agencies of the region for more productive direct service to the public. Staff at a large branch would be one full-time person, probably non-professional, but with the best educational qualifications, and part-time help. Small branches would be staffed part-time only. It is recommended that all staff be paid but it may be found necessary to use volunteer help in the smaller centres.

Standards for book stock vary from at least 1 book per capita as recommended by Peter Grossman in his New Brunswick Survey to the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  recommended by the C.L.A. We have suggested accepting the lower standard for a start and would plan to build a bookstock up to 1 book per capita by the end of the third year.

Buildings have not been considered in capital outlay under the proposed \$1 per capita financing. In most cases accommodation used will be that which is available and accessible. Where there is a library building, it can generally though not necessarily provide housing for the central agency; branches will find themselves in town halls, stores and so on.

Taking these minimum standards we have applied them to 3 areas in Manitoba. We have not attempted to outline regions for the whole province since any other area we could suggest seems to offer little chance of development as a regional library in the near future.

Miss Siemens, would you be good enough to describe the 3 suggested areas?

MISS SIEMENS: Taking the standards, that the chairman has just outlined, into consideration, we have applied them to three areas in Manitoba which appear to meet these minimum requirements. We chose three of the province's largest municipal units, outside of the Greater Winnipeg area - Brandon, Dauphin, and Portage la Prairie - as centres for three library regions, and included in each area the towns, villages and rural municipalities within an approximate 30-mile radius. Our choice was also influenced, by the fact that these centres had already established library services. Brandon has a very good public library with a professionally trained librarian in charge, Dauphin's public library was established in 1948, while Portage, though not a public library, has for years had an association library of some size. As far as we were able to discover the areas surrounding each centre provide the necessary population and tax rolls, without which a regional library cannot function. The 30-mile radius also assures a reasonable distance for communication and transportation from all populated points to the central library.

In the Dauphin area, we have included the towns and villages of Dauphin, Grandview, Ethelbert, Gilbert Plains, St. Rose, and Winnipegosis, and the rural municipalities of Dauphin, Ethelbert, Gilbert Plains, Grandview, Mossey River, Ochre River and St. Rose. Where a considerable portion of a rural municipality came within the 30-mile radius, we included all of the municipality, such as for example, Grandview, Mossey River, and St. Rose. These units together provide a population of 27,451, which meets the minimum C.L.A. standard of 25,000.

The central agency and the main branch would, of course, be in Dauphin and branches, probably, at Ethelbert, Gilbert Plains, Grandview, St. Rose, and Winnipegosis. Location of other field service agencies, in unincorporated towns and villages, would have to be determined by an on-the-spot survey.

There are trunk highways to connect the central agency with the proposed branch locations.

Brandon region, includes the city of Brandon, and the towns and villages of Carberry, Minnedosa, Oak Lake, Rapid City, Souris, and Wawanesa and the rural municipalities of Cornwallis, Daly, Elton, Glenwood, Oakland, Odanah, North Cypress and Saskatchewan. This area provides a much larger population, a total of 43,670. Since Brandon has a library building, it would be hoped that the central agency as well as the main branch could be housed there, while smaller branches could be located in the towns and villages, and the location of other agencies could again be determined by a survey of the region.

Here, as in Dauphin, trunk highways connect all incorporated towns and villages with the centre at Brandon.

Turning now to the region for Portage la Prairie, we found that the plan of a 30-mile radius did not work out as favorably as it had at Dauphin and Brandon. The trunk highways here, run east and west, with no north and south connection between them. No. 2 highway, in the southern part of this 30-mile radius, passing through Treherne, the rural municipalities of South Norfolk, and Grey, provides a direct link with Winnipeg, and there seems to be no convenient connection either by trunk highway or by rail, with Portage la Prairie. The same is true of the municipality of Woodlands, where No. 6 highway furnishes this link with Winnipeg. While its ethnic character, as well as its proximity to Winnipeg, excludes the rural municipality of Cartier from the plan. So that leaves the city of Portage la Prairie, the town and village of Gladstone and McGregor, the rural municipalities of Portage la Prairie, North Norfolk, Westbourne, and Lakeview. A gravel road connects points in Lakeview with No. 4 trunk highway and so with the system. The total population of this area is 24,419, which is slightly less than the minimum standard of 25,000. This region has very good communication and transportation facilities both by trunk highways and by rail. And though there are only the two incorporated towns and villages of Gladstone and McGregor, there are unincorporated centres where, following a local survey, small branches could be located.

As you have seen, the Brandon and Dauphin regions, more than meet the minimum standards of population for regional libraries, while Portage la Prairie falls only slightly below it. All have adequate roads, and since all populated points are within a reasonable distance from the centres, communication and transportation would not be a serious problem. A bookmobile, in each region, would be a decided asset, if funds could be made available.

Our suggestions do not necessarily limit these regions to the prescribed areas. As each region develops, other municipalities and towns could be brought in with a consequent increase in population and revenue to provide better than minimum service. Neither are we suggesting that the three regions planned are the only areas in the province that are suitable for regional library development. Others could be established along somewhat the same pattern. We chose Brandon, Dauphin, and Portage la Prairie, as I have already explained chiefly, because size and suitability of the centres, adequate population and tax rolls, and existing trunk highways, make them appear to be the most likely to succeed. \*

MISS ASHLEY: Before we look into the problem of financing these 3 possible regional libraries I should like to remind you that the general minimum standard for a workable library unit as determined by the Canadian Library Association calls for a population of 25,000 and an annual income of \$37,500 or \$1.50 per capita.

This will provide what the C.L.A. considers minimum library service.

I don't think anyone here will question the C.L.A. figures — we can accept them for two reasons —

1. They were determined by experts who made a detailed study of the subject.

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\* For charts see page 9,10 and 11.

2. Recent practical experience in the other provinces, of which all but Manitoba, Quebec have regional or county libraries, has, to a large extent, verified the C.L.A. figures.

Nevertheless a library service has been given on a smaller budget than \$1.50 per capita — it falls short of what an effective minimum service should be, it is true, but it has proved to be of value to the community.

As Helen Harris of the Tennessee Valley Authority library has pointed out "standards of support must be expressed in terms applicable to regional situations."

With this in mind, therefore, we have tried, in discussing the financing of libraries like these, in Manitoba, to suggest a compromise between the desirable and the practicable — which would not fall too far short of adequate support but which would still be within reach of possible achievement.

We have therefore adopted as our standard the sum of \$1.00 per capita, both for the annual income and the establishment grant.

At this point I might remind you that a plan for financing a regional library falls into 2 divisions:

1. In setting up the library you have your capital outlay, covered for the most part by the initial or establishment grant. This will include

Your Equipment furnishings

As for Buildings — Branches of regional libraries will be housed in whatever space is available in each district. Costs will vary from district to district. Space may be provided through local philanthropy but the budget may have to take into account the cost of remodelling available premises for use as a library.

The Initial book stock is probably the largest single item on the budget. The C.L.A. standard for book stock is 2.5 books per capita. Mr. Grossman, in his report on New Brunswick, suggests 1 book per capita as the minimum. Since the average price of a book is (at a rough guess) about \$3.00 this means a sum of \$75,000. Even if 5 years are taken to build the collection up to this size, it means an outlay of \$15,000 per year.

2. Annual expenses — covered by the library's annual income. These include

Purchase of New Books and replacements.	Running expenses:
Salaries	Light
Transportation Costs	Heat
Supplies	Telephone
	Insurance
	Rent

Lets take a look at how the standard of \$1.00 per capita works out for these 3 suggested regions.

REGION	POPULATION	ANNUAL INCOME Suggested (Minimum Standard \$1.00 per capita.)	LIBRARY INCOME Present (Maximum 1 mill on taxable assessment (1954))	ANNUAL GRANT Suggested	GOVERNMENT Present	TOTAL INCOME Suggested	ANNUAL INCOME Present Possible Maximum	INITIAL GOVERNMENT Suggested (\$1.00 per capita)	INITIAL GRANT Present
C.L.A. minimum standard	25,000	\$37,500							
DAUPHIN	27,451	\$27,451	\$15,283	\$400.00	\$27,451 (18,839)	\$15,683	\$27,451	\$10,000.00	
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE	24,419	24,419	20,923	\$400.00	24,419 (25,561)	21,323	24,419	\$10,000.00	
BRANDON	43,670	43,670	38,401	\$400.00	43,670 (45,241)	38,801	\$43,670	\$10,000.00	

TABLE

These are decidedly minimum standards which we have suggested for these 3 possible regional libraries in Manitoba. They are considerably below the C.L.A. minimum and it would be a struggle to establish and maintain adequate library service on these budgets. Amounts may seem large but when you begin to divide these sums among the items on the budget they are seen to be scarcely adequate.

Even so, these suggested funds represent a much greater sum than is available under the present government grant structure. In first place, the initial grant of \$10,000 is quite inadequate. Even if it were all spent on the book stock it would purchase only some 3-4,000 books — and this would leave nothing for equipment, furnishings, etc.

The annual grant of \$400 is less than 10% of any grant which even approaches adequacy. We may also note that while the table shows the maximum amount which may be raised by a 1 mill tax on the assessment, some municipalities are literally providing less than 1 mill for a library's income.

In some other provinces the government offers an annual grant which matches the sum raised by municipal authorities, dollar for dollar, thus encouraging them to provide an adequate amount for libraries — it also, of course, means much larger government grants.

However, perhaps the chief criticism which may be made of the present good approach to the problem of providing library service for Manitoba is this: The government has not made public many details of its plan for setting up regional libraries. As far as we have been able to determine, the government offers the \$10,000 establishment grant to any regional library set up in Manitoba — and as far as we know it (the government) has not laid down any standards or conditions under which this grant is to be made.

Presumably, any two municipal units of any size — say, 2 towns or a town and a rural municipality could set up a regional library, receive the establishment grant and thereafter have to rely on the very small amount which could be raised by a tax of 1 mill on their assessment and any donations the library might receive.

It is difficult to see how so small a region could provide even minimum satisfactory service. A library like this would have too small a book stock to continue to satisfy its patrons, the services it could give would be extremely limited and the possibility of future development would be negligible. It might start out bravely enough — it is easier to start a library than to maintain it adequately — but it would soon begin to suffer severely from mal-nutrition and eventually would die of starvation.

It is obvious, when you look at this table that, even with a maximum contribution by the municipalities of the 1 mill on their taxable assessments which is all that is allowed under the library act, funds will be woefully inadequate. The only way in which they may be made adequate is by government grants.

By making the grants it has made, the provincial government has recognized in principle the desirability of providing library service in Manitoba. But even the superficial examination of the facts which we have undertaken here shows that a more generous schedule of grants is necessary if library development is to be encouraged in our province.

MISS BUGGEY: Experience has shown that without sufficient population to provide adequate financial support, the library is unable to provide the satisfactory service which its responsibility to the community demands. It can't maintain a sufficient book stock or pay a trained librarian. The 2 indispensable requirements for giving effective library service are first, an adequate stock of books of quality replenished year by year by the addition of the best of current publications; secondly, a librarian trained and equipped to administer the library, train his staff and take his place as a leader in the community.

What positive action must be taken then to bring about this desirable state of affairs? The condition whereby all citizens of Manitoba, children and adults alike, shall be able to get easily as many books and other library material as they will use, get answers to reasonable requests for information and have the services of professionally trained librarians.

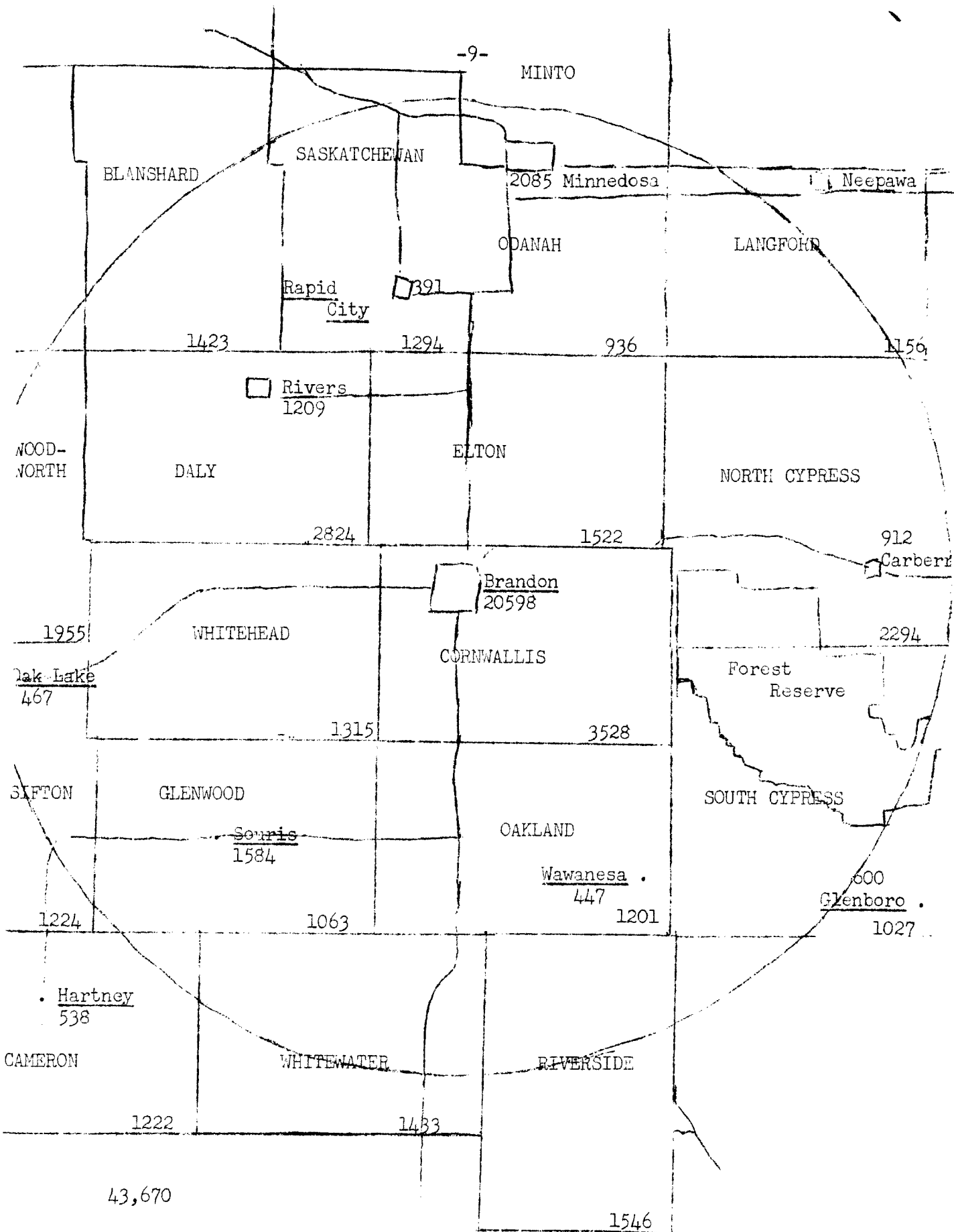
We believe that the desire for library service exists in many parts of the province. But it must be given a voice. It needs a group of citizens who really want library service and who can persuade officials and other citizens that tax money should be spent to support it. These citizens aided and encouraged by the Director of libraries and any other interested group, can do more to get a bylaw passed than any outside agency working without their support.

In the Manitoba Library Development Committee we may have the agency which will arouse these interested citizens to take the first steps in satisfying their desire for libraries. Counterparts or branches of this Development Committee formed in areas where there is a present interest could focus and strengthen it and because such a committee would be representative of so many organizations, it could unify the support of many people.

The Library Development Committee, the Public Library Advisory Board, the Manitoba Library Association and an aroused public opinion must continue to bring to the attention of the government as forcefully as possible the responsibility it bears in supporting libraries as part of the educational program.

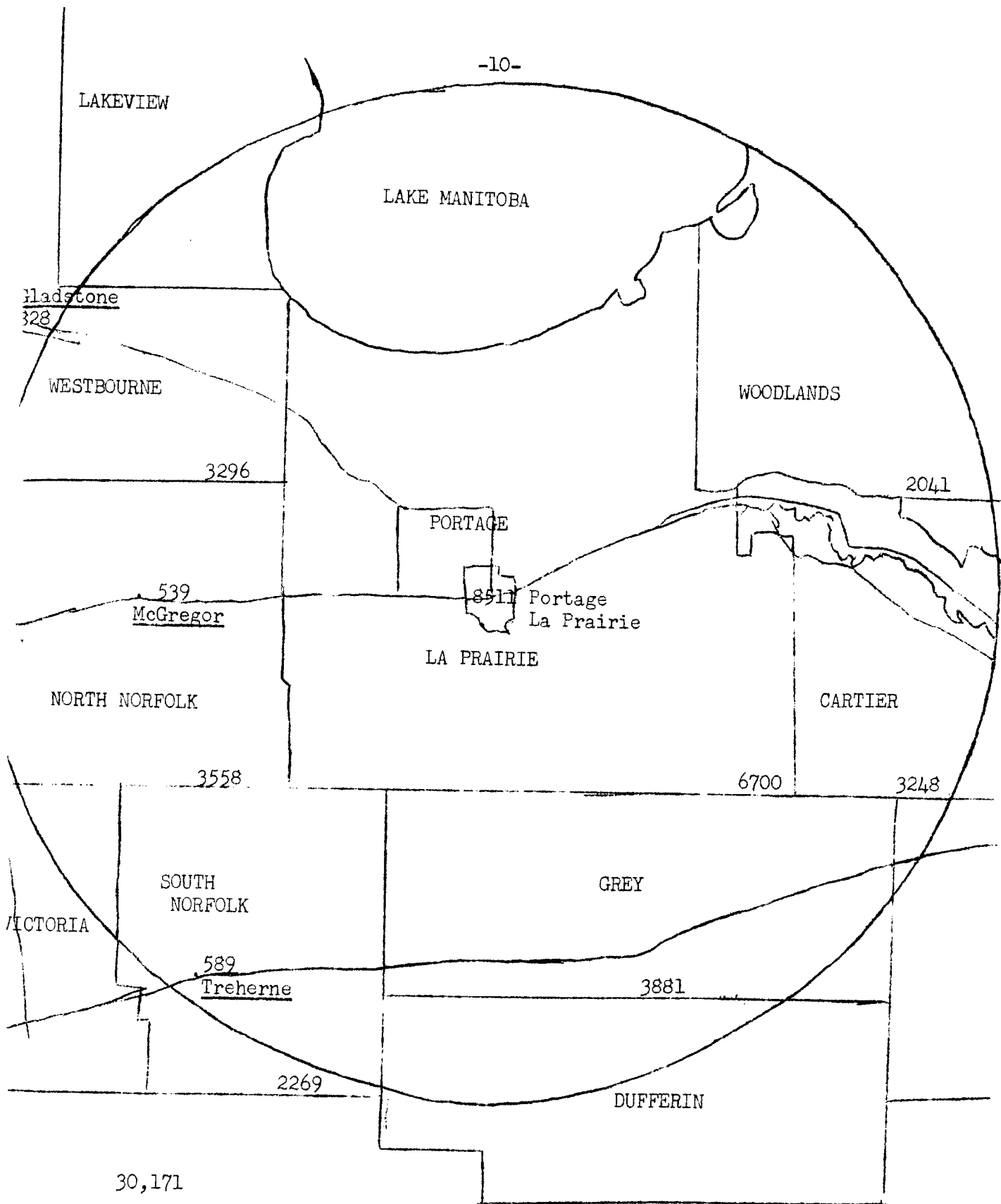
CHAIRMAN: Miss Ruth Buggey

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: Miss Nettie Siemens, Miss Margaret Ashley



BRANDON AREA  
(30 mile radius)

SCALE 1" = 8 miles



PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE AREA  
(30 mile radius)

SCALE 1" — 8 miles

-11-  
Winnipegosis  
924

ETHELBERT

Ethelbert  
491

MOSSEY RIVER

234

LAWRENCE

GILBERT

DAUPHIN

DAUPHIN  
LAKE

Grandview  
946

Gilbert Plains  
838

Dauphin  
6007

GRANDVIEW

PLAINS

St. Rose  
701

2333

2860

4533

OCHRE RIVER

STE. ROSE

5

RIDING MOUNTAIN

NATIONAL PARK

127

1706

1680

42

27,451

DAUPHIN AREA  
(30 mile radius)

SCALE 1" — 8 miles

Have YOU HEARD?

That - Miss H. Zado has retired from her position as school librarian , Sargent Park School.

That - Miss Margaret Tupper, of Winnipeg Public Library and programme chairman for the Association 1955-56, was married in June. She married the son of former M.L.A. members, Mr. & Mrs. J. Price now of Vancouver.

That - Miss Doris Erfle, Cataloguing department, University of Manitoba, has taken a position with Vancouver Public Library, Reference Department.

That - Miss Marion Booth of the University of Manitoba Library is touring Europe.

That - Miss Myrtle Lewis has joined the staff of Cataloguing Department of University of Manitoba Library.

That - Miss Margaret Gardiner of the staff of Provincial Library is a student at McGill Library School.

That - Mrs. G. Kaufman of the staff of University of Manitoba Library is a student at Simmonds College Library School, Boston.

That - Mr. Hartwell Bowsfield, Provincial Archivist in the Provincial Library, will attend the meeting of Society of American Archivists in Washington, D.C.

That - Miss Edna Greer, Circulation Department of University of Manitoba Library is on sabbatical leave in California.

That - Fort Garry Public Library officially opened on Sunday, September 23rd.

That - Miss Elizabeth Lees on staff of Provincial Library was married June 16th to Mr. Roy Newell. Mrs. Newell was a former treasurer of the Manitoba Library Association.

That - Mrs. G.A. MacMillan has resigned from the staff of St. Boniface Library and has taken a position with the Manitoba Department of Public Works.

That - Manitoba had 9 representatives at C.L.A. in Niagara Falls this year. Manitoba is represented in C.L.A. by . . .

Rev. A.J. Cotter, S.J.	—	2nd Vice-President
Miss Mona Martin	—	member — Budget and Finance Committee
Miss Ruth Bugey	—	" — Membership committee
Miss Marjorie Morley	—	chairman — Government Reference Section
		member — Legislative committee
		" — Microfilm committee

That - Miss Lottie Schuman of the University of Manitoba Library is attending Library School in Manchester, England.

That - Miss Rosemary Wagner of the Winnipeg Public Library, Boys and Girls Department is attending McGill University Library School.