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Library Committee's Work Pays Off

By SCOTT FITZGERALD

MARS HILL—Residents of this community have every reason to be grateful to the concerned citizens who make up the Mars Hill Library Committee. Members of the committee have worked diligently since 1976 trying to raise money for the construction of a new town library facility. The work was not done in vain because plans for the new facility have been completed and bidding for construction should begin next month.

Wayne Roberts, a Mars Hill architect with the J. Bertram King Company, said the new \$150,000 brick and wood building will be located on Cherry Street near the municipal parking lot. Roberts said the 3,300 square foot facility will be able to seat approximately 40 to 50 people,

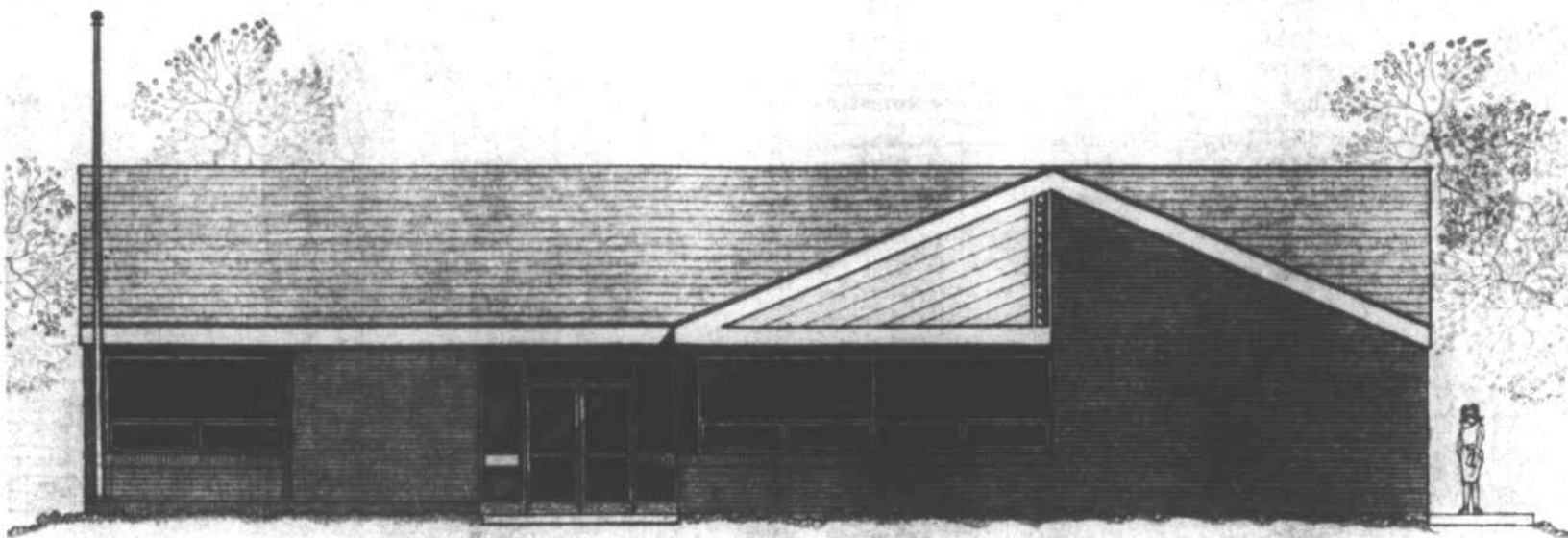
and have the capacity to shelve approximately 17,000 books. The adult section of the library will house nearly 15,000 volumes in stacks, and the children's section will contain nearly 2,000 volumes.

Plans for the structure show a modern design appearance featuring a slanted roof which will incorporate partial solar heating for energy efficiency. Construction work on the new library is scheduled to begin in mid April.

Dr. Evelyn Underwood, chairman of the Mars Hill Library Committee said recently that the initial work to build a new library began in 1976 when the committee was formed. Members include Miss Ruth Howell, Mrs. Elizabeth Crocco, and committee finance chairman Ruth Anderson. Mrs. Anderson said fund raising efforts began in

1977. The committee's goal was to raise money through fundraisers, grants from state and federal sources, and grants from foundations, companies and private individuals.

The committee raised over \$50,000 locally through flea markets and other sales. With that as a base, the committee began applying for grant monies. The Appalachian Regional Commission granted the library \$77,000, while other funds were secured from the McClure Foundation and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. Dr. Underwood said State Representative Liston Ramsey helped the committee obtain \$17,500 in two grants, one from a legislative library project and one from the Department of Natural Resources and Community



Artist's Drawing Of The East Elevation Of Mars Hill Library

Development.

All that remains before bidding can begin is approval of the blueprints and plans by the State Library Board. Dr. Underwood said she expects the letter of approval to arrive this week.

Even though the library committee currently has \$155,000 secured for constructing and partially equipping the facility, the work of the committee is not finished. Its next goal is to maintain and insure that the library has the

needed support of the community.

"We have put every dollar we can into the building, but now we want to organize a Friends of the Library association to maintain the constant support this library

needs," Dr. Underwood said.

She said furnishings will have to be bought, and fundraising efforts in the future will be put toward that purpose.

Dr. Underwood pointed out that a town library fills a com-

munity need in a different way from a school library. She added that the committee has been most pleased with the support and cooperation from the Mars Hill Town Council and the people in the community.

Town Requests Leak Information

The Town of Marshall needs to know about leaks in its water system, according to Eloise Riddle, town clerk.

"Many leaks have been reported and corrected, but there are probably more that haven't been reported," she said.

Mrs. Riddle said it would be of great assistance to the town water department and possibly reduce the electrical bill for pumping water lost through broken lines if anyone knowing of a broken line would report it to the town by calling 649-3031.

The leaks are caused by the age of extension lines and some of the main lines in the town's water system.

W. Madison VFD Off To Good Start

By KEVIN MORLEY

On Jan. 11, 1981 there were two house fires in the Spring Creek area of Madison County. One was in Meadow Fork and the other in Bluff. One house was saved and one was destroyed. On Feb. 17, 1981 some 100 people came to the Spring Creek School to talk about the formation of a volunteer fire department for the western Madison region. Before they left they contributed over \$800, and 27 men had signed up to act as volunteer firefighters. People were concerned about the lack of fire protection for their homes and woodlands and ex-

cited about the prospect of forming their own department.

Spring Creek principal Larry Plemmons opened up what proved to be a well organized meeting by describing its purpose: "to get information... to see if it is possible... and to find out how much it will cost."

An hour later the information was in, the possibility of doing it seemed assured, and the cost seemed quite affordable.

The meeting was turned over to Stan McElroy who, according to Plemmons, "had done most of the work to pull the meeting together."

McElroy spoke about how the fires in January had driven home the point to several people that Spring Creek needed a volunteer fire department. Since then McElroy started asking questions and the results of his inquiries were brought together for the meeting.

The first of several guest speakers, Tom Fry of the North Carolina Forest Service, was introduced by McElroy. Fry commented on the "fine turnout" of community people and proceeded to describe the assistance that could be given to them by the state forest service. He called

volunteer fire departments a "valuable asset" to the state and said that "millions of dollars" were saved statewide each year through the forest fire fighting efforts of local volunteers.

Fry stated that in appreciation for the work of rural fire departments the state would "help any way we can" in getting the department on its feet. For starters he said a "brush truck," a four wheel drive and three-quarter ton vehicle, would be donated to the department as well as other pieces of equipment. Funds were limited so he downplayed the idea of much financial assistance.

"It will take a year to get the truck... but we'll work on it" stated the forest ranger as he concluded his talk.

McElroy next introduced Jerry Veach, Civil Preparedness Director for Buncombe County, who, along with two fire chiefs from Buncombe County, made the long drive to Spring Creek to provide answers and offer assistance to the fledgling organization. He spoke about training, equipment and legal requirements for the formation and operation of a volunteer fire department.

"It won't cost a lot of money to get started" he stated and he noted that a fire department would benefit the community by lowering fire insurance rates as well as protecting life and property.

First, though, the organization would have to gain non-profit tax status as well as receiving a charter from the state. He thought those things could be accomplished in 60 to 90 days. (Later in the meeting McElroy announced that the legal work would be done by an attorney at no cost to the community). Once the legal requirements were met, Veach said, the organization would be eligible for funding of different types from several sources, grants as well as low

interest loans.

"It takes 19 people to charter a fire department; a chief, assistant chief, captain, and lieutenant and 15 fire men." Training would be provided free of charge by the state Department of Insurance. "We'll work with you," Veach said, "we'll come out here as many times as is necessary. He pledged to provide information about training and any extra equipment that could be donated by the Buncombe County fire departments.

Veach then introduced Vernon Dover of the West Buncombe volunteer fire department who said the key to the fire department was "good training and cooperation, dedicated people." Dover gave an entertaining talk on the pitfalls of firefighting but advised the group not to get discouraged early on.

"It takes time to learn the ropes."

He informed the gathering that quick training would be available for new departments, and that each fire man should have 36 hours of certified training. He extended an offer of assistance to Spring Creek from West Buncombe and said that members of his department would be glad to come over anytime to lend a hand.

"We'll be glad to help." He reckoned that the community would have "no trouble whatsoever getting rolling because he saw that 'the community is really interested.'"

Ron Owenby of the Broad River Volunteer Fire Department was instrumental in bringing that organization into being. He spoke of his experiences in starting a volunteer organization and turning "nothing into something." He said a prime ingredient was "a lot of people willing to work." As Jerry Veach had mentioned earlier, Owenby stated that local fundraising was the best

method for acquiring needed money and that his department had raised \$16,000 during the first year to build their fire station.

"The credit goes to the ladies auxiliary" Owenby said, "it's the backbone of the department... it's raised \$10,000 to \$12,000 every year."

A question from the audience about the ladies auxiliary brought forth the information that it is a separate organization with its own by-laws but is covered by the same insurance as the fire department. That insurance provides coverage for injury sustained while traveling to or working at a fire. Owenby concluded his presentation with an offer of assistance and support from his department.

5 During a question and answer period someone asked for an estimate of cost for getting the minimum fire department operational. The three visitors from Buncombe County talked among themselves momentarily and Jerry Veach replied to the question by saying it would be hard to say but that \$5,000 was a reasonable figure if everything had to be purchased. He noted that with donations of vehicles and equipment the cost should be much lower.

Larry Plemmons said that he thought that if a building was going to be planned to hold the fire department it "should also be large enough to house a rescue squad." His suggestion was endorsed by a loud burst of applause.

A theme that ran in and out throughout the meeting was that not only did the people want a fire department but that they also were very concerned about having emergency medical service capabilities.

Stan McElroy returned to the podium to ask the assembled community

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Probable Cause Found: Parking Lot Stabbing

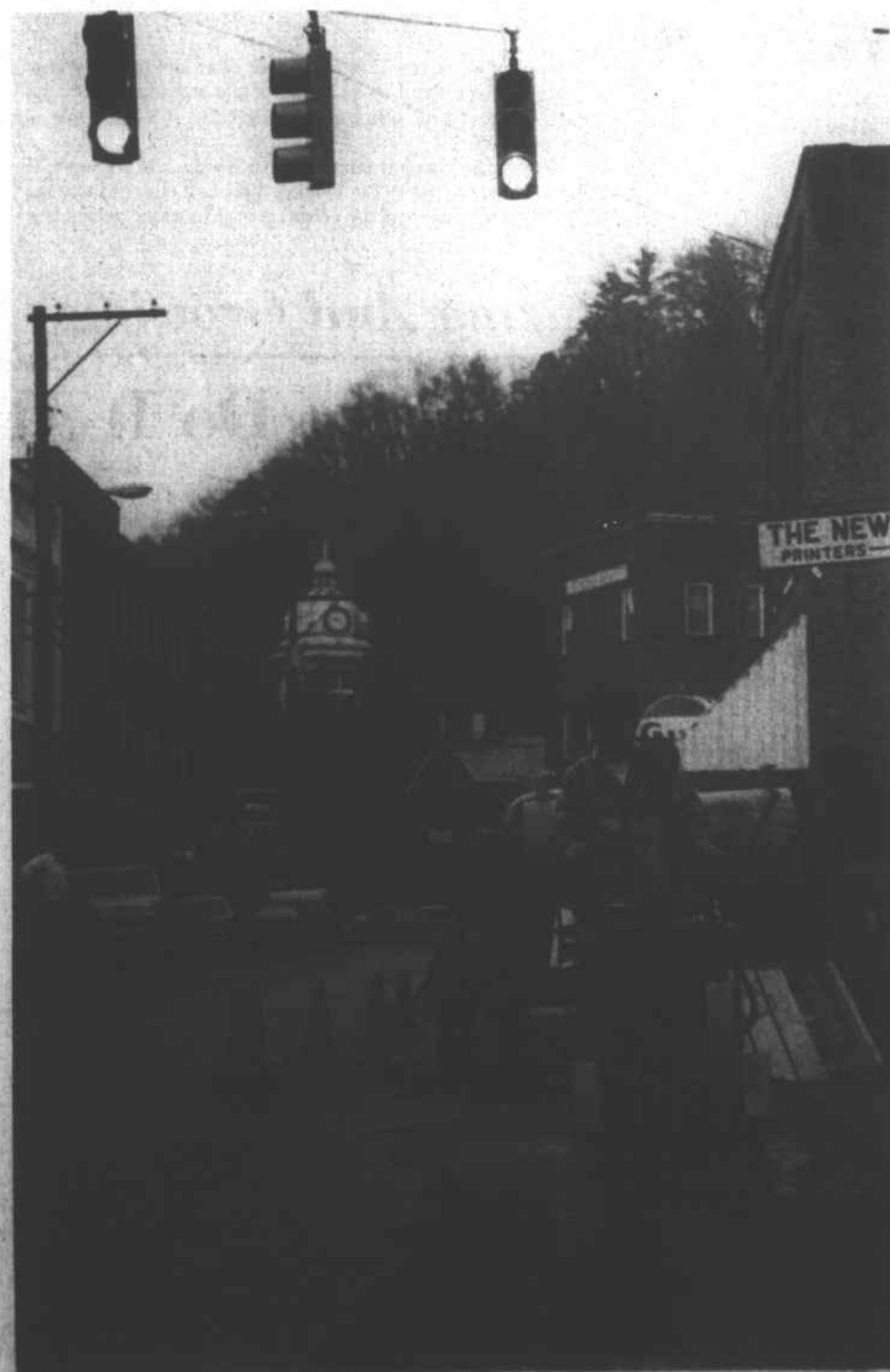
In a hearing conducted by District Court Judge Alexander Lyerly on Feb. 13, probable cause was found in the fatal stabbing of a Marshall youth, and Kenny Smith, 23, of Mars Hill was bound over to Superior Court on charges of murder in the Feb. 4 incident.

Charles Sexton Jr., 17, died after an altercation occurred between him and Smith in a parking lot outside the Marshall city limits on the Highway 25-70 bypass.

An investigation by the Madison County Sheriff's Department revealed that Sexton and three companions had pulled into the parking lot beside Smith's car. After an exchange of words between Sexton and Smith, a fight began between the two and Sexton was fatally wounded in the chest, according to Sheriff E.Y. Ponder.

Thursday, a spokesman for the sheriff's department said that Smith remained released from custody on a secured \$10,000 bond.

According to Clerk of Court James Cody, it is expected that Smith will appear before a grand jury in Superior Court at Marshall on April 27.



NEW TRAFFIC LIGHTS have been installed at the intersection of Main and Upper Bridge Streets in Marshall. The lights, purchas-

ed by the town, were put up to prevent traffic accidents at the intersection.

State Could Owe \$50 Million

RALEIGH — North Carolina could owe the federal government \$50 million because of lax control over the federally-funded, state administered Comprehensive Employment and Training Act jobs program, state Auditor Edward Renfrow says.

In a letter to a legislative committee, Renfrow said the state Department of Resources and Community Development could have allowed \$50 million in im-

proper spending while administering contracts to local governments and private organizations.

"NRCD has shown an unjustifiable amount of willingness to contract with organizations or individuals who have demonstrated poor accounting ability or poor program results," Renfrow said in a Feb. 6 letter to the joint Natural Resources and Economic Development Appropriations Committee.

The contracts for training

low income and unemployed persons to hold higher-skilled jobs are administered by the state but paid for under CETA.

Renfrow told legislators that the U.S. Department of Labor, which runs the program, would probably become stricter about CETA accounting under President Reagan. In the 1970s, Renfrow said, the Labor Department often approved costs that had been questioned by the auditors.