

# Damaged library is set to reopen

By KEITH MURAOKA  
Sentinel staff writer

**SOQUEL** — The historic Porter Memorial Library in Soquel will reopen June 4 after being closed due to damages from the Oct. 17 earthquake.

The all-volunteer library has now bounced back from three natural disasters, Jean McElroy, secretary of the library's board of directors, said Friday. The '55 and '82 floods also shut down the library, although the eight months of earthquake closure is believed to be the longest period the library has been closed.

The library, which opened in 1913, is located on Old San Jose Road. A volunteer staff of 12 will man the library seven days a week. Hours will be 1-5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 12:30-3:30 p.m. on Saturdays.

The reopening became a reality, after \$14,500 in structural repairs. The Federal Emergency Management Agency loaned the county \$12,000, while the county came up

with another \$2,500 to repair cracked plaster and stucco, as well as repaint and install new light fixtures.

The library's centerpiece, the massive rock fireplace, also has been saved. However, Library Director John McConnell said work crews still need to fill the many cracks in the interior of the fireplace.

In addition, volunteers replaced books that had been thrown from shelves, and cleaned the dust created by falling plaster. Students from Soquel High School also helped.

"The library means so much to so many people," McElroy said. "You'd be surprised at the number of people who told me how glad they're going to be to be able to bring their children there."

Both McElroy and McConnell said they had their fingers crossed over the repair, not knowing whether damages this time around might permanently close the library.