



# LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## **Historical souvenir: Free Public Library: Waukesha, Wisconsin, opening January sixth, nineteen hundred and four. 1904**

[s.l.]: [s.n.], 1904

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# Historical Souvenir

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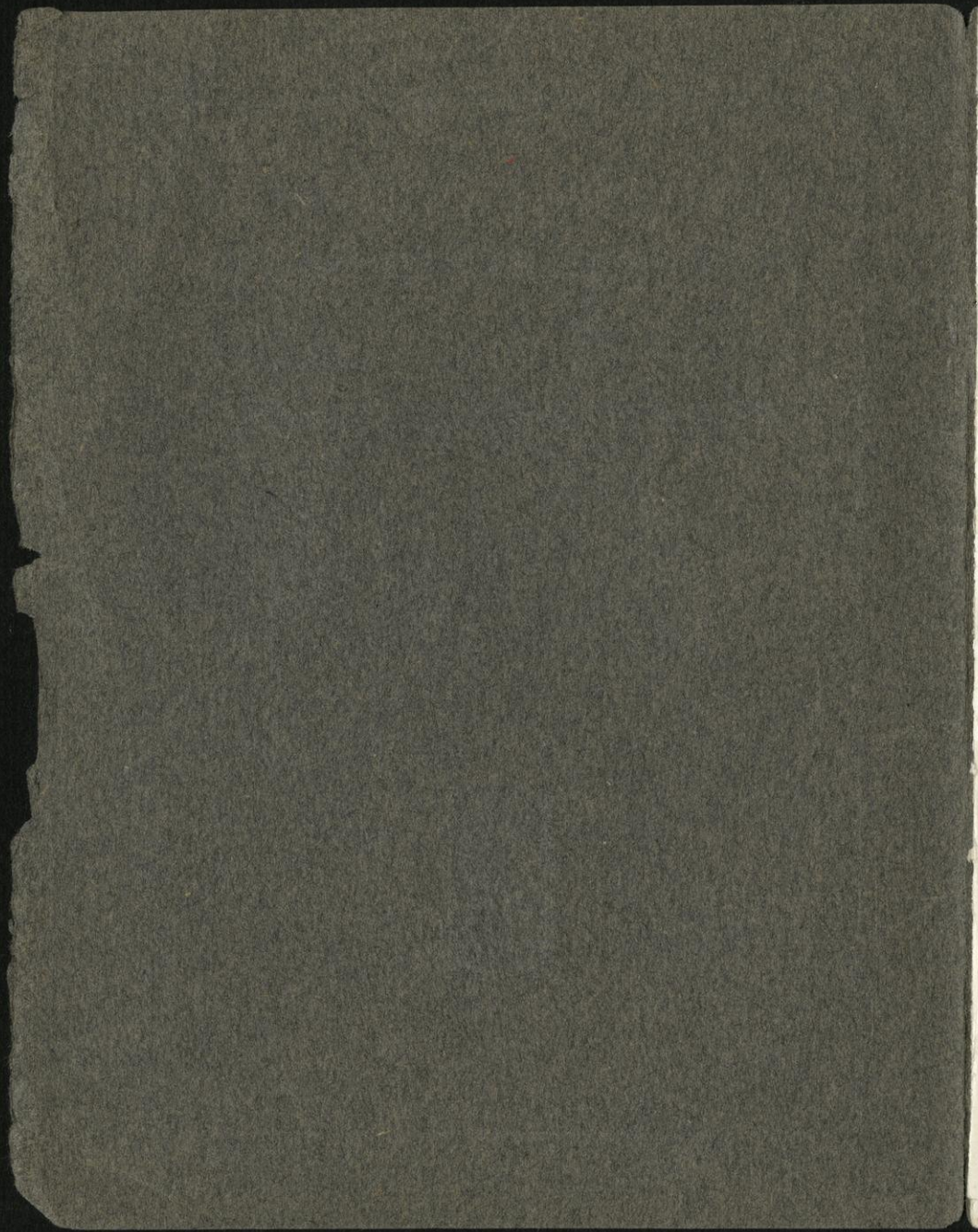
FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN,  
OPENING JANUARY SIXTH,  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FOUR.





*You are invited to attend the*

*opening of the*

*Free Public Library*

*Wednesday, January the sixth,*

*nineteen hundred and four.*

*Waukesha, Wisconsin.*

WAUKESHA FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY



PHOTO BY O'BRIEN

OPENED JANUARY SIXTH, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FOUR



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# *Order of Exercises*

JANUARY 6, 1904.

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2 to 6 P. M.—Musical Interludes.

7.00 P. M.—Lecture room doors open.

8.00 P. M.—Dedicatory address by T. W. Haight,  
President of the Library Board.

8.20 P. M.—Address by T. E. Ryan, President  
of the City School Board.

Vocal and Instrumental Music.

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THE WAUKESHA FREEMAN PRINT



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## *The Story of the Library*

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HERE had been several attempts, previous to 1896, to establish a public library at Waukesha, and a good many books of more or less value had been donated from time to time for this purpose; but all such attempts had resulted alike in speedy collapse with some little additions to private collections from what had been contributed for public purposes. It is to be hoped that the volumes thus distributed were found useful in some way, but it was not in the way of promoting this kind of enterprise. In that direction the results were clearly discouraging, and the male portion of our people had generally declared that they would do nothing more in the line of furnishing books to be lost or destroyed in vain efforts to provide reading for an uninterested public.

In the meantime there had been in existence for some years an association of ladies who called themselves the Beacon Lights Reading Club, and met at the homes of members on Monday afternoons to listen to readings from such books as were chosen for the purpose, and to spend a portion of the time in the discussion of topics of interest. A year before President McKinley's inauguration the subject of a public library was introduced at one of the club meetings and talked over, with the result that a committee was appointed to confer with committees and members from other women's clubs in the city and with them to formulate a plan for the establishment of a library for club members at least, and with a wider scope if thought best. There is no record of the proceedings at their conference, the first of which was held at the Coleman House about the 1st of April but a temporary organization was effected with Mrs. W. F. Whitney as president and Mrs. Eugene Sweeney as secretary, and contributions of books were obtained in due time, the

largest number being given by Miss Amelia R. Enos and Mr. Murray. Early in May, 1896, the collection was placed on shelves in Miss Ells' home, No. 103, Carroll St., and that lady engaged to take charge of them and keep a record of their issue and return. For these purposes she was to keep the library room open on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and evenings and was to receive \$3.00 per week for her services and use of room.

On June 24, following, Miss Ells reported 136 volumes in the collection and a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution and rules of procedure for the society. During the summer a negro minstrel show was given at the Casino, all the parts being taken by ladies of the association, and a net profit of \$84.70 was derived from it, so that the librarian was paid. On Sept. 5, a constitution was adopted and officers elected for the ensuing year as follows: Mrs. W. F. Whitney, president; Mrs. D. J. Hemlock vice president; Mrs. A. F. Warden treasurer; and Dr. Maybelle M. Park, secretary; Mmes. B. F. Seeley, A. W. Robinson, Eugene Sweeney and Ida James, directors. The offices of secretary and treasurer were filled by Miss Park, and Mrs. Warden until the final transfer to the city. Ten dollars was directed to be invested in new books, the yearly dues of members fixed at one dollar, and stricter regulations adopted as to the issue and retention of books. At the November meeting it was announced that the library had increased to 350 volumes of which it is only truth to say that a considerable proportion was of paper covered novels, re-inforced with new backs and sides.

On March 2, 1897, the meeting of directors was informed that the library had grown to more than 600 volumes, and the membership to ninety—still consisting exclusively of ladies. It was now decided to rent rooms at 135, Broadway, at \$10 a month. During the rest of the library year ways and means of providing for the increased expenses were so successfully devised and used that at the annual meeting in September a balance of \$81.67 was reported in the treasury and the books numbered 900, "all donated except eight novels, the Encyclopedic Dictionary, and the University of Literature. The membership rolls contained 132 names of which only 90 represented persons who had paid the regular dues. At the annual election Mrs. W. L. Sanner was chosen president; Mrs. T. W. Haight vice president; Dr. Park, Sec'y.; Mrs. Warden, treasurer; Mmes Whitney, G. L. Walker, Hemlock and T. H. Taylor directors. The librarian, vice president and Mrs. Hemlock were appointed as committee on books.





THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

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OV. 6, 1897, all indebtedness was reported paid with a balance over of \$35.92, and a poster show was arranged for in order to obtain additional funds. At the December meeting \$28.05 was reported as the profits of that enterprise, so that the January, 1898, report showed all bills paid and \$52.65 on hand. By February, however, there was only enough remaining for that month's expenses and all members of the board were instructed to solicit new memberships, which was apparently done with moderate success, since March showed \$18 over current expenses, and April \$7.87 still remaining. A public concert in May brought in \$7.50. By August 60 names had been added to the membership list and all the money spent except \$5.02, and the librarian's salary in arrears. At the annual meeting in September, the year's expenses were reported at \$345.93 of which \$33.64 was for new books and \$7.12 for binding. The year's income was \$413.99. The new officers elected were Mrs. Haight, president; Mrs. C. W. Parker vice president, secretary and treasurer as before, and directors to fill vacancies, Miss H. E. Marsh and Mmes G. W. Carleton, J. E. Bacon and E. W. Malone. The vice president and secretary, and Mrs. Carleton were appointed book committee.

At the November meeting there was a balance on hand of \$53.75, of which \$20 was ordered to be used for book purchases and binding. By March, 1899, the balance had grown to \$134.94 solicitations among citizens having brought in \$200 in the way of contributions of business men (who were now admitted as members,) besides a gift of \$27.15 from the local federation of women's clubs. At the annual meeting in September it was found that there was \$37.25 on hand and the expenditures during the year had been \$373. There were 750 bound and 250 paper covered volumes in the library. Mrs. Haight declining a re-election and other proposed candidates also declining, Mrs. Sanner was finally chosen president, Mrs. Walker vice president, Mrs. Warden treasurer, Dr. Park secretary, and Mmes. Malone, Whitney and Carberry directors. In October a cinch party and a social party together netted the society \$12.97, and in November another cinch party brought in \$2.70, so that at the December meeting only \$5.31 remained in the treasury. It was the deep darkness of just before dawn. During the month the Practical club (of women) presented 35 volumes of new books to the library, and a proposition brought by Alderman Arthur J. Dopp for the city to assume its care in the future was gladly welcomed at the regular January meeting and the change effected at a special meeting on the 24th of the

month, the city council having approved the plan.

Before the 30th of January, 1900, Mayor A. F. Warden had appointed as directors of the Waukesha Free Public Library Messrs. D. J. Hemlock, T. W. Haight, E. W. Chafin, George Harding and Henry Lockney, and Mmes Sanner, Carberry and W. H. Anderson, and Dr. Park, who, with Prof. H. L. Terry, member ex officio of the new board, met on that day and organized by the adoption of by-laws and the election of Mr. Hemlock as president, Mrs. Carberry as vice president, and Dr. Park as secretary. Up to this time the work of the library had been wholly performed by the ladies of the Beacon Lights club in the first instance and afterwards by those of all the local women's clubs, who had thus, through many seasons of discouragement brought the enterprise to a point where there was no longer any danger of collapse for want of financial support. Their help was not withdrawn, however. In the course of February the Ideal club presented \$100 worth of books to the library, the Beacon Lights club continued its contributions, and within the year the Waukesha Women's club added \$100 worth more of selected volumes.

The subsequent history of the library need not be told in so large detail. By the end of the library year in July, 1901, Messrs. Chafin and Lockney had retired from the board and Messrs. H. E. Osborne and C. O. Merica were appointed in their places. The city had made its appropriation a fixed amount of \$1000 annually and more convenient rooms were secured in the Columbia Block. Soon after his appointment Director Osborne conceived and carried into effect the plan of procuring a large number of memorial medals from the first sheet steel rolled at Waukesha and sending them to moneyed men with a request for contributions for library purposes. One of the first responses to his application was from Mr. Charles F. Pfister of Milwaukee accompanied by a check for \$100. This fund has since grown in Mr. Osborne's hands to over \$3,000, which has all been found necessary in addition to Mr. Carnegie's gift for the full completion of the library building.

At the annual meeting in July, 1901, Mr. Harding was elected president, Mrs. Anderson vice president and Dr. Park secretary. At the following January meeting Director Merica was requested to inquire into the matter of obtaining gifts of library buildings from Mr. Andrew Carnegie, and early in March, 1902, a communication was received from Mr. Carnegie's secretary informing the board that on proper evidence of a library site being provided, and that the city would vote an annual appropriation of \$1,500 for maintenance of the library

he would give \$15,000 for the construction of the building, as requested.

By the annual meeting in July, 1902, the city council was taking proper action for securing Mr. Carnegie's gift, and Prof. Merica was elected president of the library board, Miss Enos vice president and Dr. Park secretary, Mrs. Sanner having retired from the board. In the following December President Merica resigned as he was to leave the state at the end of the year, and Mr. Haight was elected to that position. A building committee was appointed at the same meeting, consisting of Messrs. Harding, Terry, Armin, Lowry and Osborne, who were authorized to act for the board in making contracts for the new library building and in having general oversight of the construction which was to be under the immediate supervision of the architect, Mr. C. C. Anderson of Waukesha, who also designed it and furnished the plans and specifications. Miss Ells is still the efficient librarian, and the present board of directors consists of T. W. Haight, president, Amelia R. Enos vice president, Lora E. McDonald, secretary, H. L. Terry, principal of Waukesha school system, J. K. Lowry, C. E. Armin, Ida V. Ray, Mrs. W. H. Anderson, H. E. Osborne and Mayor George Harding. On the shelves there are now nearly 4,000 volumes, which in the near future are expected to develop into a collection worthy their new home.

