

Public libraries of Manitowoc County from 1852 to the present. Monograph 26 1975

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MANITOWOC COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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1975 Series

Public Libraries of Manitowoc County

from 1852 to the present

by EDWARD EHLERT

HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT IN MANITOWOC

Interesting Review by Mrs. J. S. Anderson and Judge Emil Baensch of
Way in which Library was Fostered to Give City Present Institution

(Reprinted from SILVER JUBILEE EDITION of THE MANITOWOC HERALD-NEWS)

(This sketch was prepared in 1903 by Mrs. J. S. Anderson, then Vice President of the Library Board, and copied by Florence C. Hays former Librarian in the Records of the Library.)

Manitowoc County early exhibited the library spirit. The first public or semi-public library of which the writer can obtain knowledge was begun in 1852 in the town of Kossuth where there was a large settlement of English and Scotch. The library was formed by each settler contributing one or more books to a common fund which was kept for distribution at the home of William Eatough. This settlement also maintained for several years a literary society and debating club.

A similar organization is said to have existed in the town of Meeme, but the writer of this sketch has been unable to obtain definite information regarding the formation of a library there, but the debating club existed until quite a recent period.

200 Volumes in Old Library

Within the limits of Manitowoc City there was, before the breaking out of the Civil War a library of a couple of hundred volumes belonging to a club of young men. They either contributed these books or solicited them from their friends. Books in those days were very expensive and lads had very little money and the library did not grow to large proportions. The first call to arms took nearly every young man of the club into the army and nobody knows what became of the few books the club owned.

For many years there was a German circulating library maintained by private means at the bookstore of Mr. Fechter.

The first effort to establish a public library was made during the year 1868 by K. K. Jones who donated the lot and building upon York Street still known as the Jones Library property and some other city lots to the Jones Library Association, for use as a public library. The fund for purchasing the books was secured by membership fees. Twenty-five dollars made a life member, four dollars an annual member. Theoretically only members or their families were privileged to draw books, but practically the advantages of the library were extended to others.

The book fund was further increased by the sale of the unimproved lots above mentioned, fines, dues, the proceeds of concerts, lectures and social entertainments. In time a library of fifteen or sixteen hundred volumes was accumu-

lated embracing the works of the very best English and American authors with not a few translations of standard continental writers. Too much praise cannot be given to this library either to the generous spirit which prompted its bestowal or to the intelligence which guided the selection of the books, and notwithstanding its limited scope it did a great work in the community.

Alonzo Smith First Librarian

The first librarian of the Jones Library was Alonzo D. Smith, now of St. Louis, Missouri, son of Perry P. Smith, one of our earliest settlers and an authority upon early times in Manitowoc. In its later days the library was presided over by Mrs. Sharp, a widow who was a natural born lover of books and librarian. She removed to Detroit, Michigan, where she has since died.



Main Library Circulation Desk — Carnegie Library

Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Langworthy then took charge of the library. The only compensation given a librarian was their fuel and the rent of the upper story of the library building for living rooms. The library was not kept open more than a few hours each week. The building gradually became too dilapidated for occupancy and as there was no money provided with which to repair it, Mr. and Mrs. Langworthy resigned.

Various organizations undertook the charge of the books. The Young Men's Christian Association, a social organization of young men of the city calling themselves the Calumet Club, each had it. No new books were added however and books which were borrowed were often not returned so that the collection was gradually depleted.

It was owing to the care of the few remaining trustees, and especially to the guardianship of one of them, Mr. Henry Mulholland, that a large number of the books were preserved to be presented to and incorporated with the Free Public Library when it was finally established.

Vote to Turn Over Jones Library

Upon the organization of the present library the trustees of the Jones Library voted to turn over all books, moneys, and property belonging to the Jones Library to the Manitowoc Free Public Library, in which they doubtless carried out the wishes of the founder whose purpose was to benefit this community. The books, about eight hundred volumes, are a very valuable and much appreciated part of our present collection.

The story of the Jones Library is the story of all libraries which depend upon the enthusiasm of the public for their support. After a time enthusiasm dies, new enterprises enlist the public interest and the library perishes from the lack of sustenance.

For many years the city was without a public library, although there were sporadic attempts either to revive the Jones Library or to establish another.

The matter was finally taken up by the Clio Club, an organization of twenty ladies of the city whose object was literary study. The ladies felt the need of authorities in their own studies, saw that the schools were similarly hampered, and that the public generally needed reading rooms and library facilities. They were doubtless additionally stimulated to effort by the success neighboring cities were having in getting libraries. Our nearest neighbor, Two Rivers, already had a free public library. Sheboygan, Fond du Lac, Menasha, and many other towns

were supplied and the Clio Club determined Manitowoc must have one also.

The first move was to address a series of questions regarding the need of a public library, the benefit it would be to all citizens, the way it should be supported and the like, to leading men requesting that answers might be returned which could be used for publication.

The Preliminary Canvass

This preliminary canvass was conducted by Mrs. Max Rahr and Mrs. Oscar A. Alter, and so efficient and persuasive were they that they soon had nearly every man who was supposed to have a dollar in his pocket committed to the project of a public library. The city press came gallantly to our aid and published these letters as furnished them, two or three a week, the publication continuing several months.

These letters afterward afforded a good pivotal point for the soliciting committee which could gracefully approach a citizen and say, "We were glad to notice by your published letter that you are in favor of a public library and as we are soliciting contributions for the establishment of one you will doubtless gladly put your name on our list." Doubtless many will recall the formula which we learned to repeat as glibly as a book work he has for sale.

After the way had been sufficiently prepared, in our judgment, a committee of five was appointed by the Clio Club from its own membership to go among the citizens and solicit subscriptions for a public library to be supported by public taxation. This committee was Mrs. Oscar A. Alter, Mrs. James S. Anderson, Mrs. Mary A. Hewitt, Mrs. Lyman J. Nash, Mrs. Max Rahr.

Mr. Lyman J. Nash took an active interest in the matter, prepared a suitable form for the petition and headed the subscription with a liberal donation which far exceeded any the ladies had expected from one person, and thus equipped, the committee entered upon the labor of securing subscriptions. The work was not concluded until the following year however, when nearly \$4,700.00 had been collected. It was contributed in small sums varying from one dollar to five hundred dollars and sometimes the smallest sums came from those to whom a dollar meant more sacrifice than \$500 did to others and was accompanied by such earnest wishes for success that the committee felt richer by thousands. For after all it is the heart interest in such an enterprise which measures its value to the community.

This soliciting was done during the years 1898 and 1899.

Presented To Council

The matter was presented to the city council in November 1899 by Mr. Lyman J. Nash. The council accepted the gift from the subscribers and provided for a tax to support the library and appointed the first library board. Of this board, as first appointed, Mr. C. F. Canright, our very efficient secretary, and Mr. John Nagle, have been removed by death, and Mr. Norman Torrison has resigned.

The board secured the rooms over the post office in a two story brick building owned by the O. Torrison Co., adjacent to the river on the east side of Eighth Street.

From the first a trained librarian was employed, and Miss Henrietta von Briesen, of Columbus, Wisconsin was the first librarian and served until June 1, 1902 when she resigned and was succeeded by Miss Florence C. Hays, of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and a former pupil of the Wisconsin Training School for Librarians. Miss Agnes Peterson, a graduate of the North Side High School was employed as assistant. Later Miss Louise Spiering was added to the staff and till more recently Miss Lillian Sieker has entered as an apprentice.

The library was first opened to the public on March 13, 1900, and while it hardly falls within the province of this sketch, I propose to give a brief account of some of the incidents attending our opening, feeling sure that if this paper be legible upon that distant day when both library and city shall have outgrown the building whose cornerstone is about to be laid and this cornerstone be opened and this narrative read, nothing can be more interesting than the knowledge of our small beginning.

Had 1,683 Books

We had been delayed in our orders for books but on opening we had 1,683 ready for circulation, this included four hundred juveniles with about two hundred more upon the adult shelves which could be made to do duty as such. We issued instructions to the schools to send their pupils by grades upon the successive days of the week, a request which was not altogether complied with being imperfectly understood.

The first day not many people visited the library and those who did avoided the books and when we closed at nine o'clock P.M., having issued only eighty one books doubts arose in our mind as to whether the city wanted a public library after all.

We found out afterward that many thought something must be paid before getting books, and just how much or where they were uncertain. The impression was soon dissipated by the experience of the bolder ones, but for a long time patrons would ask the attendant what deposit they must make or how much they must pay for the cards.

On Wednesday the fourteenth, the rooms were crowded after school hours. It was nearly impossible for any person to make his way from one end of the room to the other. On Thursday night we closed with but twenty-six juveniles in the library and four grades of the city schools were still to be served. We telephoned to Milwaukee for more books and four hundred came up by the morning express. On Friday we were compelled to close to get the books ready. The women of the city worked all day and all evening, they cut leaves, opened volumes, stamped them, pasted labels and pockets while the librarians recorded and by dint of great industry we were prepared to supply our patrons when two o'clock came on Saturday afternoon.

It was inevitable that at a time of such eager excitement many amusing incidents should occur. For instance one applicant on her application blank where there is a space after the words "Age, if a minor" wrote "40."

One young man wanted a card for his brother who, he said was spending all his money for books and the applicant thought it would be a good thing if the spendthrift could get his books for nothing.

The first week many seemed to care little what they got so they got a book. Again and again they were assured that the library was here to stay, but "things seen are mightier than things heard" says the poet and they could not believe us when they saw it being carried away piecemeal before their eyes.

It was impossible to supervise the selections. All that those in charge could do was to maintain as good order as possible and record whatever was presented at the desk. One young man went off, apparently happy, with a child's picture book under his arm, while young children sometimes took volumes of Herbert Spencer or Lord Bacon.

Lucky to Get a Book

One little girl about five took a volume of Bancroft's History of the United States, and when her parents commented upon the impropriety of her selection, she replied, "I was lucky to get this."

Another child was observed to go to the adult shelves, select a book with a bright red cover and without a glance at either title or contents, take it to the registrar's desk.

Naturally such precipitancy brought its own punishment as the following illustrates: There are in the library two similar books, differing, indeed, only in title. One is the "American Girls' Handy Book", the other the "American Boys' Handy Book." The librarians smiled as on the third day a big boy returned the former, saying sheepishly, "I took the wrong one."

The Library Board and patrons owe grateful thanks to Miss L. E. Stearns, the state library organizer, and to Misses Rose Schuette and Jean Anderson of this city for the help they gave the regular force that trying week and to the many ladies who helped prepare the books for circulation.

The quarters over the post office were from the first too small. This with other considerations prompted the application to Mr. Andrew Carnegie of New York City for money to build a library building. On December 29, 1902, Mrs. J. S. Anderson, who had written a number of times to Mr. Carnegie without receiving a reply, received the following letter from Mr. Bertram, Mr. Carnegie's private secretary:

27th December, 1902.

Mrs. J.S. Anderson
Vice Pres. Library Board
Manitowoc, Wis.
Madam:

Responding to your letters in behalf of Manitowoc. If the city agree by resolu-

tion of the Council to maintain a Free Public Library at cost of not less than Twenty-five Hundred Dollars per year and provide a suitable site for the Building, Mr. Carnegie will be glad to furnish Twenty-five Thousand Dollars to erect a Free Public Library Building.

Respectfully yours,
JAS. BERTRAM

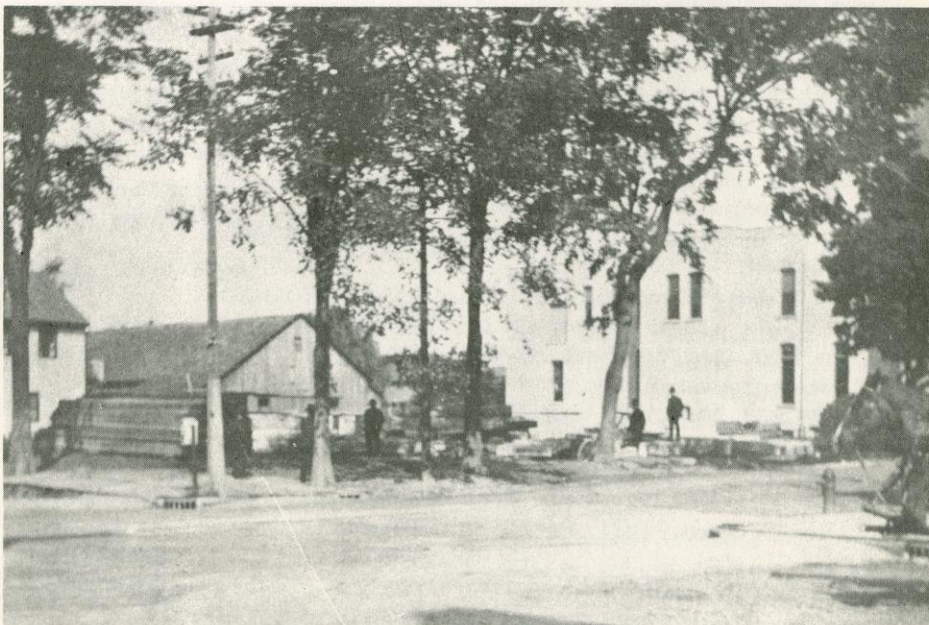
Once more Mr. Lyman Nash went to the council and presented the above offer. The gift was accepted upon the above condition. A committee was appointed to confer with the Library Board regarding a site. As to this there was much difference of opinion.

Select Location

The board selected the plat of ground occupying the northwest corner of the intersection of Chicago and Eighth streets believing it to be by far the most desirable for the purposes of all which were offered and this was finally purchased.

The price paid was Nine Thousand Dollars of which the city paid Eight Thousand and the balance was realized from the sale of the old buildings and a contribution made by the men on the board and Mr. Max Rahr. This division was made to bring the purchase within the limits of a state law which required city councils, in case of gifts to libraries for buildings, to purchase library sites selected by library boards, provided the cost thereof does not exceed one third of the gift.

The site having been selected plans were advertised for and Messrs. Van Rhyn and De Gellecke of Milwaukee having presented the most desirable plan, were engaged as architects of the new building.



Library Site — Sept. 10, 1903

Messrs. L.J. Nash, President of the board; J.E. Plumb, Secretary of the same, and Dr. J.E. Meany were made the building committee and to them, the remaining members of the board.

Bids for construction were then advertised for and were opened July 10, 1903. The successful bidders were Valentine Goetzler and son of this city. Ground for the building was broken August 3, 1903, and from that date to this work has proceeded as steadily as possible until on September 24, we laid the cornerstone of the building.

Grows to 4,000 Patrons

During the last year we have issued 35,025 books. There are now 4,000 patrons of the library. We have 6,333 books. We issue books in six different languages.

The winter of 1902 and 1903 was the date of the establishment of our first sub-station. It was put first at Mr. Weinert's bakery at Marshall Street and later was removed to Pankratz & Becker, Washington St. Twelve hundred and twenty-five books were issued at this station which was maintained only during the winter months.

Those who have thus far guided the destinies of the library believe it has long since justified its establishment, and with the completion of our new building giving us more commodious and attractive quarters we confidently expect an increasing interest. Our ambition is to extend its influence so that every family in the city shall be among its patrons.

LIBRARY STATISTICS

(by Judge Emil Baensch)

Since the foregoing was written the records of the Library register a steady advance. It has become an indispensable adjunct of the schools, and furnishes a most efficient agency for self-education. While its progress may be verified by statistics, it will probably be more interesting, from a historical viewpoint, to give a list of the personnel which has guided its career.

Board of Directors

The following named persons were in the years mentioned, appointed on the Board, which consists of nine members:

1—1899 L. J. Nash. 1909 Chas. West. 1912 Flora Waldo.

2—1899 Mrs. E.M. Anderson. 1909 Johanna Lueps. 1916 Marie Rahr. 1917 Mrs. Frank Eggers. 1921 Rev. E.J. Symonds.

3—1899 Ella Rahr. 1909 Emilie Richter.

4—1899 Norman Torrison. 1901 J.E. Plumb. 1907 Emil Baensch.

5—1899 Edwin Schuette, 1910 A.L. Nash.

6—1899 Dr. A.C. Fraser. 1905 Arthur George. 1908 A.J. Wyseman.

7—1899 John Nagle. 1900 Flora Waldo. 1910 Mrs. C.M. Gleason.

8—1899 Dr. J.E. Meany. 1905 Edward Zander. 1908 Frank Hoffman resigned. 1918, vacancy not filled.

9—1899 C.F. Canright. 1902 E.G. Nash. 1905 Mary Newitt. 1907 H.F. Groth. 1911 Helen Platt. 1918 Norman Knudson.

Librarians

There have been five librarians whose subsequent careers and present whereabouts are herewith presented.

1900—Henrietta van Briesen, until 1902. Married Walter Kaser, and resides at East Las Vegas, New Mexico.

1902—Florence C. Hays, until 1904. Librarian Ripon College, chief cataloguer Legislative Reference Library, librarian Municipal Reference Bureau in University of Wisconsin. Now librarian of St. John's University (Episcopal) at Shanghai, China.

1904—Agnes J. Petersen, until 1910. Assistant in Newberry Library, Chicago, assistant in Public Library, Lincoln, Neb. Now assistant in library of Milwaukee Journal.

1910—Lucille Cully, until 1914. Librarian at Kewaunee, Ill. Married Earl G. Taylor and resides in that city.

1911—Martha E. Pond, Graduate Wisconsin Library School, 1911.

Assistant Librarians

1900—Agnes J. Petersen, promoted to librarian 1904. Louise Spiering, died in service 1908. Lillian Sieker, until 1905. Graduate Milwaukee Normal. Now teaching in Milwaukee.

1905—Emilida Baensch, until 1906. Graduate Wisconsin Library School 1908. Librarian at Antigo, married Robert P.

Brown. Now widowed and residing at Manitowoc.

1906—Anetta Watts, to date. Summer course in Wisconsin Library School 1916.

1909—Adeline Pickard, until 1914. Summer course in Wisconsin Library School 1913, librarian at Jefferson, Wis. Now in charge of Children's Department of Sheboygan Library.

1914—Edith Rechcygl, until 1916. Graduate Wisconsin Library School 1918, library at Stanley, Wis. until 1921. Librarian at Antigo since then.

1916—Lorine Kolbeck, until 1919. Graduate Wisconsin Library School 1920, children's librarian at Buhl, Minn. until Sept. 1922. Since then assistant in Children's Department of the Public Library in Cleveland, Ohio.

1920—Augusta Nielsen, to date

Lorraine Wattawa, to date.

Besides these a number of young ladies served their apprenticeship in our library and also made good, each of them graduating from the Wisconsin Library School.

Dorothea Heins, class of 1912, is now at Des Moines, Iowa, with the State Library Commission, and in charge of the Travelling Libraries.

May Westgate, class of 1913, was employed in war work at Washington, D.C. and is now assistant cataloguer in the Library at Los Angeles, Calif.

Johanna Kingholz, class of 1919, is now librarian of Evansville College Library at Evansville, Ind.

And last, but not least, comes the short list of the one who keeps the house in order, the janitor.

Chas. G. Sieker, performed this work efficiently until his death in 1912, when his widow was elected his successor and remained in service until 1918 when her health induced her to resign. Since then Herman Lemke has faithfully attended to this work.

The Manitowoc Public Library Since 1920

The Public Library as a Manitowoc institution can best be shown in the statistics which follow:

75 Years of Growth

Year	Expended	Volumes	Circulation
1900	\$ 3,450.58	3,994	20,491
1910	3,407.67	9,796	44,070
1920	7,908.46	15,091	62,797
1930	20,628.52	31,792	166,561
1940	21,730.00	44,661	208,189
1950	44,000.00	66,163	212,944
1960	94,789.00	81,700	253,943
1966	113,876.00	97,849	270,549
1967**	136,932.00	98,362	326,919
1970	179,255.00	120,979	384,824
1974	216,730.00	138,057	438,536

**In the new library building

The Junior and Senior high schools have always had library facilities of some kind. However, it was not until the late 1930's that there were central library facilities in the elementary schools. At first the number of library books available in the elementary schools could be numbered in only the hundreds. The Public Library cooperated with the schools in supplying these libraries with collections of books and other materials. Already then it was apparent that there was a growing interest in books and in services which a library could provide.

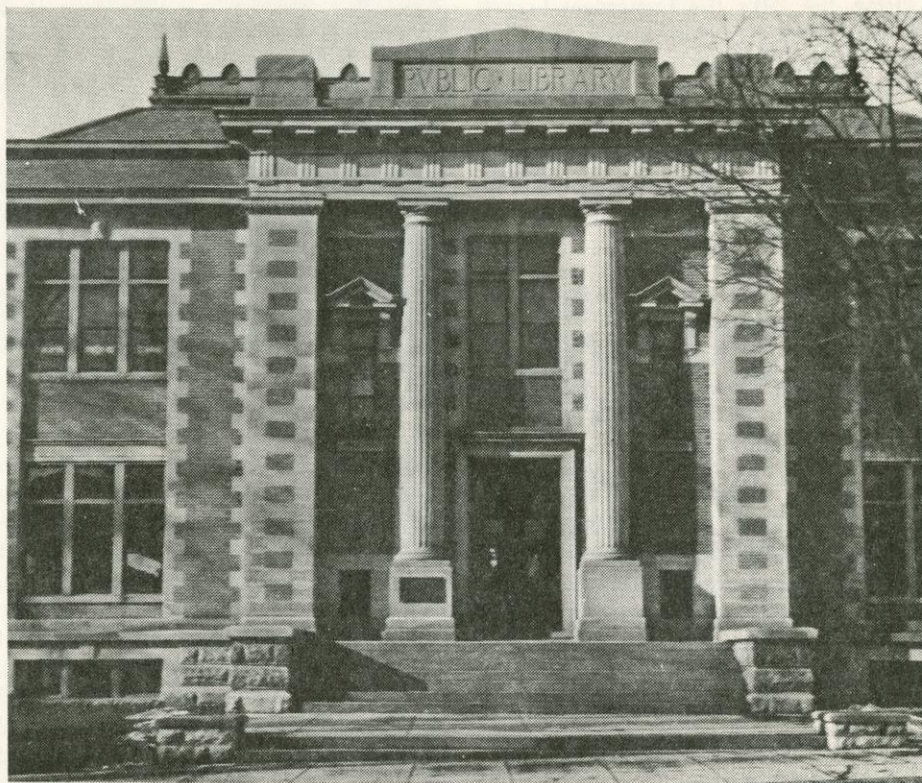
In the post-World War II years it was recognized that the Carnegie library on North 8th Street no longer was adequate to meet the needs of the people. To better serve the growing city, branch libraries at 1816 Washington Street, 1722 New York Avenue, and in the Administration Building at Custerdale (the present Senior Center), were established.

New Beginning: 1967

In the mid 1950's it was recognized that the Carnegie building was inadequate to house the library activities demanded by today's citizens. The shelves were overcrowded, the patrons were no longer able to find a chair or space to study and research. Many possibilities were explored after which a decision was made that a new building at a new site would be the best solution.

On October 2, 1964 the library received notification that a federal building grant of \$118,750 had been approved. The date of March 10, 1965 is also important — it was then the City Council earmarked \$350,000 in municipal funds for library construction. On August 1, 1966 the City Council approved \$65,000 for equipment costs. Moving expenses were to raise that figure to \$70,000.

The site chosen for the new library building was located on Hamilton Street, extending from South Eighth Street to South Ninth Street. The property has a long history in the Manitowoc area. It was purchased in 1871 by the city from the Allen and Hinckley estates of Massachusetts, for the purpose of a proposed new school. This was commonly referred to as the First Ward School. Later it was called the Southside High until 1910 when it was renamed the Lincoln Elementary School. After the new Lincoln High was erected (1924) the building was officially named Roosevelt School. The Roosevelt School was closed in the spring of 1937, and the building was used for various projects until it was razed in 1954.



The former Manitowoc Public Library

Members of the Library Board of Trustees and staff members attended the ground breaking ceremony. This was on November 23, 1965.

The culmination of many years of planning and effort resulted in the opening on January 14, 1967 of the beautiful and functional new Manitowoc Public Library, 808 Hamilton Street.

The architect of the new library building was Perc Brandt and Associates. The electrical consultant was John K. Primm and Associates. Contractors and suppliers were:

General Contractor	Hamann Construction Co.
Electrical Contractor	Anderson Electric Co.
Heating, Air Conditioning	George Rutherford, Inc.
Plumbing	Hardow Plumbing Service
Elevator	F. Rosenberg Elevator, Inc.
Painting	Kumbalek Color Center
Carpeting	Rahr's, Inc.
Shelving	Estey Corp.
Library Specialty Furniture	Myrtle Desk Co.
Seating	H. C. Prange Co.
Office Equipment	Badger Specialty Co.
Audio Equipment	Rahr's, Inc.

Dedication

The new library was dedicated on Sunday, April 16, 1967. This was indeed a big day and the dedication was set to coincide with the observance of National Library Week. Mr. John Savage, chairman of the library building committee presented the building formally to Mayor Robert J. Rand. A public open house from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. followed the ceremonies.

The dedication climaxed years of planning and waiting and months of construction resulting from the efforts of a dedicated Library Board, director, staff, City Council, Mayor Walter Koepke.

From the '60's to the present many changes have taken place. A few highlights are:

October 1964: A federal grant provides for a demonstration of library service to rural Manitowoc County.

February 17, 1966: Manitowoc Public Library will provide service to county residents in cooperation with libraries at Kiel and Two Rivers, and partially funded by the county.

November 21, 1967: Watts Branch was sold by the city. This was the last of the branch libraries to be discontinued. In 1902 and 1903 there were substations in Weinert's bakery, then at Pankratz and

Becker establishment. Later several north-side one-room libraries were opened. During the '50's the Custerdale branch was a lively place, closing only when the new building opened.

June 17, 1968: The Story Wagon started its round of county stations. Stops are made at fifteen communities. After a program of stories, puppet shows, sing-alongs, etc., the children may borrow books from the wagon.

The circulation system was computerized in 1968 to accommodate the rapidly increasing book circulation.

Fall of 1970: Mailbox Library service to rural Manitowoc County was begun with federal funds and became one of the first in the United States.

1973: Young Adult Department was established.

1974: Book circulation was the highest ever, 438,536, an increase of 62% over 1966, the last year in the Carnegie building.

Saturday, January 14, 1967, was preview day at the new Manitowoc Public Library. Regular library service began on Monday, January 16, with hours from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Without discounting the architectural beauty of the new building, its obvious operating efficiency, the warm welcoming look of its brick and wood panelled walls or the bright non-institutional color schemes, it should be said that the new library's greatest contribution is room, and lots of it.

Recreational, research and periodical reading areas are available. Once the reader has found his book or magazine, he will find a comfortably upholstered chair nearby in the casually arranged reading areas.



Storywagon at Kingsbridge

Art highlights include two wall panels created by Ronald Stokes of the Lincoln High School art department. His "Manitowoc Industry" panel of wood, metals and ceramic depicts the shipping, agricultural, fishing and industrial aspects of the community's economy. The "Story of Civilization" panel above the central desk serving both the children's and adults' departments traces in metals, woods and tiles the Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Byzantine cultures including such man made advances as the wheel, alphabet, and movable printing type.

The mezzanine level cuts across the library at an angle, standing free from two walls for the look and feel of spaciousness. On this level is the Wisconsin Room which houses materials pertaining to the City of Manitowoc, the county, and the state. The library director's office, the business office, and the staff lounge are located on the mezzanine which can be approached by two stairways.

Every library has "behind-the-scenes" areas where staff members carry out work necessary to keep the library operating. The circulation work room is behind the central information and check out desk. Another work area is the technical processing section where books are cataloged and prepared for circulation.

In the lower level is housed the Extension Department with its Mailbox Library. Also there is a display preparation room and a printing room where library materials, book lists, and posters are produced. Storage area houses the collection of back issues of periodicals which are available upon request from the Information Desk. This lower level is under one-third of the building, and includes the heating plant and the custodial workshop.

The activity room, which has a separate entrance from the parking lot, will seat about one hundred people. This meeting room serves many library purposes. Special activities, film showings, story hour programs, library orientation sessions, adult education classes, and Great Books groups utilize this room.

The large and colorful children's room is entered from the Hamilton Street foyer. There are many small table and chair groupings for the very young pre-schooler and for the kindergarten through sixth grade student.

In the hallway leading to the meeting room is a large collection of framed art reproductions which you may borrow. A coin operated copying machine is available for public use, as well as a microfilm reader and printer for newspapers and magazines.

In the beginning a library was thought of only as a dispenser of books. Through the years it has become much more. The list below is a description of the kind of services that a modern library provides. Someone has said that the cultural status of a community is reflected in its public library, and its interest in the arts. Truly the Manitowoc community has come a long way in this regard, as the list of articles and services which our library now provides so aptly shows:

Books for all ages — almost 150,000 of them, including large print books.

Magazines and newspapers.

Instant (almost) information through telephone reference service.

Xerox copying machine.

Microfilm reader - printer.

16mm sound films.

Filmstrips.

Talking Books for the handicapped.

Phonograph records and cassettes

Framed art reproductions



The Manitowoc Public Library

Special programs — movies, travelogue slide programs, etc. for adults.

Mail Service for the homebound or hospitalized, and for rural county residents.

And especially for the younger generation — Pre-school Story Hours, Film Parades, Vacation Reading Club, Summer Story Wagon, interesting displays, contests, etc.

Librarians

1900-1902 Miss Henrietta van Briesen
1902-1904 Miss Florence C. Hays
1904-1910 Miss Agnes J. Petersen
1910-1911 Miss Lucile Cully
1911-1927 Miss Martha E. Pond

1927-1928 Miss Helen H. Aten
1928-1939 Miss Florence E. Dunton
1939-1944 Miss Doris M. Call
1944-1957 Miss H. Alberta Seiz
1958— Mrs. Barbara F. Kelly

THE JOSEPH MANN LIBRARY AT TWO RIVERS

The Dedication pamphlet of the Joseph Mann Library of June 4, 1914 contains this paragraph relating to the origin of the public library in Two Rivers:

“The TWO RIVERS LIBRARY, unlike many Public Libraries in various parts of the country, came into existence upon the demand of the people of the community. In the winter of 1890 and 1891 as a result of a meeting of interested citizens, a subscription list was sent out to solicit support for a free public library. All classes of citizens responded according to their several abilities and something more than two hundred dollars was secured. From this small beginning the Library grew in favor with all classes. A little later Mrs. Mann, widow of the late Joseph Mann, gave the library its first substantial support in a bequest of one thousand dollars upon the condition that the library be named in memory of her deceased husband. The gift was accepted together with an additional sum of five hundred dollars given by the son of Mr. Mann. An organization known as the “Joseph Mann Library Association” was incorporated and a campaign for the erection of a permanent library building was instituted. The business men of the community and citizens gave loyal support to the movement and the Joseph Mann Library building was erected, each citizen who contributed one dollar or more being declared a member of the Library Association.”

At this point we would direct attention to an article in the Two Rivers Reporter under date of June 13, 1953 in which is given a more detailed account of the history of the Two Rivers library.

Recall Public Subscription In Establishing of Library

TWO RIVERS — When the 31-year-old Joseph Mann Library holds “Open House” between the hours of 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, marking the completion of the \$65,000 enlarging, remodeling and re-equipping program, it should bring fond recollections from three generations of the reading public, dating back to 1892.

The story of the library is a saga of the vision and courage of a few citizens who remained undaunted in the face of seemingly unsurmountable difficulties and several failures in an effort to provide the residents of the Community with a public institutions These public-spirited residents realized that the little rental library then existing in the rear of the old post office on Jefferson Street between 16th and River Streets was inadequate to meet the needs of a growing community.

Several citizens solicited subscriptions and, at last, with a substantial bequest of \$1,000 from Mrs. Joseph Mann, in memory of her deceased husband, an early industrialist and with the request that the library bear his name, their hopes seemed possible for realization. Leopold Mann, another of the Mann brothers, gave the sum of \$500 and the “Main Street” site on which the building was erected, and Henry Mann, Jr., contributed an additional \$500.

Insert Notice

The citizens, thus encouraged, inserted in the Oct. 14, 1890 issue of the Manitowoc County Chronicle, a notice to all those interested in establishing a public reading room and library. The notice invited all citizens of all classes and conditions to attend a public meeting to be held on Thursday at seven-thirty o'clock in the evening in the Turner Hall, now the site of the present Post Office Building. “The lot for the building has been donated and substantial financial aid promised.” the article pointed out.

Christ H. Johannes, superintendent of the Mann Brothers woodworking operations here, was named temporary chairman for the first meeting. A motion was made and carried to have three citizens represent each ward at the following meeting. These representatives were H.P. Hamilton, Edward Courchaine and P. Pilon, first ward; C.O. Marsh, Leopold Mann and William Ahearn, second ward; and Ernest Koeser, William Luebke and W. J. Wrieth, third ward. A soliciting committee comprising of Peter Gagnon, J.E. Hamilton, Dr. J.R. Currens

and Christ Springer was appointed. With the loyal support of all the citizens a sum of \$1,122 was raised, largely from donations of \$1 from each.

Marsh First Head

School Principal C.O. Marsh was named the first president of the Library Board. Others named were Peter Gagnon, vice president; Leopold Mann, treasurer; and Silas Van Ostrand, secretary. On the committee for building and concluding all arrangements for the library were L.C. Traverse, J.E. Hamilton, C.H. Johannes, Dr. J.R. Currens and Peter Gagnon.

On Dec. 1, 1891, the Joseph Mann Library Association, claiming as members all who had donated \$1 or more, was granted a state license, and the construction of the first library was begun.

Early in January, 1892, the new library, an imposing building consisting of one main room, completed at a cost of \$3,500, was opened to the public. Although the outlay for the building had exhausted all of the subscription money, the association mortgaged the real estate and spent \$500 on new books. At the time of its opening the library had 1,360 volumes of which 1,175 had been purchased and 185 donated. Of these 478 were public documents, 36 reference books, and 846 in the circulation department.

First Librarian

Fifty-seven days after the opening of the institution, March 12, 1892, Miss Lizzie H. Yahnke, the first librarian, published the first report, which showed that 1231 books had been loaned. It disclosed also that 264 cards had been outstanding and 2,269 visitors had made use of the reading room. Fees for the use of the library were \$1 for initiation and \$1 down for the opening of the library. The library hours were each evening except Sunday and every Monday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

An arrangement was made between the Library Board and city officials for a definite sum from the city for the maintenance of the library. The salary of the librarian was rent free, heat free and \$75

a year. It was the custom of the librarian to occupy rooms over the library.

Following a year of service Miss Yahnke resigned, and in March, 1893, Miss Mary Lyman became librarian and her father, Barney Lyman, the janitor. Miss Lyman served for five years, until 1898, when Miss Mabel Campbell succeeded her. After two years, in 1890, Miss Lizzie Baetz succeeded her and remained in charge 19 years, the longest of any of the librarians on record, and became the connecting link between the old library and the new institution, which was built in 1914 with Carnegie funds. Increased circulation brought about need for additional help, so in 1904, Miss Baetz received an assistant, Miss Myrtle Grover (Mrs. Thomas Magee).

Three Events

Three events of interest occurred during the early years of the library. On April 19, 1894 the first Library Ball was held. Devised, at first, as a means of creating a fund for new books, the affair grew to be the social event of the year and continued to be held for 20 years. The first Ball yielded a net profit of \$78.45, and some of the later ones added \$200 to \$300 annually. The second event of interest was an article by Miss Mary Lyman, librarian, published in *The Chronicle* on March 3, 1896, explaining the new system of numbering the books through the use of the Dewey Decimal System. The third event was a gift to the library of a handsome ornamental ceiling by the Friedley-Voshardt Company of Chicago. Herman Voshardt, a member of the firm, was a former local resident.

The idea of applying to the Carnegie Library Fund for a sum sufficient for the erection of a new library had filled the minds of the citizenry for some time. Finally in 1913, the members of the Library Board and the City Council joined forces in a plea for the sum necessary, and their request was granted. Charles E. Mueller aided them by donating a site for the new library across the street from the old one, which is now in its last year as the City Hall.

Completion 1914

Thus, in 1913, a gift of \$12,500 was given to the city for the construction of the new building. On June 4, 1914, during the administration of Mayor Conrad Baetz it had been completed and special exercises were held for its dedication. Ladies civic organizations of the city held a reception in the afternoon at which the Gloe-Naidl orchestra furnished the music. In the evening at the dedicatory exercises J.F. Magee made the speech of presentation to the city, with Mayor Baetz in the



First Joseph Mann Library

speech of acceptance. M.S. Dudgeon was the principal speaker, with his message, "The Library, a Community Asset." Musical numbers on the program were a vocal duet by two school teachers, Gleason Scoville and Miss Josephine Treat and numbers by the Liederkrantz Male quartet and the Gloe-Naidl Orchestra. The library — the dream of the community — was a realization. Although really a Carnegie Library, the name of the old Joseph Mann Library was retained.

Members of the Library Board at the time of the dedication were Mrs. J.E. Hamilton, president; Mrs. John Gesell, vice president; J.F. Magee, secretary; H.C. Wilke, treasurer; Dr. J.R. Currens, Mrs. F.W. Eggers, Dr. Eugene Gates, and W.J. Hamilton, superintendent of schools.

Present Statues

In the early years of the new library two attractive statues were presented to the institution. The first was Mercury by Giovanni da Bologna, a gift of the Ladies of the Round Table in 1914. The second was a statue of David by Andrea Verrochio, presented by Lucia Eli Conant in memory of her mother, on Christmas day, 1915.

Upon the resignation of Miss Baetz after 19 years of faithful service in 1920, she was succeeded by B. Rosalie Beale, now the wife of Frank J. Kracha. She remained until her marriage in 1922. In quick succession came Miss Mary Dowd and Miss Dena Lindley, who held the position until 1924. Mrs. Bernice Knight, who assumed the post of librarian in 1924, carried on until her death in 1942 when she was succeeded by the present librarian, Miss Theodora L. Haman, a native of Monroe, Wis., who is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and of the state university library school.

Woman Served Longest

Records show that 62 persons have served on the Joseph Mann Library Board since 1892 while 12 citizens have held the presidency since its existence. The administration of Mrs. J.E. Hamilton was the longest, serving 15 years as president.

Following is the list of the Board of Directors:

Peter Gagnon, Leopold Mann, Silas Van Ostrand, the Rev. J.A. Geissler, David Decker, L.C. Traverse, C.O. Marsh, J.E. Hamilton, C.H. Johannes, Dr. J.R. Currens, Peter Schroeder, W.J. Wrieth, A.W. Dassler, the Rev. J.N. Davidson, Mrs. J.E. Hamilton, Mrs. L.C. Traverse, Miss Lucy Niquette, E.E. Carr, Mrs. Walter Mann, A.B. O'Neil, Dr. Joseph Eggers.

H.P. Hamilton, J.F. Magee, Miss Frances Schroeder, John Weilep, F.H. Wiese, Dr. E. Gates, W.J. Hamilton, Mrs. John Gesell, H.C. Wilke, Mrs. H.C. Wilke, Mrs. F.W. Eggers, A.H. Lohman, W.T. Darling, William Halbert, F.G. Bishop, L.B. Clarke, Miss Josephine Herian, Newman Nash, Mrs. William F. Molitor, Howell G. Evans.

Mrs. Raymond Schneider, the Rev. F.E. Schlueter, Mrs. Ben Nilles, Mark R. Byers, Mrs. E.P. Hamilton, Carl M. Bloomquist, Mrs. A.P. Zlatnik, Alfred Zoerb, Norman Allie, Marcel V. Eckardt, Mrs. W.G. Dickson, George M. O'Brien, the Rev. William C.F. Hayes, Norman E. Carron, Ernie L. Merow, Floyd Bauknecht, Mrs. Donald C. Dean, Mrs. Miriam Meyer, William N. Mosuch, Alex Flemal, Harvey Lehrman, Stanley Greene, Mrs. Milton Zuehl and Mrs. R.C. Arbaugh.

Presidents of the Joseph Mann Library Association were: C.O. Marsh, 1891; J.E. Hamilton, 1892; Peter Gagnon, 1893; L.C. Traverse, 1894-1897; Dr. J.R. Currens, 1898-1904; Mrs. J.E. Hamilton, 1905-1919; Mrs. John Gesell, 1920-1921; J.F. Magee, 1922-1935; Mrs. F.W. Eggers, 1936; Arthur H. Lohman, 1937-1947; L.B. Clarke, 1948-1952; and E.L. Merow current president.

Some Happenings of The Later Years

Scrap books containing accounts of interesting happenings in the later history of the Joseph Mann Library are sources which were used to secure the highlights of these later years.

1. Since the resignation of Theodora Haman in August 1957, librarians who served were Lee Gregory (Jan. 1959 - Aug. 1965). Mrs. Jessie W. Lyman has served in that capacity since.

2. There have been two fires in the history of the Joseph Mann Library. The first occurred in 1934 and did about

\$2,000 damage. The second fire occurred on Feb. 8, 1943, and \$2,000 of damage was done again to buildings and contents.

3. In 1932 library use statistics show that there was a circulation of 107,781 books. Of this number, 16,707 were of the non-fiction kind. Also 953 foreign language books were circulated. Each year thereafter there was a lesser number of foreign language books that were circulated. In 1939, for example, only 139 books of this kind were circulated.

4. An addition to the original library, 24' x 50' in size, was built in 1951. The cost was \$55,000.

5. During the mid-fifties the Joseph Mann Library was the object of controversy over the issue of authority and management of the institution. To determine a solution of the issue, the courts were requested to resolve the matter with the Supreme Court expressing the final word. After several years, the matter was finally resolved and the library has since been operated under a City Council resolution which was in conformity with the requirements set up by the courts. The courts respected the authority of the Joseph Mann Library Board and also recognized the need for involvement of the city of Two Rivers for maintenance and support of the library facility.

6. On January 13, 1966 the Two Rivers Library became a part of the Manitowoc County Library Service. There was an arrangement of reciprocal service which would benefit all parties to the agreement. Soon after this resulted in making library service available to the rural areas of the county as well as the citizens of the city.

7. On August 3, 1967 the City Council approved a library expansion program whereby another addition to the library facilities was ordered. Construction cost of the addition was \$96,000, with \$12,000 appropriated for furnishings \$6,000 for land acquisition. The federal government granted \$34,000 toward this project. The total cost of the new addition was \$149,902.

8. Statistics reflect that the Two Rivers community likes its Public Library. In 1973, 106,930 materials were loaned. There were 8,831 registered patrons of the library. Of the items circulated 88,031 were books, 7,608 were magazines, 9,292 recordings were loaned, 322 film strips, 141 art reproductions, and 1,376 other materials. 106,743 persons viewed the films that were shown during the year. 1,235 films were shown.

9. The library board as of February 21, 1974 consisted of the following: Richard Horn, president; Richard Rheil,

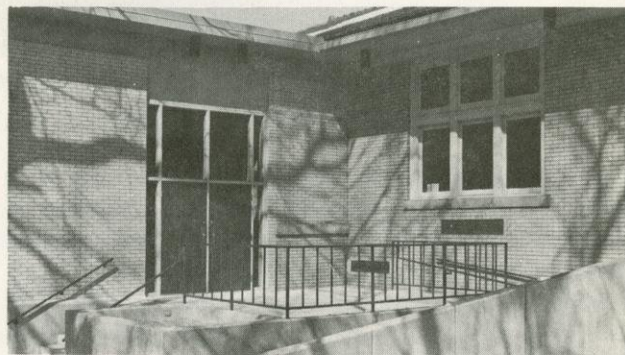


Two Rivers Public Library

June 4, 1914

Joseph Mann Public Library

Two Rivers, Wisconsin



vice president; Jessie W. Lyman, secretary; Mrs. Paul Cigler, Mrs. James Lester, George Petrotta, Donald P. Rice, Willard Sauve, John Springer, Donald Taylor.

KIEL PUBLIC LIBRARY

On October 31, 1924 a group of women met at the home of D. F. Nauth to discuss the possibility of establishing a public library in Kiel. Since those present were interested it was decided to actively seek the support of various organizations as well as individual citizens.

After several informal meetings it was voted to form the Kiel Library Association. The first annual meeting was held on February 9, 1925. By-laws were discussed and adopted. Election of the following officers took place: President, Mrs. Edwin Duecker; Vice President, Mrs. George Meyer; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Hugo Neuman; Directors: Mrs. Adolph Stoelting, Mrs. William Keller Dr. F. P. Knauf, Mr. Albert Laun, Mr. Hugo Neuman.

In September of 1925 Mr. Albert Laun was elected President of the Kiel Library Association. Mr. Laun served in that capacity until the Association was discontinued in 1971. He has also served as President of the Board of Directors to the present time.

First books were obtained from the Traveling Library, the Andrew Carnegie Endowment Fund and local citizens. Dues of members and donations from organizations were the only sources of revenue at the start. As finances permitted books were purchased. At the

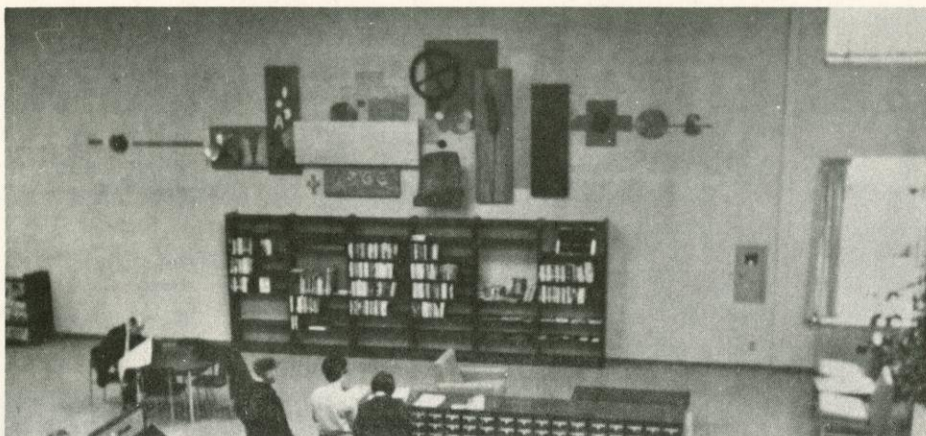
end of the first year the library owned 253 volumes.

Books were first temporarily housed at Lindsay's Drug Store. Next they were moved to the Arnold Building on the corner of Fourth and Fremont. Volunteers served as librarians. When the new City Hall was built the library moved into its own quarters. Miss Clara Oesau was appointed the first librarian. In 1930 the city began to assume some financial responsibility for the operation of the library. The first year the sum of \$600.00 was appropriated for library use.

In 1933 Miss Eleanor Duecker succeeded Miss Oesau as librarian. Miss Duecker retired in 1960 at which time Mrs. Edgar Detjen, the present librarian, assumed the post.

Continued growth of book stock and services and increased usage made it necessary to twice enlarge the quarters in the City Hall by the addition of two adjacent rooms. Continued growth also necessitated the need for more funds and gradually the city increased its support. The library is now supported by the city. In addition in recent years the library has received county funds as a member of the Manitowoc County Library System providing service to county residents.

Growth also indicated that the time was coming when additional space would be needed. Through the generosity of the Adolph Stoelting family who donated the site and a substantial sum of money, the library was able to move into its new home in June, 1972. The new building is located in the area known as Indian Hill overlooking the Sheboygan River.



A mural showing the industrial history of Manitowoc (Manitowoc Public Library)

THE INDUSTRIAL STORY OF MANITOWOC

Manitowoc is a city of many facets. This bas relief assemblage mural examines one important aspect of our community, industry. From the earliest traders who settled on the northwestern shore of Lake Michigan to the contemporary industrial workers who dwell here now, this mural depicts the unending record of growth that is Manitowoc.

The mural must be read all at once to get the total picture. Then the viewer can isolate areas within the wall to associate and draw from his own experience to develop a meaning. The mural is a statement by one man of what he has seen of Manitowoc and his reaction to what he has experienced here. The viewer must see it through his own eyes and develop an intellectual concept of his own.

The mural consists of many different materials and in some instances the actual products of industries were used where esthetically compatible. Aluminum is the warp of the image, wood is the woof. The wood represents nature and the environ-

ment within which Manitowoc's industries operate. The aluminum panels pay tribute to major industries in our city.

The gears represent the corporations that manufacture large earth moving equipment and heavy construction devices. The weathered riveted steel plate from an old ore carrier represents the important part heavy shipbuilding plays in Manitowoc. The propeller, bright and new, foretells of the expanding directions in shipbuilding.

The small mosaic of black stones from Point Beach State Forest speaks of the part recreation plays in our community. The large wood and ceramic panel, highlighted by the letter "A" represents agriculture. On the same panel, in green glazed ceramic, the fishing industry is shown, and this is placed near the recreation panel to indicate that wildlife, the shore, and forests contribute to the total recreation picture that attracts tourists.

The ceramic cross stands for the many religious groups that make up the working force which operates the industrial complex. The cross form is a minor unifying theme. The four unpainted building blocks repeat the cross symbol, but also depict the construction and cement industries. Superimposed upon the cement cross is a limestone slab showing another aspect of the industrial scene.

A major unifying element in the mural is the circle. The textured copper discs echo the circular gears and show how industry takes new materials and through technology produces usable goods. The colorful angular free form on one of the copper discs speaks of the coming of the atom to Manitowoc County in 1967.

The large carved stalk of grain portrays the industries that perform services and produce goods using this seed as raw material. The black stained, carved wooden panel tells the story of forest products, from the early shingle makers to the wooden mine sweepers built during World War II, to the wood products of today.

The black ceramic plaque with the cut out letter "C" stands for commerce. The end plaque of fired clay with a mat glaze portrays government. It has a horizontal line piercing and pointing to a new and unknown direction. Government is the element which unifies the industrial story.

Ronald Stokes

MANITOWOC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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