

## Highland Park News-Letter

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### The Public Library

The Highland Park Public Library grew out of a two years' agitation led by such men as Prof. John T. Ray of Chicago, then Superintendent of schools in this city, William O. Hipwell, then cashier of the Union National bank, and a few other like minded and public spirited citizens.

July 7, 1887, a petition signed by Frank P. Hawkins, the city's first mayor, John T. Ray, Rev. Henry Nell, pastor of the Presbyterian church, Stillman R. Bingham and forty two others, asking for the establishment of a public library, was presented to the city council. The petition asked for a one mill tax only. Aug. 27th the council granted the petition and instructed the city attorney to draft the necessary ordinance, and the item of \$260.00 was put in the tax levy September 14th, 1887.

October 4th Mayor Col. William A. James appointed the following board of library directors: Prof. John T. Ray, Rev. Henry Neil, Rev. John W. Weddell, Michael J. Cray, Frank P. Hawkins, William O. Hipwell, Mrs. George B. Cummings, Mrs. George Hall and Mrs. Prof. Elisha Gray. Subsequently, Mr. Hawkins declined to serve and the Mayor appointed Miss Marsalene Green to fill the vacancy.

October 10th, the library board elected Prof. John T. Ray President, Rev. Henry Neil Secretary pro-tempore. Steps were taken to secure the books, etc., of the Perry Library Association, which was finally successful.

November 8th, Mrs. George B. Cummings was elected permanent Secretary. There was then a break in the records till February 23rd, 1888, when the Book Committee was allowed \$100, for the purchase of new books, and they used about \$80. At the same time a Committee was appointed to make arrangements for the formal opening of the library which took place according to the following program.

April 6, 1888. Place—McDonald's Hall. Music—Instrumental Duet. Prayer—Lewis Hibbard.—Music, Male Quartette. Presentation address, Prof. John T. Ray. Response, for citizen's, acting Mayor, Gen. F. F. Flint. A word for the Library, Rev. Henry Neil. A word for the Reading Room, Rev. J. W. Weddell. Music—Vocal selection. Address—Read; why, what, how, when. Prof. Jehu J. Halsey, Lake Forest University. Music—Male Quartette.

At the close of these exercises a "Book Reception" was held in the library rooms, when many public spirited citizens presented the library a book, some of which were subsequently weeded out. The library building then occupied with the city council the ground floor of the old frame building just east of Erskine's bank, and so long used by Charles A. Kuist as a hardware store.

June 13th, 1888, Prof. Ray submitted his first report, showing 433 volumes in the library and 700 books loaned during the two months it had been opened, and he wisely called for the two mill tax. President Ray resigned September 23, 1888, having become principal of the John P. Crerar school in

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Chicago, a position which he still occupies. W. O. Hipwell was elected his successor and filled the office sixteen years, or until the present incumbent was elected Sept. 8, 1904. Miss Marsalene Green was elected librarian at a salary of \$75 per annum, the money being raised by public subscription. She held the office until her untimely death in 1888, when Miss Anna Obee was appointed her successor.

February 19, 1889, an insurance of \$500 was placed on the property of the library. It now carries \$4,000, which of course will be materially increased when we get into the new building. The council having erected the present City Building, offered the library a small room—the west half of the rear City Clerk's office—for a library room. The board July 5, 1889, voted to accept the same and move into it at once, which was done, and the library remained there until it finally moved to the present building, its own property in 1900.

President Hipwell's annual report for the year ending June 1, 1889, showed a total receipt for the year of \$363.55; 240 volumes purchased, 3,904 volumes loaned during the year; total volumes in the library at that time 673.

October 14, 1890, E. N. Chase, Principal of the High School, was elected Secretary. In May 1891 Mrs. Mary A. Jennings was elected librarian, and is still in the service. The late Mrs. Julia B. Leach, served a few weeks prior to Mrs. Jennings' term, which began June 15, 1891. About this time the old jail room was added to the library room, nearly doubling its capacity.

The President's report for 1892 showed total receipts of \$525.25, books on shelves, 1214, books loaned during the year 4,011, and the board asked for a levy of \$600. In 1893 the council appropriated \$550. The library contained 1484 volumes and circulated 5594 volumes. In 1893 Rev. J. W. Weddell resigned, having removed, and Rector Peter C. Wolcott was put in his place, and in 1895 Rev. Henry Neil also resigned for the same reason, also Miss Sabea A. Sargeant. In 1896 Secretary E. W. Chase retired and Mrs. Henry C. Street was appointed.

In 1897 the City Council appropriated \$1,000 for the library, in response chiefly to President Hipwell's persistent urging the legal right of the board to the same. In 1899 President Hipwell's report showed 2764 volumes on shelves, total receipts \$1,288.00 and the expenditures the same.

September 19, 1899, the City Council took steps to secure the present library site and building for library purposes, and the same was occupied in the early summer of 1900.

The President reported when the library moved into the new quarters 3,032 volumes on the shelves, 5983 volumes loaned to 750 patrons. Total expenditures for the year, including expenditures on the grounds and building, including a balance of \$558.59 on hand, \$3,615.52.

During the summer of 1903 Miss West, an expert in modern library methods, was engaged to prepare a new catalogue and enter the books in the library according to said methods, thereby putting the library in line with up-to-date libraries, and a new finding list was published at an expense of \$155.00.

Early in 1903, through the wise, patient and persistent efforts, of the Highland Park Woman's Club Mr. Andrew Carnegie, the well known benevolent promoter of free public libraries throughout the country, was led to make to the Highland Park Public Library a gift of \$10,000 for a new library building. After many delays Mr. Arthur C. Thompson in February, 1905, gave the library a portion of lot 3, block 50, to wit:—50 feet front on Laurel avenue by 100 feet deep, which was gratefully accepted by the library board; additional land was purchased for \$1,000 making the lot 75 feet front on Laurel avenue by 100 feet deep, where the fine new building is now being erected.

The present or old library building and lot was sold by the city council November 7, 1905; to Mr. Fitz Bahr for the sum of \$4,500, the board to retain possession of said property until the new building is ready for occupancy.

By a vote of the Library Board, the President appointed a Building Committee consisting of Charles H. Warren, Alexander Robertson and Mrs. Elizabeth Hawley Everett (Mrs Frank D.) to have charge of the work of construction.

### The Library Building

The new building now being erected only one block from the railway depots, banks, postoffice and business center of the city grows out of the munificent gift of \$10,000 from Mr. Andrew Carnegie of New York. To his fund is added the price of the old property, \$4,500. The building is 60 feet front by 40 feet deep, one story high, with basement for a fine assembly room, boiler, fuel, toilet and other rooms. The roof is to be of tile with best metal gutters. It will be lighted by electricity and gas, heated by hot water, interior wood work of oak, hall floors in mosaic. Exterior Bedford cut stone trimmings, and Portsmouth Ohio glazed paving brick. All the fixtures will be of the best, up-to-date in every respect and the building complete and ready for occupancy will represent an outlay of \$17,000, \$3,500 of which remain to be provided for.

Messrs. Bully and Andrews of Chicago have the general contract. Archibald Abercrombie of this city the contract for plumbing, drainage, etc. The Schaeffer Company of Chicago will do the sheet metal and tile roofing work. Edward M. Laing of this city will install the hot water heating plant, while the McFell Electric Company of Chicago will do the electric wiring of the building. Contracts for the balance of the work have not been let. The work is progressing as rapidly as possible and in a manner entirely satisfactory to the Building Committee and the Library board.

It scarcely need be said that Messrs. Patton and Miller of Chicago are the architects of our new building, and that they have furnished plans for over three stores and ten Carnegie Library buildings in the middle west of our country. In elegance of design, adaptability to the use for which it is expected, as well as the substantial and thorough work of construction, the building will be in every respect all that could be reasonably expected from the sum of money expended on it. It will be ready for occupancy the early summer of 1906.

### Corner Stone Laying

The corner stone of the new Public Library building will be laid Saturday, November 11th, 1905, at 2:30 o'clock p. m. The following is an outline of the order of service as arranged by the special committee of library board appointed at the last meeting, November 7th, for that purpose, to-wit: Messdames Elizabeth H. Everett, Adeline P. Cummings, and Miss Jane H. Street, with the president.

### Programme

Invocation; Rev. A. A. Pfanstiehl.  
Address; Prof. John T. Ray, Chicago.  
Laying of Corner Stone; William O. Hipwell.  
Music; "America," The assembly.  
Benediction; Rev. J. J. Morrissy.

If the weather should be inclement the exercises will be in the Baptist meeting house, otherwise on the grounds at the building. All in any way interested in the Public Library are invited to attend.

LEWIS B. HIBBA RD  
President.