

"If the crowns of all the kingdoms of Europe were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all."
Fenelon.

"For the price of one ticket to an ephemeral entertainment you can secure a book that will give strength and leisure to your mind all your life."
—William Lyon Phelps.

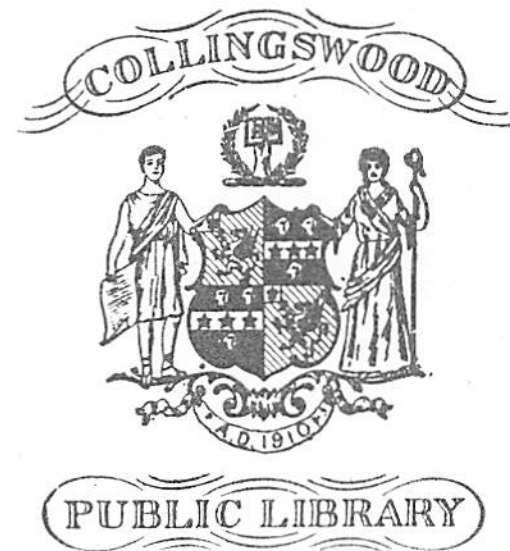
"More is got from one book on which thought settles for a definite end in knowledge, than from libraries skimmed over by a wandering eye. A cottage flower gives honey to the bee, a king's garden none to the butterfly." —Bulwer-Lytton.

"The first thing naturally when one enters a scholar's study or library, is to look at his books. One gets a notion very speedily of his tastes and the range of his pursuits by a glance round his book-shelves."
—Holmes—"Poet at the Breakfast Table."

"A taste for books is the pleasure and glory of my life. I would not exchange it for the riches of the Indies."
—Gibbon.

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

1911 - 1936



January ninth, nineteen thirty-six

"In books lies the soul of the whole past time; the articulate audible voices of the past, when the body and material substance of it has altogether vanished like a dream."

—Carlyle—"Heroes and Hero Worship."

A Brief History of the Collingswood Public Library

Published on the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Its Founding
January 9, 1936

THE history of our Library is, in itself, a most interesting chapter in the history of Collingswood. Leaders in the civic life of today are among those instrumental in the Library's formation. Such names as Philip G. Knebel, Dr. Edward B. Rogers, George M. DeGinther, Mrs. C. B. Aaron, Dr. Grafton E. Day, Ernest Spofford, William Hambrecht, Jr., and J. W. Diffenderfer appear in the first records of the Library. It is interesting to note that all of these people are still prominent in the affairs of Collingswood.

Early in October, 1910, at the instigation of a literary group known as the Shakespeare Club, a public meeting was called for the purpose of forming a Library Association. At this meeting committees were appointed to sound out public opinion on the feasibility of establishing a Public Library, to look into the matter of ways and means, and to find a suitable location for the Library.

Later reports of these committees were most encouraging. The Board of Education and the Civic Association of the borough gave the committee members assurance of their co-operation in this venture of civic service. And from all other indications the founders deduced that the time was right for the formation of the Collingswood Public Library.

At a further meeting, held on November 10th at the Misses Thomas Private School, on Lakeview Drive, a temporary Library Association was formed. T. J. Bailey was elected President and Raymond Lippincott was installed as Treasurer. Miss Sarah Askew of the State Library Commission was present at this meeting and gave a great deal of information as to the best methods to be followed in the establishment and maintenance of a Public Library. It was further decided to solicit three-year subscriptions of \$1 a year from the citizens of the community for the financing

of the Library. A Membership Committee was appointed at this time, as was a Publicity Committee.

On November 18th, 1910, a meeting was held at the Presbyterian Church to ascertain the progress made by the various committees. The Membership Committee reported the receipt of \$117 in cash subscriptions. The committee appointed to find a location for the Library recommended the new store building of N. B. T. Roney's, at 725 Haddon Avenue, as an ideal location for the new Library. The Committee as a whole accepted this report and rented the whole building as recommended, planning to sub-rent the second floor.

The First Annual Meeting of the Collingswood Free Library was then held on December 1st, 1910, at the Misses Thomas Private School, and the following officers elected:

President of the Association, T. J. Bailey; Vice-President, William Hambrecht, Jr.; Secretary, Dr. F. B. Kirby; Board of Trustees: J. W. Diffenderfer, A. H. Flake, Dr. E. B. Rogers, Mrs. C. B. Aaron, Mrs. W. W. Castleberry, H. L. Merrick, Miss Anna C. Wilson, G. M. DeGinther, Dr. Grafton E. Day, C. H. Harrington, A. K. Roberts, William B. Oliver, Ernest Spofford, Rev. M. L. Rutherford and Dr. T. J. Shaw.

The following Committees were named by the Board of Trustees:

Library: Miss Sarah Wilson, Miss Lydia Kite, Rev. W. L. Rutherford, Ernest Spofford, Prof. Amos Flake, Prof. J. O. Wilson and Dr. T. J. Shaw.

Executive: William B. Oliver, Handson Holdsworth, J. W. Diffenderfer.

Rooms: H. R. Lippincott, Dr. Grafton Day, H. L. Bialy.

Ways and Means: Dr. E. B. Rogers, Philip Knebel, Miss Edith Thomas, Mrs. H. R. Lippincott and Mrs. C. W. Foust.

It was decided at this meeting to hold an open reception in the new Library rooms on Saturday, January 7th, 1911, and to open the Library for public use on January 9th. The following committees were appointed to take charge.

Reception Committee: Mrs. Aaron, Mrs. Casselberry, Mrs. Day, Mrs. Fries, Mrs. Foust, Mrs. Kirby, Mrs. Lippincott, Mrs. Rutherford, Misses Edith and Eunice Thomas, Katharine Brown, Mrs. Wolfkiel, Dr. Day, Mr. DeGinther, Mr. H. R. Lippincott, Mr. Diffenderfer, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Oliver, Dr. Rogers, Mayor Roberts, Rev. W. L. Rutherford.

Refreshment Committee: Misses E. S. Wilson, Clara Anthony, Clara Bullock, Ira Boyce, Myrtle Boyce, Carrie Jones, Mildred Oliver, Arline Prestwich, Clara Simmons and Marie Trusens.

Explanation Committee: Mrs. T. J. Bailey, Miss Katharine Brown, Dr. Kirby, Miss S. Kite, Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Wolfkiel.

This reception was an outstanding success. In the evening members of the various Reception Committees and Officers of the Library were present and showed the visitors about the Library rooms and explained the workings of the new organization. A great number of application cards was given out to those requesting them.

It was only through the hearty spirit of co-operation on the part of the citizens of the town and the various civic organizations that it was possible to open a Public Library on such short notice. The Board of Trade and the Civic Association were most active in collecting books and magazines. Through the good offices of Miss Sarah Askew, the State Library Commission sent Miss Pratt to assist the volunteer librarians to accession and catalog the books. The State Library Commission also forwarded 100 volumes to the new Library for temporary use, and Mr. Ernest Spofford was able to secure 250 additional volumes from the Mercantile Library of Philadelphia.

The Collingswood Public Library was formally opened to the public on Monday, January 9th, 1911. The Library Hours established at that time were: Monday, 5 P. M. to 8 P. M.; Tuesday and Thursday, 3 P. M. to 5 P. M.; Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 7 P. M. to 9 P. M.

Through the month of January Miss Sarah Wilson, chairman, and volunteers were in charge of the Library; but on February 1st Miss Katharine Brown was engaged by the Trustees as the Librarian.

Through 1911 our Library was supported by entertainments, cake sales, a lecture, Chatauqua and the Children's Carnival held in Knight Park. A further source of income was a contest sponsored by The Weekly Retrospect. The popularity of the Library through its first year is proved by the rapidity of its growth. Over 2000 volumes were in constant circulation, and 757 readers' cards had been issued.

On April 28, 1911, the Articles of Incorporation of the Library were recorded.

The Trustees at this time were: President, William B. Oliver; Vice-President, Mrs. Carrie B. Aaron; Secretary, J. W. Diffenderfer; Treasurer, Dr. E. B. Rogers; Dr. Grafton B. Day, Rev. J. F. Shaw, Miss Anna C. Wilson, Ernest Spoford, Charles H. Harrington, George M. DeGinther, Amos H. Flake, H. L. Merrick, A. K. Roberts, Mrs. W. W. Casselberry and Rev. W. L. Rutherford.

Early in the Fall of 1912 the Trustees passed a resolution requesting the Borough Commissioners to call a special election on the question of the Borough's taking over the Library. William B. Oliver, T. J. Bailey and Miss Katharine Brown presented the resolution to the Commissioners. Evidently the residents of the community thought well of this plan as our next records show the formal transfer of the Library to the Borough on January 2, 1913.

The new Trustees appointed by the Borough Commissioners in 1913 were Mr. Oliver, Mr. Diffenderfer and Dr. Edward B. Rogers; and Miss Katharine Brown was retained as the Head Librarian.

By this time, 1913, the residents of West Collingswood showed conclusively that a Branch Library was necessary in that section of town. Consequently the West Collingswood Branch of the Collingswood Public Library was opened on Saturday, February 20th, 1913, in the office building of G. Franklin Davis on the corner of Collings and Richey Avenues. Among those present at the formal opening of the Branch Library were Mr. W. B. Oliver and Mr. Philip Smith, representing the Trustees; Librarian Miss K. A. Brown and Assistant Librarian Miss Ada T. Lewis; Miss Margaret Wolfe, who was engaged as Librarian for the Branch Library; Assemblyman J. B. Kates; Mr. Rehn, Secretary of the Branch Association; G. Franklin Davis, H. Wilber Bircks, and a number of others participated.

A large number of application cards was received at this reception. The Branch Library opened with about 400 books on its shelves, one-fourth of which were furnished by the West Side residents. Miss Margaret Wolfe served as the Librarian on the West Side from 1913 to the Fall of 1921, when Mrs. Florence Skillman, the present West Collingswood

Librarian, took office.

Further interest in the growth of our Library was stimulated by a contest for a bookplate for use in the Library books. The design submitted by Miss Alice Schramm was awarded the prize inasmuch as her suggestion included the Coat of Arms of the Collings Family, and that of the Earl of Camden, famous advocate of Constitutional Liberty for whom the County of Camden was named. Along with these historical features the design signified the freedom of knowledge to be found in the Public Library with the reward and possible honors to be attained by advantageous use of that knowledge. This same bookplate is still used by our Library, and it may interest you to look at it again, on the cover of this program, with this additional data in mind.

In 1915 the Library Trustees ascertained the requirements necessary to receive an appropriation from the Carnegie Corporation for the erection of a Library Building. On December 7th this information was compiled and forwarded to that organization along with a formal application for funds. On January 5th, notice was received from the Carnegie Corporation that a building was authorized if the Borough would furnish a suitable site. At the request of the Trustees, the Borough Commissioners purchased the property on the corner of Haddon and Frazer Avenues from the Presbyterian Church, as the location for the new Library. After plans for the building were prepared and bids were received, they were submitted to the Carnegie Corporation which, after a few minor changes, approved them on April 5th, 1917. The contract for the erection and furnishing of the Library building was awarded to James W. Draper of Camden.

At last the dreams of the founders of our Public Library were about to come true. On December 15th, 1917, the new Library building so gratuitously given the Borough of Collingswood by the Carnegie Corporation, was formally opened. The Board of Trustees in charge at that time consisted of: H. Raymond Lippincott, Philip A. Becker, Myrton A. Bryant, T. J. Bailey, Dr. E. B. Rogers, Thomas W. Jack, and Prof. Amos H. Flake. Their unselfish devotion to this civic project is most commendable, and the residents of Collingswood are indebted to them.

During the World War our Library was as active as

those throughout the Nation, gathering magazines and books to send to the men in service on the ships at sea and at the various camps.

One of the more recent developments in the growth of our Library was the opening of the Junior Library in 1929. This annex at the back of the main Library is one of the finest Children's Libraries in South Jersey. With the Story Hour in charge of the Junior Librarian and the fine selection of books to choose from, our children are most fortunate. The Junior Library hours are from 2 P. M. to 5 P. M.

Record of Personnel

Librarians

Katharine B. DeGinther1911-
Mrs. F. Skillman 1921-

Assistant Librarians

Ada T. Lewis and Eleanor E. Brown.....1911-1916
Mrs. E. E. Oliver1916-1921
Mrs. A. C. Acker1921-1923
Mrs. A. M. Mohrfeld1924-

Junior Librarians

April 1929 to October 1930.....Miss Alice Tatem
October 1930 to June 1933.....Miss Frances Whidden
June 1933-Miss Martha Reuter

Statistics

Main Library

	Circulation	Readers' Cards	Books in Library
1911	15,334	771	2,000
1917	33,736	2,253	5,317
1935	89,679	4,305	10,177

Branch Library

	Circulation	Readers' Cards	Books in Library
1913	900	203	644
1921	1,614	1,050	1,534
1935	42,158	2,280	5,514

Junior Library

	Circulation	Readers' Cards	Books in Library
1929	10,823	481	2,370
1935	15,457	939	3,803

PRESENT FACILITIES FOR SERVICE

The Library has always aimed to serve both those who seek useful information and those who look to it to supply leisure-time reading.

The reference department is one of the finest, and the Librarians are always glad to render assistance to those seeking information.

Latest books are purchased monthly so that up-to-date works shall be available in the several departments.

Many of the leading magazines are to be found on the reading tables. Everyone is welcome to share their contents or browse among the books to his heart's content.

The Junior Library with its many beautiful books and Story Hour is very popular with the children.

Suggestions for improvement of service or purchases of books are always welcome from the patrons of the Library.

LIBRARY BOARD — 1935

President: J. C. CLARKE

Vice-President: GEORGE B. MC KEAG

Secretary: JOHN B. RITTER

Financial Secretary and Treasurer:
MRS. FLORENCE DAVIDSON

SIDNEY S. GRIEB

HOWARD REEL

R. J. MATTERN, Acting Mayor

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM
of
THE COLLINGSWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

January 10, 1936
8:15 P. M.

1. INSTRUMENTAL TRIO
Miss Marion Post, piano; Miss Helen Behre, violin;
Miss Katherine Crouch, 'cello
2. ADDRESS OF WELCOME.....J. C. CLARKE
President, Board of Trustees
3. ADDRESS.....MISS SARAH ASKEW
Sec., N. J. Public Library Commission
4. INSTRUMENTAL TRIO
5. ADDRESS.....DR. EDWARD B. ROGERS
6. INSTRUMENTAL TRIO
7. ADDRESS.....MYRTON A. BRYANT
8. INSTRUMENTAL TRIO

Guests are invited to inspect the Library at the
conclusion of the program.

The Board of Trustees wish to express their appreciation to Mr. George M. DeGinther for the use of his files of The Weekly Retrospect in the preparation of this short history of the Public Library of Collingswood. Inadvertently the first records of our Library were destroyed, and we were pleased to find this source of information. We also wish to thank Mrs. DeGinther for assembling this material for us, and to thank the many others who have assisted materially to make this anniversary a memorable one.