

# **Brunswick Area Public Library**

The residents of Brunswick and of the surrounding communities can say with pride, "Brunswick Area Public Library is OUR library," for a vast majority of the people of this area have donated money, labor, talents, or a combination of all three.

At a breakfast meeting at Moser's Coffee Shop June 6, 1970, the Worthwhile Club, MFWC, discussed the need for a public library in Brunswick. The president had appointed Mrs. Laurence Storer, Mrs. Fred Heimer, and Mrs. Wm. Holtmeyer, Jr., as members of the public relations committee; they volunteered to have the establishment of a library as their project for the year. Mrs. Storer talked with Mayor G. Goe and Vic Dankert, Community Betterment Committee Chairman, who advised her to send a letter to the president of every community organization, asking that a representative of each club attend the October CBC meeting to discuss the organization of a library.

A delegation, composed of Mrs. Lloyd Herring, Mrs. Kenneth Richardson, and Mrs. Laurence Storer, met with the City Council asking them if the city would provide the space on the east side of the first floor of the City Hall for a library. The Council agreed to provide the space and pay for the utilities; the library committee, in return, promising to provide volunteer labor to repair, redecorate, rewire, and install a new lighting system.

A public meeting was held in the high school library with almost a hundred people attending. A slate of officers placed by Michael (Mick) Reichert, representing the Community Betterment Committee, was elected by acclamation. Those elected as trustees were: J. McKinny, Walter Riffle, Mrs. Evelyn Smith, Mrs. Constance Fristo, Mrs. Ann Herring, Mrs. Cynthia Holtmeyer, Jack Lukehart, Mrs. Archadean Storer, and Mrs. Llennell Richardson. During the meeting of the trustees following the public session, Mrs. Storer was elected president; Mr. Riffle, vice-president; Mrs. Smith, secretary; and Mrs. Holtmeyer, treasurer. Area representatives elected were: Mrs. Elmer Leimkuehler, Dalton; Claude Murray, Triplett; Lee Widhalm, Indian Grove; Mrs. Jack Squires, DeWitt.

Committees named were: By-laws and constitution, Mr. Hibler, chairman, Mr. Lukehart, and Mr. Riffle; Housing, Mrs. Smith, chairman, Mrs. Holtmeyer, and Mr. Lukehart; Budget and Finance, Mr. Riffle, chairman, Mrs. Herring, Mrs. Fristo, Mrs. Holtmeyer; Book, Mrs. Storer, chairman, Mrs. Llennell Richardson, and Mr. McKinny; Special Finance and Membership Drive committee; Mrs. Herring and Mrs. Kenneth Richardson, co-chairmen. Many others became members of this committee and helped to solicit money. Members of the high school library club, Boy Scouts, and other high school students helped to collect books donated by the people of the town, and later helped transport them to the city hall from the elementary school, where they had been stored.

Mrs. Herring and Mrs. Richardson set \$5,000 as their goal. By June 17, 1971, the goal had been exceeded by \$270.63, with some solicitors unreported. Membership dues had been set at \$5.00, but the first twelve donors averaged \$100 per family; 512 family membership cards were issued and every gift, large and small, was appreciated. Each gift represented a family interested in having a library.

The largest single contribution was money for the Mary Jo Swan collection of children's books, given by Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Swan in memory of their daughter, Mary Jo. Since that time many books have been given in memory of friends and loved ones.

Volunteers built and painted new shelves and repaired old ones; amateur painters redecorated the entire building; labor for the plumbing was donated; lighting fixtures and materials were furnished at cost; and part of the labor was donated. Mrs. Storer, assisted by Mrs. Jane Bahr, and Mrs. Ollie Belle Hedrick, processed approximately 2,500 books in a room on the second floor of the City Hall (with no air-conditioning) while the library was being decorated. They were aided in shelving the books by the high school library club. Mrs. Heimer, a professional librarian, assisted in the selection of the books.

More than 200 persons attended the opening of the Brunswick Area Public Library, Sunday, October 1971. When the library opened, Mrs. Herring reported that \$6,195.03 had been contributed, not counting \$154.26

donated in magazine subscriptions by Mr. and Mrs. Romie Spence, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Richardson, and Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Richardson, Jr.. A flag stand and a Missouri flag, a table and eight chairs were donated by the Commerce Bank of Brunswick.

Trustees and officers for 1976-77: Mrs. Lloyd Herring, president; Mrs. Jess Smith, vice-president; Mrs. Laurence Storer, secretary; Mrs. Wm. Holtmeyer, Jr., treasurer; other trustees: Walter Riffle, Mrs. Winsts: Walter Riffle, Mrs. Winston Blanton, C. N. (Dutch) Stroemer, Mrs. Charles Richardson, and J. J. McKinny. Area Representatives: Mrs. Jack Squires, DeWitt; Mrs. Lawrence Kipping, Triplett; Mrs. Bob Littleton, Dalton; Mrs. Lee Widhalm, Indian Grove.

During the summer of 1974, \$1,500 was raised for a new heating and cooling system, much of the money coming from an auction.

For the most part, the library is still staffed by volunteers, but we are grateful for the workers who assist in all phases of the library work under the following federally financed programs: Neighborhood Youth Corps, Green Thumb, and Main Stream programs, and CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Agency). The library is still financed by gifts from many friends of the library; one member of the City Council gives his annual salary from the city to the library. In the past Mrs. Kenneth Richardson and Busy Brunswicker 4-H members, and Mrs. C. N. Stroemer have conducted the story hour for children. This year's

members of the Rho-Gamma of Beta Sigma Phi have charge of the story hour. Mrs. Carlos Edwards of Carrollton has contributed clever and appropriate posters each month.

The establishment and maintenance of our library of more than 6,600 books is a truly magnificent example of cooperation, and proves that the people of Brunswick and of the surrounding communities still have a high degree of public spirit.