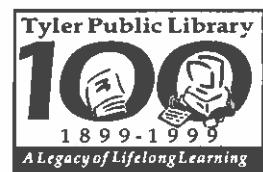


One Hundred Years of Library Service to Tyler, Texas



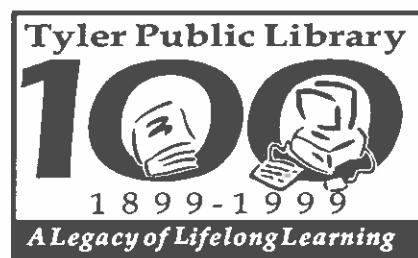
By Sarah H. Harper



One Hundred Years of Library Service to Tyler, Texas

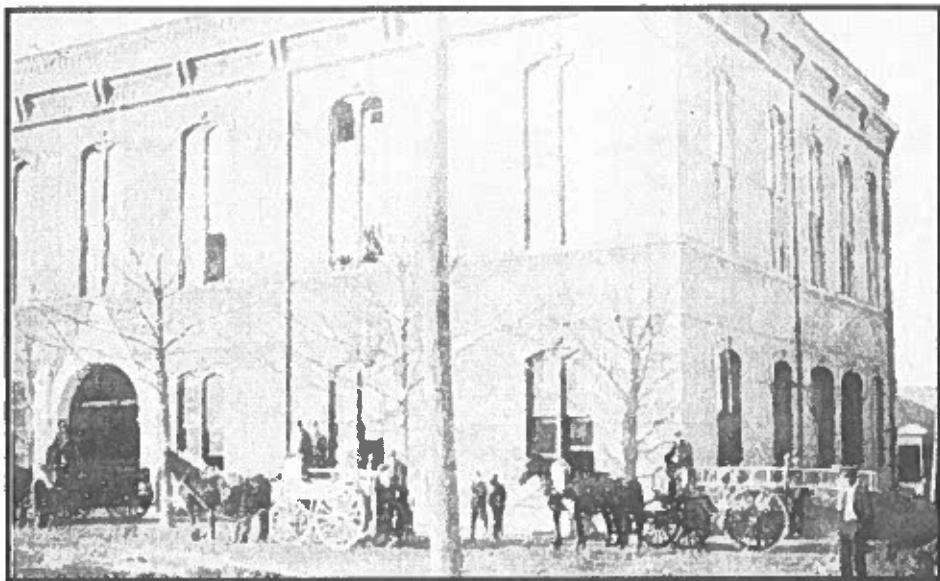
By Sarah H. Harper

Published by the Friends
of the Tyler Public Library



Other activities included a burlesque by the women's clubs given at the Tyler Opera House, teas, chafing dish parties, readings, musicales, and renting chairs at baseball games.⁵

Shortly after the library marked its second year of existence, the City Federation of Women's Clubs decided to change the subscription library to a free library. The following resolution, quoted in part, was adopted on May 17, 1901: "Resolved that we, the City Federation of Women's Clubs of Tyler, are for the greater encouragement of education, in favor of, and do hereby agree to change our public library from a pay to a free institution...."⁶ An immediate search was begun for suitable quarters for the new free public library. In the course of the search, it was discovered that the Tyler High School, the Mayor's Court, and the Callabooze were all housed in the city hall. Immediately the following petition, quoted in part, was circulated among the citizens of Tyler, "We, the parenthood of Tyler, do petition the City Council of Tyler that it may find it fitting to remove from contact with all high schools, the Mayor's Court and Callabooze to some other quarters, since we feel that this environment of the young is a daily menace to their proper training and morals. And we petition also that the rooms thus vacated be given to the Tyler Library as its permanent home so long as may be agreeable to the City and the Library Association."⁷ This was accomplished, and the library was installed in its new quarters on October 21, 1901, with a collection of 1500 books and a professional librarian, Miss Hetty M.B. Sherwin of Jamestown, New York. Miss Sherwin had been



Tyler City Hall and fire station, northeast corner of College and Locust Streets, ca. 1904. *Photo courtesy of Tyler Public Library Archives.*

trained in the Cleveland Public Library and the Chautauqua Summer Library School.⁸

By the fall of 1902 the library had again become a constant topic of discussion. During that same year Andrew Carnegie had given grants for the building of libraries in five Texas cities—Bryan, Clarksville, El Paso, Temple, and Waco.⁹ In due course of time, March 20, 1903, to be exact, Mr. Carnegie agreed to give \$15,000 to the city of Tyler for a free public library building if the City would in turn agree to maintain the library at a cost of not less than \$1500 per year. On May 4, 1903, the City accepted this proposition.¹⁰ After a fund-raising campaign, the citizens of Tyler bought a lot, costing \$2065, on the northwest corner of South College Avenue and West Elm Street and presented it to the City.¹¹

The architectural firm of Patton and Miller of Chicago was chosen, and the design they submitted was of the Italian Renaissance style. They appointed Mr. R. H. Downing of Tyler to be the local supervisor. D. Mahoney of Waxahachie was the builder. The brick came from the Hydraulic Press Brick Company of St. Louis, Missouri, costing \$15.56 per thousand. It was



Children's Room, Carnegie Public Library, Tyler, 1904. *Photo courtesy of Tyler Public Library Archives.*

shipped free of charge by the Cotton Belt Railroad to Tyler.¹² The building as originally constructed was designed to shelve 12,000 books and was arranged so that it could be administered by one librarian.¹³ There were two large rooms on the first floor—the room on the right was for the children and the room on the left was for adults. There was a large desk for checking books in and out and an office for the librarian. The second floor contained a small lecture hall with a stage and two dressing rooms. This was called Carnegie Hall.

The new Carnegie Public Library opened its doors for business on October 3, 1904, with Miss Mary B. Sawyer of Boxford, Massachusetts, serving as Librarian. Miss Sawyer's contract read in part, "In consideration of the faithful discharge of her duties the Librarian shall receive a salary of \$35.00 per month...."¹⁴ The library was dedicated and formally transferred to the city on November 29, 1904. Mayor John H. Bonner accepted the library with these words: "Ladies, Gentlemen, Chairman and President of the Federated Clubs of Tyler: I am sorry that they did not limit my time to one minute instead of

five. It would have been better for you. I want to say in behalf of this dear little city of Tyler, and the state government, I accept this municipal gift tendered this night to the city of Tyler by the Tyler Federated Clubs and the Honorable Andrew Carnegie, and

I wish to reiterate here that all the success of this library has been due to the efforts of the noble women of our city, and I say furthermore that future generations will

...all the success of this library has been due to the efforts of the noble women of our city, and I say furthermore that future generations will rise up and call you blessed for your noble efforts.

Mayor John H. Bonner

rise up and call you blessed for your noble efforts. Since I will not belong to that crowd, I want to take advantage of the opportunity now in their behalf to throw bouquets to the ladies of Tyler."¹⁵

There were several significant and unusual gifts made to the library during this era. In June 1902

named. Lyon G. Tyler was president of William and Mary College at this time.¹⁶ Andrew Carnegie gave two books to the new library: *American Natural History* by W. T. Homaday, and *The Rights of War and Peace* translated from the original Latin of Grotius.²⁰ In August 1907 the Daughters of the Ameri-



Reading Room, Carnegie Public Library, Tyler, 1904. Photo courtesy of Tyler Public Library Archives.

a gift of 600 children's books came from Miss Helen M. Gould, sister of railroad magnate Jay Gould.¹⁶

On September 15, 1903, the Edgar Lasker Lodge No. 347 of the Independent Order of B'Nai B'Rith gave the library a twelve volume Jewish Encyclopedia.¹⁷ In April 1904 Edward Whymper, famous explorer and first man to scale the

Matterhorn, donated

books on exploring.¹⁸ Lyon G. Tyler gave a three volume set on the life of his father, President John Tyler—for whom Tyler is

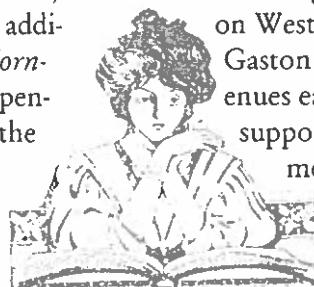
can Revolution loaned books to the library to begin a genealogical collection.²¹

Each year saw a continued growth of the city with a corresponding growth in the library. More books were added to the collection and additional staff members were hired to serve the increased number of citizens using the library. In 1934 it became apparent to the Board of Trustees and the City Commission that the library had outgrown the Carnegie building. Subsequently an election was held and the citizens voted in favor of a \$19,000 bond issue for the construction of an addition to the library. This also meant that the City qualified for a \$7,300 grant

for library improvements from the federal government's Public Works Administration.²² Construction was begun in 1935, and every effort was made by the local architect, Shirley Simons, to match the new addition to the original library building.²³ On the evening of June 8, 1936, the formal opening of the new addition was held. The *Tyler Morning Times* reported: "The opening of the new addition to the public library tonight is an occasion for rejoicing among book lovers of Tyler. The annex doubles the capacity of the building. In every respect except size it has for a long time been one of the outstanding libraries of the state, with an excellent staff... and a wide range of reading matter. Tyler has every right to be proud of its improved library, of the enlarged facility and of the fine people who are directing it."²⁴

Although this was the last major addition made to the Carnegie Public Library, two interior renovations were carried out by interested groups. In 1965, the Junior League of Tyler supervised the incorporation of part of the auditorium of Carnegie Hall into the children's department. The new space was allocated for a work room, a staff lounge, and a room for shelving children's non-fiction books. In 1971, the Mary Tyler Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution renovated the stage area of Carnegie Hall for a local history and genealogy department.²⁵

Library service to the African American community was segregated until the early 1960's. A library for this community was chartered on July



The opening of the new addition to the public library tonight is an occasion for rejoicing among book lovers of Tyler.
Tyler Morning Times

28, 1941. It was housed in the Bethlehem Baptist Church and was called the Negro Public Library. In 1947 the Tyler City Commission authorized the purchase of Building T382 from Camp Fannin for use by the Negro Public Library.²⁶ The building was moved to a lot on West Lollar Street between Gaston and Confederate Avenues early in 1949.²⁷ It was supported by donations of money, books, and furnishings and was governed by a board of directors. Tentative plans were made to incorporate the library into the city library system as a separate branch, possibly at the end of World War II. The library did become a city tax-supported institution in the early 1950's, but a

much-talked about new building never materialized. In 1961, the name was changed to the Ella Reid Public Library in honor of a highly respected member of the African American community. Mrs. Reid "was an outstanding person not only in church, but in the county and the community in which she lived and served." The library had a trained librarian from the start, and a staff of two part-time assistants.²⁸

With the advent of desegregation of library services in Tyler, use of the Ella Reid Public Library declined. At the December 1968 meeting of the City Commission, the library was closed. Commissioner Debenport stated that "the Ella Reid Library which is located in the north part of Tyler and which has been considered as the Negro Library is being closed be-

cause it has not been used a great deal since the entire community is making good use of the downtown library facility." He stated that "combining the Boards and closing the Ella Reid Library is part of the overall plan to do more for the people of Tyler, not just closing down a facility."²⁹ In May 1972 the records of the Ella Reid Public Library were sent to the Balch Institute Research Library in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Institute collects the records and histories of ethnic groups in America.³⁰ Those records and memorabilia not accepted by the Balch Institute were given in 1974 to the library of Texas College, Tyler.

New services were continually added to the library's programs, and books became only a part of the collection available to the library patron. Other materials to be checked out were records and cassettes, slides and filmstrips, sculpture, art prints, projectors, cassette players and recorders, and "talking" books and equipment for the physically handicapped. When it became apparent that the library could no longer expand its services in the existing building, efforts were made to take library service to the community. A program for taking books to the homebound and to the nursing homes and senior citizens' centers was established. A similar program was started for the pre-schools and day-care centers in Tyler and it was called "Traveling Books." With much hard work and persistence, the League of Women Voters of Tyler was instrumental in the decision by the city to purchase a bookmobile.³¹ The bookmobile





Bookmobile, 1975. Photo courtesy of Tyler Public Library Archives.

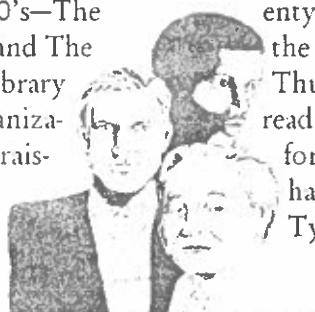
began its service in March 1975.³²

In 1976 the citizens again came to the support of library service. Two organizations dedicated to library service had been formed in the 1970's—The Friends of the Library and The Tyler-Smith County Library Foundation. These organizations conducted a fund raising campaign in the Tyler community to raise \$400,000. This money was used to purchase land directly south of the Carnegie Public Library. On August 17, 1976, Tyler's City Council "gratefully accepted by unanimous vote a gift of land from a group of private local citizens for a future proposed library building."³³ A plaque in the lobby of the Tyler Public Library lists the names of all those who donated to this gift. The gift of land was contingent upon the City Council calling a library bond election, and this they did on October

1, 1976. The bond was for \$2,750,000.³⁴ The election was held October 26, 1976, and in a moderate turnout the voters approved the bond election by more than seventy percent.³⁵ The editorial in the *Tyler-Courier Times* on Thursday, October 28, 1976, read in part: "Those who look for positive news should have plenty to their liking in Tyler reports Wednesday.

One bright report was furnished in the returns from the Tuesday library bond election which overwhelmingly approved... bonds to finance a new building. The...approval... certainly reflects that Tyler indeed does have many civic-minded citizens who believe in the educational and cultural assets that expanded library facilities represent, and are willing to back the project totally...(and)

also reflects, we believe, an optimistic outlook on the part of the city's residents as far as the economy of this area is concerned."³⁶

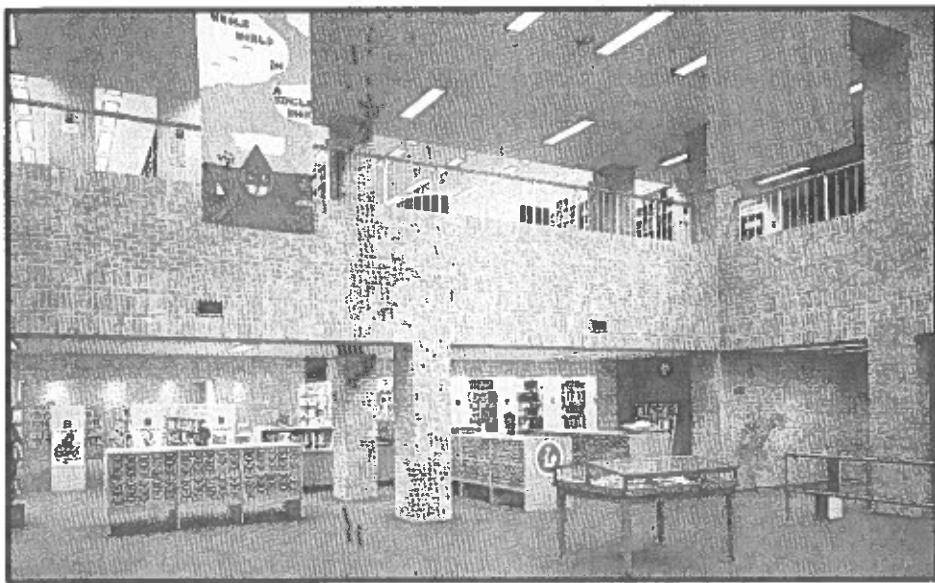


Tyler indeed does have many civic-minded citizens who believe in the educational and cultural assets that expanded library facilities represent.

Tyler Courier Times

On September 3, 1976, an Architect Selection Committee was appointed by the City Council. After much hard work and many interviews, the committee recommended in January 1977 that the architect for the library be Sinclair and Wright Architects, Tyler, in association with Fisher and Spillman Architects, Inc., Dallas. The design concept was to be done by Fisher and Spillman, and the on-site supervision was to be done by Sinclair and Wright.³⁷ The construction contract was awarded to Gordon Campbell and Associates of Tyler,³⁸ and the landscaping contract went to Bryan H. Thompson of Thompson-Hills Nursery, Tyler.³⁹ A building committee was appointed by the City Council to serve as a liaison between the architects and the library board. In the fall of 1977 the library board assumed direct responsibility for working with the architects. On Tuesday, August 15, 1978, at 1:30 p.m. approximately 150 civic leaders and library patrons attended the ground-breaking ceremonies for the new library.⁴⁰

After almost four years of anticipation, the new Tyler Public Library, built at a cost of \$2,804,000, opened its doors on Monday, May 5, 1980, at 9:00 a.m. Formal opening ceremonies were held at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 11, 1980. Earth-tone bricks harmonizing with the surrounding buildings were used to construct the three-story building. Red bricks salvaged from Tyler's old brick streets were used as pavers for the library's foyer, northeast corner plaza, south plaza, and porte-cochere.⁴¹ The darker bricks were from a 1926 street, and the lighter ones from a 1938 street.⁴² With a



Atrium, Tyler Public Library, 1980. Photo courtesy H. K. Barnett.

total of 48,000 square feet, the library was designed to house 215,000 books and to seat 220 patrons. It also included the Gus Taylor Auditorium, named for a Tyler citizen whose family bequeathed funds to build this room. The auditorium seats 150 persons and has a projection room, automatic screen, dimming lights, and a small kitchen. On the first floor can be found the circulation and reference departments, as well as the children's collection and a story-hour room. Also a collection of Spanish language books is located here. On the second floor will be found the adult fiction and non-fiction collections. On the third floor are the audio-visual materials, the periodical collection, the Family and Local History Department, and the administrative offices.

Over the next two decades private and federal grants provided the means to expand the library's services. Reference services were improved with new shelving and an information desk bought with a gift from Mattie Alice Baker. Staff created story time kits called "Stories to Go" for the sole use of child care providers. A new bookmobile, purchased in 1990 through

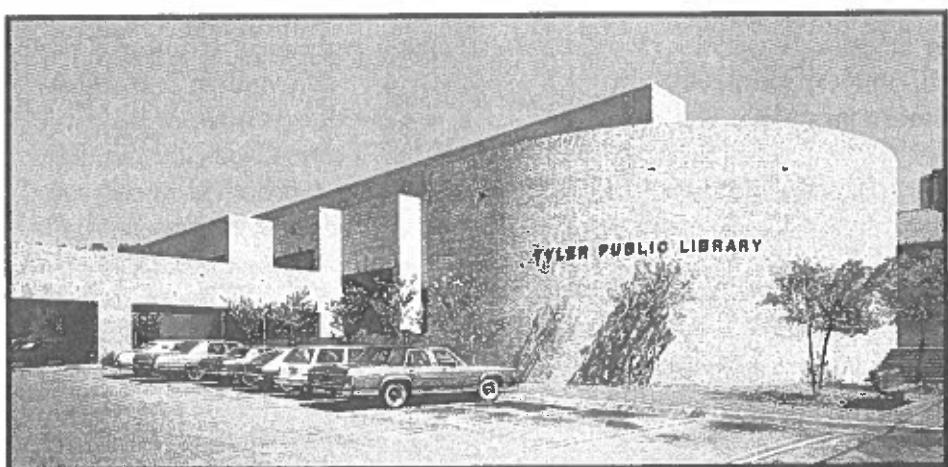
a federal Community Development Block Grant, travels to low and moderate income neighborhoods. State funds provided Internet access to library patrons. And in 1999, a project of the Junior League of Tyler made possible a facelift for the bookmobile and the refurbishing of the library's children's area.

Library service to Tyler, Texas, has evolved in the past one hundred years

With the help of its many supporters, both public and private, the library will continue this role for the next one hundred years.

from a collection of 235 books housed in a small storefront on the square to a 48,000 square foot, three-story building with all the library services offered today—a collection of more than 125,000 books and periodicals, audio-visual resources such as video cassettes, audio cassettes, films and film-strips, recordings, equipment, art prints, and sculpture. Children's services include books, story hours, regularly scheduled programs, and participation in the Texas State Library Summer Reading Club. Family and local history resources emphasize Tyler and Smith County history and genealogical resources with a concentration on southern states. Reference services include access to information in other libraries through interlibrary loan. Home-bound citizens are served by mail and by volunteers, and a bookmobile makes regularly scheduled stops throughout the city.

The Tyler Public Library has been one of the Tyler community's major resources for culture, information, and learning, and with the help of its many supporters, both public and private, it will continue this role for the next one hundred years.



Tyler Public Library, ca. 1980. Photo courtesy Acme Brick Company.

ENDNOTES

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APPENDIX I

Carnegie/Tyler Public Library Library Directors, 1899-1999

1899 - 1901 Mr. Charles V. Johnson
1901 - 1902 Miss Hetty M. B. Sherwin
1902 Mrs. Elizabeth Herndon Potter
1902 - 1905 Miss Mary Sawyer
1905 - 1913 Miss Mary A. Osgood
1913 Ms. May Flourney
1913 - 1915 Ms. Ethel Pitcher
1915 - 1916 Ms. Doris M. Hanson
1916 - 1917 Miss Rumana (Ruth) McManis
1917 - 1919 Miss Edith Allen Phelps
1919 - 1922 Ms. Caroline F. Gates
1922 - 1924 Miss Margaret Jarvis
1924 Mrs. Lois Holland Morton
1925 - 1927 Mrs. Louise Walker Marshall
1927 Mrs. Lois Holland Morton
1927 - 1936 Mrs. Elizabeth Hill Haynes
1936 - 1957 Miss Sophie Loftin
1957 - 1968 Miss Lorene Ellerd
1968 - 1970 Mr. Robert Betts
1970 - 1974 Mr. L. B. Woods
1974 - 1980 Miss Harriet Henderson
1981 to date Mr. Christopher Albertson



Mr. W. R. Castle, 1907
Mr. Will Caswell, 1907
Mr. Clark, 1932, 1934-1936
Mrs. R. D. Cobb, 1906
Mr. Cole, 1931
Mr. Walter Connally, 1904, 1905
Dr. C. C. Crews, 1907
Miss Lucia Douglas, 1917, 1937-1960
Mr. Charles A. Dubberly, 1972-1978
Mr. John M. Duncan, 1903, 1904
Mr. Joe Elliot, Jr., 1970-1972
Mrs. C. B. Epes, 1903
Dr. Maurice Faber, 1907; 1910; 1911; 1913-1917, chairman; 1918-1922
Dr. J. Z. Ferrell, 1910
Miss Mattie Fielder, 1910
Mr. William Finn, 1967; 1968; 1969, chairman; 1970-1972
Mr. R. C. Fyfe, 1906, 1907
Mr. Hampson Gary, 1903, 1904
Mrs. W. L. D. Glass, 1969-1972
Mrs. Max Goldstein, 1915, 1916
Mrs. S. V. Goodman, 1910-1913
Mrs. Mary H. Gray, 1906, 1910, chairman; 1911-1914
Mr. J. C. Hale, 1936-1948
Mr. George Hall, 1979, 1980
Mr. William S. Hanley, 1932-1953, chairman
Mr. W. H. Hanson, 1914
Mr. Michael Hatchell, 1972-1974; 1975-1977, chairman
Mr. J. L. Henderson, 1903
Mrs. A. Hicks, 1910
Dr. Robert Hill, 1910, chairman
Mrs. David Houston, 1979, 1980
Mr. Kenneth W. Hurst, 1977-1980
Mrs. Ben Jarvis, 1971-1975
Mr. J. B. Jones, 1969-1972
Miss Mattie L. Jones, 1920-1937
Mr. Sid S. Johnson, 1907
Mr. T. W. Joyner, 1949-1953; 1954 -1961, chairman
Mr. A. E. Judge, 1903, 1904, 1910
Mr. E. W. Judge, 1927
Mr. Lawrence A. Kayser, 1926, 1927
Mr. W. G. Kilfoyle, 1906
Mr. W. F. Knox, 1905, 1906
Mrs. Harry B. LaTourette, 1961; 1962, chairman; 1963-1967; 1968, chairman; 1969-1978; Honorary Board Member, 1979-present
Mr. F. Lee Lawrence, 1961-1965; 1966, chairman; 1967-1969
Mrs. T. H. Lawrence, 1925
Mrs. Jacob Lipstate, 1903-1906
Mr. Louis Lipshitz, 1905, 1906

APPENDIX II

Carnegie Public Library Board Members, 1903-1979

Mrs. James R. Adams, 1912-1914
Mrs. W. T. Adams, 1914
Rev. William F. Andrews, 1913, 1914
Mr. R. E. Beaird, 1903
Mr. Upton Beall, 1962-1966; 1967, chairman; 1968; 1969; 1970-1972, chairman
Dr. T. J. Bell, 1903, 1904
Mr. Rudolph Bergfeld, 1905, 1906
Mr. A. W. Birdwell, 1905, 1906
Mr. P. K. Birdwell, 1910-1913
Mr. John L. Booty, 1915
Mr. Oswald M. Boren, 1910-1923
Mrs. John A. Brown, 1903-1906
Mrs. R. H. Brown, 1907, 1910, 1911
Mr. Sig Bruck, 1910-1912
Mrs. C. R. Buddy, 1919, chairman
Mrs. C. A. Caldwell, 1914
Mrs. D. K. Caldwell, 1975-1980
Mr. J. S. Carlton, 1907

Mrs. Clay Love, 1923
 Mr. D. F. Madlock, 1972
 Mr. John B. Mayfield, 1903-1906
 Mr. McBride, 1931
 Mr. O. McFarland, 1904-1906
 Mr. George S. McGhee, 1910
 Mrs. John S. McIlvain, 1910-1913
 Dr. McLean, 1907
 Mr. Francis H. Merrill, 1910-1913, chairman
 Rev. Bill Moore, 1961-1964; 1965, chairman; 1966;
 1967
 Mr. Wilton Fair, 1974 - 1999
 Dr. Osborn, 1925
 Mr. J. B. Parker, 1906
 Mrs. Roy W. Phillips, 1906, 1907
 Mr. James Pierce, 1972, 1973
 Mr. Gus F. Pinkerton, 1907
 Mr. George E. Platt, 1913, 1914
 Mrs. E. P. Price, 1919-1922
 Mrs. Leslie C. Polk, 1926-1949
 Mrs. Elizabeth H. Potter, 1903-1905, chairman; 1914-
 1916; 1917-1918, chairman
 Mr. Thomas B. Ramey, 1916-1919; 1920-1926,
 chairman
 Mr. S. D. Reaves, 1911-1914
 Mrs. L. W. Rogers, 1950-1960
 Mrs. Joseph Selman, 1976; 1977-1979, chairman; 1980
 Mr. Gordon Simpson, 1935
 Mrs. Oscar Sjerven, 1975-1980
 Mr. A. F. Sledge, 1910-1914
 Dr. Carl A. Smith, 1903, 1904
 Mr. John W. Smith, 1932
 Mr. Frank N. Speller, Jr., 1972-1975, chairman
 Mr. Gus F. Taylor, 1906, 1907
 Mrs. W. D. Swann, 1915
 Dr. James G. Ulmer, 1931
 Mrs. Florence E. Vaughn, 1972-1980
 Rabbi Harvey Wessels, 1954-1960; 1961, chairman
 Mrs. Patrick White, 1974
 Mr. W. C. Wiley, 1905, 1906
 Mr. Frank E. Williams, 1923-1926;
 1927-1932, chairman
 Mrs. George Wimberly, 1914
 Dr. Lynn B. Windham, 1939-1956
 Mr. Wilbur C. Windsor, 1936-1939
 Mrs. Alex Woldert, 1905; 1906-1910,
 chairman; 1911-1914
 Mrs. Bernard Wolf, 1961; 1962; 1963-1964, chairman;
 1965-1972

APPENDIX III

Tyler Public Library Board Members, 1980 - 1999

Mr. Leroy Anderson, 1982-1987
 Mrs. Carolyn Baer, 1991-1993
 Mrs. Julia Brown, 1992
 Mr. Tom Brown, 1988
 Ms. Ann Butler, 1994
 Mrs. Evelyn Cain-Smith, 1995, 1996
 Mrs. D. K. Caldwell, 1980, chairman
 Mr. David Calloway, 1998, 1999
 Dr. Joyce Cherry, 1991
 Dr. Mary Cleveland, 1985-1988
 Mrs. James Deakins, 1980-1983
 Mrs. Pearlia M. Derrick, 1998, 1999
 Mrs. Ruth Floyd, 1994, 1995
 Mr. Ric Freeman, 1982
 Mrs. Donnie Gaines, 1989, 1990
 Rev. David Galloway, 1991, 1992
 Ms. Gale Hale, 1996, 1997
 Mr. George Hall, 1980; 1981, chairman; 1982, chairman;
 1983; 1984
 Ms. Virginia Harrell, 1993; 1994, chairman; 1995, chairman
 Mrs. David Houston, 1980-1984
 Mrs. Gretchen Leath, 1994-1999
 Dr. Michael McArthur, 1983-1986
 Mr. Tom McLaren, 1985-1990
 Ms. Eloise Montgomery, 1994; 1995; 1996-99, chairman
 Ms. Hattie Moreland, 1997-1999
 Mrs. Flora Nauls, 1995, 1996
 Mr. Andrew Navarro, 1989-1993
 Mrs. Virginia O'Connell, 1988, 1989, 1990-1993, chairman;
 1994
 Mrs. Mary Pinyan, 1984-1987
 Mrs. Cindy Pirtle, 1990-1992
 Mr. Tom Robinson, 1982; 1983-1987, chairman
 Mr. Sol Roosth, 1987-1989
 Mrs. Bill Ross, 1982, 1983
 Mrs. Ann Sefrna, 1984-1987; 1988; 1989, chairman
 Mrs. Joseph Selman, 1980, 1981, 1994-1999
 Mr. Andy Shaw, 1998, 1999
 Mr. Raymond Sikes, 1996, 1997
 Mrs. Oscar Sjerven, 1980, 1981
 Mrs. Lisa Starnes, 1997
 Mr. Lonnie Stephens, 1988-1993
 Mrs. Florence E. Vaughn, 1980, 1981
 Mrs. Carolyn Waters, 1990
 Mrs. James C. Wynne, Jr., 1981

(Continued page 10)



1998-99 Tyler Public Library Board:
Mrs. Eloise Montgomery - Chairman
Mrs. Gretchen Leath - Vice-Chairman
Mr. David Calloway
Mrs. Pearlia M. Derrick
Mrs. Hattie W. Moreland
Mrs. Cris Selman
Mr. Andy Shaw

APPENDIX IV

Tyler- Smith County Library Foundation Board Members, 1974 - 1999

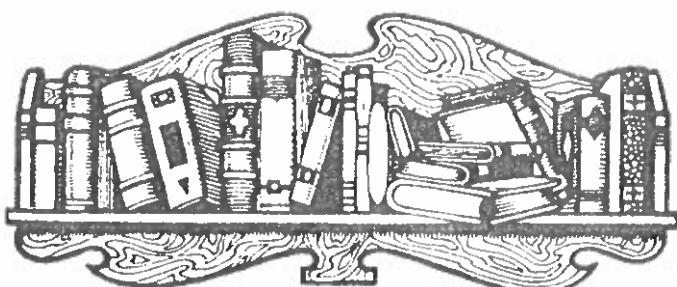
Members:

Mr. Henry M. Bell, Jr. 1974-1999
Mrs. D. K. Caldwell, 1974-1998
Mr. Charles A. Dubberly, 1974-1999
Mr. I. Greenberg, 1984-1990
Mr. Jack H. Harper, 1974-1999
Mr. B. G. Hartley, 1974-1999
Mr. Kenneth W. Hurst, 1974-1983
Mr. F. Lee Lawrence, 1974-1996
Mrs. Jack J. Powell, 1974-1999
Mr. A. W. Riter, Jr., 1974-1999
Mr. Isadore Roosth, 1974-1992
Mr. Ralph Spence, 1977-1996
Mr. Harold Stringer, 1974-1979
Dr. Jim Vaughn, 1974-1999
Mrs. Mary Jane Wilson, 1974-1997
Mrs. Bernard Wolf, 1974-1996

1998-99 Present Board

Officers:

President - Dr. Jim Vaughn
President-Elect - Mr. Henry M. Bell, Jr.
Secretary/Treasurer - Mr. Jack H. Harper



APPENDIX V

Friends of the Carnegie/Tyler Public Library - Officers, 1970 - 1999

Past officers:

Mr. Henry Alsmeyer - Secretary, 1998-1999
Mr. Upton Beall - Secretary, 1975-1976; Vice-President, 1976-1977; President-Elect, 1979-1980; President, 1980-1981
Mr. Henry M. Bell, Jr. - President-Elect, 1977-1978; President, 1978-1979
Mrs. Roe Buckley - Treasurer, 1994-1996
Ms. Mary Burch - Secretary, 1992-1993
Mrs. Allen Burt - Vice-President, 1975-1976
Mrs. Jane Hartley Coker - Secretary, 1989-1991
Mrs. Frederick Cote, Jr. - Vice-President, 1984-1985
Mrs. Don Cowan - Secretary, 1978-1979
Mrs. Jim Deakins - President-Elect, 1978-1979; President, 1979-1980
Mr. Bill Dickson - Vice-President, 1996-1998
Mrs. Robert Dobbs - Secretary, 1974-1975
Mr. Jim Gatewood - Vice-President, 1987-1988; President, 1988-1989
Ms. Julie Gorski - Secretary, 1988-1989
Mrs. Fred Grinstead - President-Elect, 1989-1990; President, 1990-1991
Mr. Jack H. Harper - President, 1970-1971; Secretary, 1995-1996; President, 1998-1999
Mr. Charles Harrell - Vice-President, 1993-1996
Mrs. Kenneth Hayes - Secretary, 1971-1973
Ms. Leesa Hedge - Treasurer, 1990-1993
Dr. Raymond Hedge, Jr. - President, 1975-1976; President, 1976-1977
Mr. Randy Honea - Treasurer, 1993-1994
Mr. Willis Jarrell, Jr. - President, 1994-1996
Mrs. Worth Johnson - Vice-President, 1980-1981
Mrs. Harry LaTourette - President-Elect, 1983-1984; President, 1984-1985
Mrs. Lee Lawrence - President-Elect, 1976-1977; President, 1977-1978
Mrs. Thomas Mallory - Secretary, 1970-1972; Vice-President, 1972-1974
Miss Lucy Marsh - Vice-President, 1970-1971
Mr. J. R. Montgomery - President-Elect, 1985-1986, 1991-1992; President, 1992-1994
Mrs. Hascall Muntz - President-Elect, 1973-1974; President, 1974-1975; Secretary, 1985-1986; President, 1986-1987
Mrs. Andy Navarro - Treasurer, 1988-1990; Vice-President, 1990-1991; President, 1991-1992

Mr. Rhey Nolan - Vice-President, 1992-1993
Mrs. Howard Norris - Vice-President, 1986-1987
Mrs. George Oge - Vice-President, 1978-1979; President-Elect, 1980-1981; President, 1991-1992
Mrs. Charlotte Davis Owen - Secretary, 1993-1995
Ms. Debra Pollitt - Treasurer, 1996-1998
Mrs. Jack J. Powell - President-Elect, 1970-1971; President, 1971-1972
Mr. Chris Reed - President, 1996-1998
Ms. Trudy Richardson - Secretary, 1996-1998
Mr. Will Mann Richardson - Treasurer, 1970-1976
Mrs. Frank Rimmer - President, 1972-1973
Mr. A.W. Riter, Jr. - President-Elect, 1972-1973; President, 1973-1974
Mrs. Bill Ross - Secretary, 1980-1981; Vice-President, 1981-1982
Ms. Ann Sefrna - Treasurer, 1998-1999
Mrs. Charlotte Shtofman - President-Elect, 1986-1987; President, 1987-1988
Mrs. Watson Simons - Secretary, 1982-1984
Mrs. Oscar Sjerven - President, 1986-1987
Mrs. Myrtis Beall Smith - Secretary, 1984-1985
Mr. Nelson Smith - Treasurer, 1977-1986
Mrs. William Starling - Secretary, 1981-1982
Mrs. Thomas Sproule - Vice-President, 1977-1978
Mrs. Harold Stringer - Secretary, 1973-1974; Vice-President, 1974-1975
Mr. Ben Sutton - Vice-President, 1982-1984; President-Elect, 1984-1985; President, 1985-1986
Mrs. Thomas Swann - President-Elect, 1974-1975; President, 1975-1976; Vice-President, 1985-1986
Mrs. VaLita Waits -Secretary, 1987-1988
Mr. Mark Walling - Treasurer, 1986-1988; Vice-President, 1988-1989; President, 1989-1990
Mrs. Marquis T. Walters - Secretary, 1976-1978
Mrs. Fred M. Warren - President-Elect, 1971-1972
Ms. Elaine Wells - Secretary, 1991-1992
Mrs. Raymond Whitney, Jr. - President-elect, 1982-1983; President, 1983-1984
Mr. Sam Wolf - Treasurer, 1976-1977
Mrs. James Wynne, Jr. - President-elect, 1981-1982; President, 1982-1983; Vice-President, 1998-1999



Current officers:

President - Mr. Jack H. Harper
Vice-President - Mrs. James C. Wynne, Jr.
Secretary - Mr. Henry Alsmeyer
Treasurer - Ms. Ann Sefrna

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Supplement: Library Employees

100 YEARS OF Library Service to Tyler, Texas

Below is a list of all those employees who were involved in providing library service to the citizens of Tyler, Texas, *for one hundred years*—from 1899 to 1999. Those names preceded by an (*) were employees of the Tyler Public Library as of April 1, 1999. Every known record of the Carnegie Public Library and the Tyler Public Library was searched for the names of employees. The author wishes to thank Mary Jane McNamarra, former employee of the Carnegie Public Library, for her help in recalling the names of many former employees. There is no way that all names were found, so this is a "work-in-progress." If anyone knows of someone whose name should be on this list, please relay that information to the Tyler Public Library.

* Albertson, Christopher A.	* Brown, Dephoine	Danile, Beverly	Goold, Judy
Allen, Charlotte	Brown, Joy	Davenport, Lois Hale	Graham, Jo
Allen, Murl	Browning, Dewana	Davis, Katherine	Gray, Linda
Allen, Tracey Lynette	Bruning, Jeane	Davis, Yolanda	Green, Beth
* Anderson, Jackie	Buchanan, Kathy	Day, Laura	Green, Joan Hill
Anderson, Shannon	Burden, Frances	DeLeon, Roxanne	* Green, Tish
Ardis, Hazel McCameron	Burist, Anet	Demery, Marie	Green, Vanessa
Arnett, Angie	Burkett, Laurie	DeSoi, John	Griffin, Deidra
Ash-Geisler, Viki	Burleson, Mary	Devereaux, Phyllisia	Grimes, Julie
Ashton, Rhonda	Burton, Ted	Dingler, Deborah	Grosenbacher, Marion
Ates, Yvette	Caddell, Brenda	* Dobbs, Melanie	Gullikson, Jean
* Atkins, Rodney Lamar	Cain, Maurice	Dorsey, Freda	Hall, Brenda
Ayers, Linda	Cain, Mechelle	Dudley, Patricia Kay	Hall, Virginia
Bailey, Lamerne Layton	Caldwell, Lottie Ray	Dudley, Scherry	Hallman, Margaret
Bailey, Sarah	Campbell, Vera	Eaton, Helen	Hallmark, Ann
Barnes, LaWanda	Carlson, Sarah Coker	* Edwards, Betty	Hammond, Lois
Barnhart, James	Carpenter, Nancy	Edwards, Katherine	Hanson, Doris M.
Barnhart, Louise	Carson, Terra Mae	Edwards, Wilbert	Harden, Derrick E.
Barron, Gena	* Carver, Scherel	Ellerd, Lorene	Hardie, Elma
Battles, Louise	Cates, Suzanne	Elliott, Grace	Harned, Olene
Baynham, Becky	Chavez, Darryl	Ellis, Hillary	Harper, Sarah H.
Beal, Felicia	* Cheatham, Evelyn	* Eng, Pauline	Harrell, Virginia L.
Bedford, George	Clark, Charolyn	Evans, Virginia	Harris, Mary Emma
Bell, Roy	Clark, Ermer	Fasel, Linda	Harris, Sonia
Berry, Kimberly	Clark, Mr.	Felix, Maxine	Harvill, Alta
Betts, Robert E.	Clark, Sarah	Finley, Margaret Mesler	Haynes, Elizabeth Hill
Bircher, Mahogany	Clausen, Sara	Fischer, Bevery Bixler	Henderson, Harriet
Biscoe, Demekia	Claybon, Sibyl E.	* Fleming, Eva Jackson	Henry, Joyce
Black, Fisher	Coleman, Meshell	Fleming, Susan	Henson, Lyndell
Blackmon, Maryian	Collins, Dianne	* Fletcher, Harmon	Hernandez, Marina
Blair, Aubrey	Cooper, Dovie	Fletcher, Judy R.	Hicks, Janet
Blount, Matilde	Cooper, Steven A.	Flippen, Sharlot	Hodgkinson, Freda
Boehner, Mindy	Corbin, Josleen	Flournoy, Susan May	Hoil, Gloria
Boggs, Carol G.	Cotten, Bob	Flowers, Shwana	Holland, Florence
Boles, Jean	Cowan, Katherine	Ford, Argie Elizabeth	Holt, Frances
Borgman, Stephanie	Crawford, Florence Henry	Foster, Diane	Horn, Betty
Bostick, Jo	Crespo, Abigail	Foster, Manson	Howard, Sharon
* Bowie, Lois	Criswell, Brandon	Foster, Mary	Howell, Elizabeth
Boyd, Amanda	Cumby, Horace	Franklin, LaVoya	Howell, Gail
* Bradshaw, Alice	Cunningham, Stacy	Franks, Ida	Howell, Modena
Branam, Tonya	Curry, Evelyn Edwards	Frazier, Genevive	* Huey, Carolyn Ann
Brewster, Joyce N.	* Curtis, Judy Taylor	Freeman, Cora	Hullett, Margaret
Bridges, Jeri	* Daniels, Terri	Frisby, Norrine Riley	Hullum, Adele Florey
Brock, Sherri		Frost, Casandra	Hunt, Laura
Brooks, Mary Emily Thompson		Fuggins, Ana	Isabell, Mary Jackson
		Gage, Jettie	* Jackson, Cindy Mahomes
		* Galbreath, Barbara	Jackson, Rebecca
		Gamez, Juanita (Jane)	Jarvis, Margaret
		* Garcia, Elizama M.	Jett, Zenaida
		Gardner, Willie Mae	Johnson, Becky
		* Garrison, Heather	* Johnson, Benjamin
		Gates, Caroline F.	Johnson, Carl
		* Gauna, Alejandro	Johnson, Charles V.
		Gauna, Ricardo	Johnson, David
		Gibson, Earnest	Jones, Bernice
		Gipson, Judy	Jones, Cindy
		Goldstucker, Marion	Jones, Ramana
		Gonsolus, Eric	Jummerson, Donna
		Gonzales, Mary	Kaffka, Norene
		* Goodman, Lucinda	Kaiser, Jane



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sarah H. Harper was graduated from Brown University with a Bachelor's Degree in American Civilization, and from Rutgers-the State University (New Jersey) with a Master's Degree in Library Service. A long-time member of the Smith County Historical Society and a charter member of the East Texas Genealogical Society, she was head of the Family and Local History Department of the Tyler Public Library from 1972 through 1995. Her "Bibliography of Smith County" appeared in *Chronicles of Smith County*, Volume 16, Number 2, Winter, 1977. She is married to Jack H. Harper, attorney retired from the Ramey and Flock Law Firm, and they have three children and six grandchildren.

cultural, historical, landmark program

CHHS

In 1910 chose to honor a place about town

1899 Library began in space donated by A. E. Judg.
back of a shoe store at college & Ferguson
then moved to city hall
1904 Carnegie Library @ college & Elm
1980 moved to 2nd floor of downtown

over 100 notable citizens have served on the
board. This is an organization that
continues to contribute to the lives of
Teton residents

1890 Wyoming Public Library - 1902
1904 Carnegie Library - 1980

Heather Nick

From: Chris Albertson
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2009 11:30 AM
To: Heather Nick
Cc: Evelyn Cheatham
Subject: RE: Half Mile of History Tyler Library

Looks good to me....unless you have some concerns about "inclusive" language difficulties with "man" kind...[I don't ☺]

Chris

From: Heather Nick
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2009 11:18 AM
To: Chris Albertson
Subject: Half Mile of History Tyler Library

Chris,

Please review the following "Stone Language":

TYLER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Since 1899, the library has served to expand the horizons and dreams of Tyler's citizens while connecting them to the cultural and historic heritage of mankind.

The proposed ceremony date is September 24th at 1:30 p.m.

The Carnegie Library will be set for a later date.

Thanks,
Heather

Heather Nick

Senior Planner\MPO Coordinator
Metropolitan Planning Organization

City of Tyler

✉ hnwick@tylertexas.com

☎ 903.531.1175

🌐 www.tylerpz.org

🌐 www.tyler21plan.com

08/12/09

Fort Worth Monument Company
5811 Jacksboro Hwy
Fort Worth, TX 76114
Fax Number: (817) 624-8428

James,

Please remit proofs to 903-531-1170.

We are expecting to have our ceremony on September 24th.

Please let me know when these will be ready for shipment.

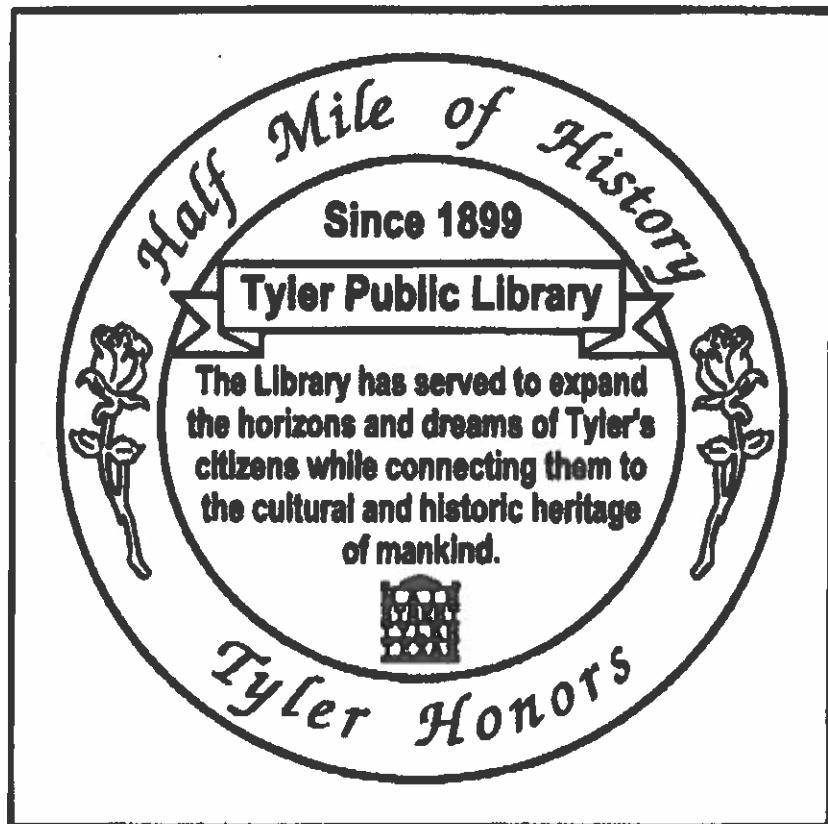
TYLER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Since 1899, the library has served to expand the horizons and dreams of Tyler's citizens while connecting them to the cultural and historic heritage of mankind.

TEXAS COLLEGE

Founded in 1894 to educate the children of former slaves, the College continues to benefit society through its vision to "Enhance the Culture of Learning".

Thanks,
Heather



Total Cost - 500.00 each delivered

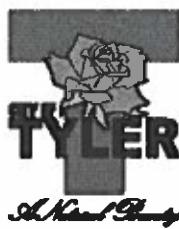
The Lettering on this stone is smaller than we recommend

We cannot guaranty the lettering.

Sign and fax back to 817-624-8428

BA OK

K. Bridgeman



NOMINATION FORM HALF MILE OF HISTORY

Section A: Nomination Information

Name of Nominated person, place or event: Tyler Public Library

The nominee is being honored for outstanding contributions in the area(s) of (please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Government/Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Aviation	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention/Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports
<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil/Gas	

Section B: Nominator's Information

Name of person making nomination: Chris Albrecht, City Librarian

Address: 201 S. College Ave

City: Tyler State: TX Zip: 75702

Daytime telephone: 903-593-4357 Email: cabretht@tylertx91.com

Relationship to nominated individual:

Current director of Library

Nominated Individual's year of death: NA

Section C: Narrative

The narrative section of the application is the most important. It is the primary source of information judges use to make their selection of new inductees. Two (2) typed pages of 12-point type is the maximum acceptable length of the narrative. Any additional material will be referred to only for verification of accuracy of the nomination. No submitted materials will be returned.

The narrative section must contain an explanation of the nominee's enduring contribution that make this person/place/event worthy of the honor. Please describe the impact the nominee has had on the community, county, region, nation and/or world. For Individuals, please include any honors earned by the nominee as well as a list of organizations in which the nominee has been involved. Also, please indicate their educational background as well as the length of time the individual has lived in Smith County. Inclusion of photos is preferred but optional. Do not send original photos. All submitted materials will become property of the City of Tyler and its Historical Preservation Board.

Please submit nominations to:

City of Tyler Historical Preservation Board

Attention: Half Mile of History

P.O. Box 2039

Tyler, Texas 75710

The Tyler Public Library has had an enduring impact on the City of Tyler as an institution that was chartered 110 years ago to meet the needs of Tyler and its citizens for information, education and recreation originally through access to books and periodicals but now through such additional resources as digital, audio visual and web based materials.

119 West

On April 1, 1899 the Library opened at 111 East Ferguson on the square in the offices of the Tyler Electric Company with the president of the company A.E. Judge allocating shelving space for the 235 books while he and his son Eugene W. Judge volunteered as librarians. A young lawyer, Charles V. Johnson, who officed on the second floor later became the first paid librarian working part time for five dollars a month.

Sponsored by the Tyler Federation of Women's Clubs, by April of 1901 it had grown to the size of a thousand volumes. Its board consisted of two members from each federated club: The Quid Nuncs, The First Literary Club, The Sherwood Club and the Bachelor Maids. In addition to the subscription fee of one dollar, monies were garnered by innumerable fund raisers including the rental of chairs at baseball games, burlesques, teas, readings and even a speech by the world famous orator William Jennings Bryan which raised \$222.

Shortly after the library marked it's second year of operation the Federation decided to change from a subscription library to a free library with the following resolution adopted May 17, 1901: "Resolved that we the City Federation of Women's Clubs of Tyler, are, for the greater encouragement of education, in favor of, and do hereby agree to change our public library from a pay to a free institution...". An immediate search was undertaken for suitable quarters for the growing library with the result that it was moved to City Hall and opened October 21, 1901 with a professionally trained librarian, Miss Hetty M.B. Sherwin, who had trained at the Cleveland Public Library and the Chautauqua Summer Library School.

Now a department of the City of Tyler, steps were taken to request funds from Andrew Carnegie who agreed to give Tyler \$15,000 to build its Carnegie Library if the City would pledge to support the operations with at least ten per cent of the building cost, or \$1,500 per year. Accordingly a lot was purchased at the northwest corner of College and Elm and the Chicago architectural firm of Patton and Miller was chosen to design the building. The Carnegie Library was thus opened for business October 3, 1904 with Miss Mary B. Sawyer, a graduate of Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts as librarian.

Each succeeding year saw a continued growth of the city with a corresponding growth in the library. More books were added to the collection and additional staff members were hired to serve the increased number of citizens using the Library. In 1934 a much needed expansion was made possible by a \$19,000 bond issue that qualified the City for a \$7,300 PWA grant. Doubling the original square building to a rectangle, prominent local architect Shirley Simons carefully saw to it that the addition matched the existing structure.

Further minor renovations to the Carnegie Library occurred in subsequent years. Eventually a new three story building was paid for with 2.75 million dollars in bond money. The 50,000 square foot building that now serves as the home of the Tyler Public Library is at the southwest corner of College and Elm and houses almost a quarter of a million items of all types.

119 West.

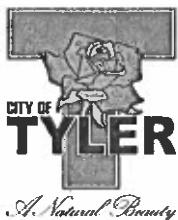
It is appropriate to celebrate public library service in Tyler with a Half Mile of History sidewalk plaque, preferably at ~~111~~ East Ferguson, the site of the original 1899 library for many reasons. The successive downtown library locations have served to expand the horizons and dreams of Tyler's citizens while connecting them to the cultural and historic heritage of mankind. In the past one hundred and ten years tens of thousands of Tylerites have used the services of the Tyler Public Library in all of its manifestations and over a hundred of Tyler's notable citizens have served on the library board throughout its history including statesmen, church leaders, men and women of business and community leaders from all walks of life.

(Much of the above text was taken from the booklet: *One Hundred Years of Library Service to Tyler, Texas* by Sarah Harper)

Not to be presumptuous, but IF a plaque should be approved...I could see it as being either an institution: "Tyler Public Library" OR a service: "Public Library Service in Tyler" and I could even see a departure in text to read something like TYLER PUBLIC LIBRARY housed at this address in 1899...just a thought for example:



Chris



CITY OF TYLER, TEXAS CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION



Agenda Number:

Date: May 13, 2009

Subject: Request that the City Council consider designating the Tyler Public Library as a Half Mile of History recipient.

Page: 1 of 2

Item Reference: Half Mile of History Preservation Program

The Half Mile of History is a cultural and historic landmark program paying tribute to people, places and events that have contributed to the City of Tyler and/or Smith County. The Half Mile of History is a permanent, outdoor walk-around loop that covers an approximate one-half mile stretch of sidewalk surrounding the square in the heart of downtown Tyler. People, places and events chosen for the Half Mile of History are honored with a commemorative plaque placed in the sidewalk.

One of the responsibilities of the Tyler Historical Preservation Board is to recommend people, places and events to be included in the Half Mile of History Preservation Program. On April 1, 2009, the Tyler Historical Preservation Board voted unanimously to recommend Tyler public Library for inclusion in the Half Mile of History Preservation Program. A brief narrative follows.

For the past 110 years, the Tyler Public Library has served the citizens of Tyler at four locations along College Avenue in downtown. The modest beginnings of the Tyler Public Library at the end of the nineteenth century and the hopes of those who started it have borne fruit in the present day services of a modern library.

Inspired by an 1898 annual meeting in Tyler of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, the club began an initiative for a public library for Tyler. On April 1, 1899, the Tyler Public Library got its start on the northwest corner of the square in space donated by A.E. Judge. Mr. Judge was the owner of the Tyler Electric Company was housed at that time in the back of the Burks and Alexander Shoe Store building at the corner of College and Ferguson.

Shortly after the library's second year of operation, it evolved into a free institution and moved up College Avenue a short distance to a room at City Hall where it became a City department. Immediately, an effort was begun to secure a \$15,000 grant from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation to build a library building. The new library was later opened in 1904, three blocks south of the northwest corner of College and Elm. In 1980, the current 50,000 square foot building was opened at the southwest corner of College and Elm with the help of \$ 2.75 million dollars in bond money.

Agenda Number:

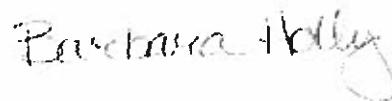
Page: **2 of 2**

The library today houses over 200,000 items and has almost 20,000 cardholders. Nearly 58,000 people visited the library from January to March of 2009, and over 60,000 items were circulated. In addition, over two dozen Internet access work stations are in constant use seven days a week.

The successive downtown library locations have served to expand the horizons and dreams of Tyler's citizens while connecting them to the cultural and historic heritage of mankind. In the past one hundred and ten years, tens of thousands of Tylerites and Smith County residents have used the services of the Tyler Public Library. Over a hundred of Tyler's notable citizens have served on the library board throughout history including statesman, church leaders, men and women of business and community leaders from all walks of life.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Tyler Historical Preservation Board, by a unanimously vote, request that the City Council approve the designation of the Tyler Public Library as a Half Mile of History recipient.

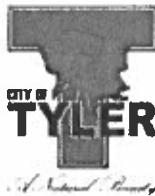
A handwritten signature in cursive ink that reads "Barbara Holly".

Drafted/Recommended By: **Barbara Holly**
Department Leader

Edited/Submitted By:
City Manager

Bernadette Spitz

From: Susan Guthrie
Sent: Wednesday, April 01, 2009 5:15 PM
Subject: FW: City of Tyler Library marks 110th anniversary
Attachments: library.tif



CITY OF TYLER COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
Susan Guthrie, APR
Communications Director
Office 903.533.7444
Cell 903.920.8070
sguthrie@tylertexas.com

Press Release

For Immediate Release
April 1, 2009

City of Tyler Library marks 110th anniversary

For the past 110 years the Tyler Public Library has served the citizens of Tyler at four locations along College Avenue downtown. The Library now has almost 20,000 current cardholders and over 200,000 items. Nearly 58,000 people visited the Tyler Public Library from January to March of 2009 and over 60,000 items were circulated. In addition, over two dozen Internet access work stations are in constant use seven days per week.

The modest beginnings of the Tyler Public Library at the close of the nineteenth century and the hopes of those who started it has borne fruit in the present day services of a modern library in the cyber age. On April 1, 110 years ago, the Tyler Public Library got its start on the northwest corner of the square in space donated by A.E. Judge, owner of the Tyler Electric Company who was housed at that time in the back of the Burks and Alexander Shoe Store building at the corner of College and Ferguson.

Inspired by an 1898 annual meeting in Tyler of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, which adopted public library support as a statewide plan, the Tyler Federation of Women's Clubs got together to initiate a public library for Tyler.

The collection began with 235 books and the first paid librarian was attorney Charles V. Johnson who had his offices upstairs. He received \$5 per month and after seven months was given a 100% raise. The collection was supported by a one dollar per card subscription fee and various fundraisers

including a lecture by famous orator William Jennings Bryan that raised \$222.

Shortly after the library's second year of operation it evolved into a free institution and moved up College Avenue a short distance to a room at City Hall where it became a City department.

Immediately, an effort was begun to secure a grant for a Carnegie Library building which was later opened in 1904, three blocks south at the northwest corner of College and Elm. In 1980, the current 50,000 sq. foot building was opened at the southwest corner of College and Elm.

(Photo attached: Mary Sawyer, the Librarian in 1902 at her station in the library room at the old City Hall.)

###

Susan Guthrie, APR

Communications Director

City of Tyler

(903) 533-7444 office

(903) 920-8070 cell

sguthrie@tylertexas.com

www.cityoftyler.org

A Natural Beauty

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