

ELISHA D. SMITH PUBLIC LIBRARY
MENASHA, WIS.
HISTORICAL FILE

THIS IS THE STORY

of 60 years in the life of the
Elisha D. Smith Public Library
of Menasha, Wisconsin.

By

Harold Josef Bachmann

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Harold Josef Bachmann". The signature is written in a cursive style with long, sweeping strokes.

President of the Board of Trustees

of the Library -- 1956

THESE WERE THE BEGINNINGS

The first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Menasha Free Public Library Association, the real beginning of a public library for Menasha, was held in the parlor of the National Hotel on Saturday evening April 18, in the year 1896.

Officers were elected and directors were chosen. It was decided to immediately lease suitable rooms and to purchase such furniture as might be necessary. The secretary was directed to prepare a list of books to be submitted to the directors at the next meeting. The secretary was Miss Lucy Pleasants, the founding spirit, and the guiding spirit of the library for many years. It was she who gathered together in November of 1895, at the National Hotel, a group of persons whom she thought might be interested in the establishment of a library for Menasha. That meeting, and numerous conferences which she had with local residents lead to the first meeting of the group which was to be the Board of Directors of the library, sixty years ago.

In May, a purchasing committee was authorized to select and purchase books to the amount of \$1000.

Also in May the directors inspected rooms in the Adam Tuchscherer building on the north west corner of Chute and Milwaukee Streets, above what is now the Menasha Furniture Company. The front room overlooked the square and the second room was adjoining. Mr. Tuchscherer agreed to assist the directors in their movement for a working library, to give the rooms rent free until September. For a year from that date the rent was set at \$75 a year. He also agreed to furnish heat and one electric light for each room. The directors said "We'll take it".

With such excellent facilities available it was decided to purchase the needed equipment at once and to have the library open Wednesday and Saturday afternoons from 2 o'clock until five and evenings from 7 to 9. Miss Pleasants agreed to care for the library during those open hours. In August of that year Miss Pleasants was formally appointed Librarian.

The original name of the association was given as the "Menasha Free Public Library Association", and the question soon arose as to the legality under the constitution which the group had formulated, of allowing persons to draw books from the library without the payment of a membership fee of \$1.00. It was decided to have the library thrown open to the public without demanding a fee, although those who wished to pay a fee might do so.

Rules of conduct for the library and its patrons were carefully drawn up in October of 1896, and they vary little from what are considered library "rules" today.

Included in the bills read at the November 28, 1896 meeting were items such as "Rent for three months, \$18.75" "Salary for librarian for the same time \$12.50", and Binding Polish books, \$2.75." Several bills had been paid personally by members of the board and they were reimbursed. It was noted that not all of the persons who had subscribed had paid their subscriptions. The list was reviewed and it was decided to make an effort to collect all of them.

The secretary asked permission to use the fines for current expenses such as postage and the cleaning of the rooms. Permission was granted on the condition that the librarian keep a monthly record of the outlay.

The directors had worked hard and conscientiously for the Library and were confident that things were going well. The library was very well patronized and the selection of books was considered very good. The directors were sure that the idea of a Library for Menasha was a good one, and that the residents were enthusiastic about it. A large number of Polish books

and a large number of German books were circulated and seemed very popular.

At the March 22, 1897 meeting a resolution was presented and passed, which was to change the status of the library as it existed at that time. It was noted in a resolution to the mayor and the common council that the Free Public Library Association had purchased and paid for \$1100 worth of books and \$100 worth of furniture, and that the operation was in a healthy condition. It was suggested that if the Free Public Library might be accepted and maintained by the City, other and further donations might be given to it from time to time thereafter. The Board of Directors agreed to tender its library and all of its furniture to the city of Menasha upon the condition that the city accept, establish and maintain the same as a Free Public Library according to law. It was further requested that a proposition be submitted to the people of Menasha at its next municipal election to raise a tax on the taxable property of Menasha not exceeding one mill on a dollar of the assessed valuation of the property of the city for the purpose of maintaining the library. The resolution was presented to the Common Council at its first meeting following that date. The question was put to a vote of the people at the municipal election held on April 6, 1897, at which a majority of the votes cast were in favor of the establishment of said library as a public library and of levying said tax for the support of the library. The tax was to become available in the winter of 1898.

The board of Directors of the Menasha Free Public Library assigned, gave, and transferred, to the Directors of the Menasha Free Public Library as representatives of the city of Menasha, all the property of the association, "to have and to hold for the use and benefit of the people of Menasha forever." Thus ended the July 12, 1897 meeting of the Association as a subscription group, and the beginning of a completely free library for the city.

THESE WERE THE EARLY DAYS

On the same evening on which the Association turned over to the city the belongings of their library unit, the first meeting of the directors of the continuing organization met. That was July 12, 1897. At this meeting, E. D. Smith was elected president, F. D. Lake took over as vice-president, and J. L. Fieweger became secretary.

It was noted that Miss Pleasants, the librarian, was to continue at the \$75 a year salary, to be paid monthly.

The directors, in a resolution to the mayor and common council formally announced the continuing organization as the "Free Public Library and Reading Rooms of Menasha". An inventory of 1458 volumes and pamphlets was announced.

The directors of the board, said by many to be the most forward looking citizens of the city, were thinking forward to increased circulation and use of the library. They could see the need for a building to house the library as an eventuality not too far in the future. Discussion regarding costs of a library building was held at several meetings, formal and informal conversations. Two directors were authorized to visit the new library in La Crosse for the purpose of inspecting it, and obtaining information regarding cost, plans and so forth. A Library Committee was appointed by board president E. D. Smith.

At the September 1, 1897 meeting, just six months after the citizens of Menasha had voted to take over the library and its maintenance by the levy of a Mill Tax, a most important letter was presented to the board, by board president E. D. Smith. Its vital contents were as follows:

September 1, 1897

To the Directors of Menasha Public
Library -- Gentlemen:

I wish to advise you, as I have the City Council, that I hereby agree to aid, by gift, the Library, to the amount of \$25,000. Of this amount I propose to invest in a building and the furnishing of the same, to be located on Lots 4 and 5 (except the North 15 ft of Lot 5) in Block 44, and the balance or say \$10,000 I propose to place as an endowment fund when the building is completed.

E. D. Smith

The proposition was accepted and placed on file. Mr. Smith received the thanks of the Board for the magnificent gift. It was immediately determined to build a Library Building at the cost not exceeding \$15,000. Advertisements for bids were reported at once.

On October 6, 1897, the date for receiving the bids, twelve architects submitted their plans, six of them being present in person to make the presentation. It was voted to accept the Van Ryn plan. The firm was a Milwaukee concern.

In December of 1897 the board voted to raise the salary of the Librarian, Miss Pleasants to \$100 a year. Miss Hattie Northrup had given some help to the librarian and she was paid \$2.50 for working on the library books.

One of the most exciting meetings of the board to date was reported when the board of directors, meeting at the Bank of Menasha, accepted the proposal of the C. F. Ehlers company of Milwaukee. The proposal was to complete work except Heating and Plumbing and including extra stone wall on the North side

of the proposed building, for the sum of \$14,270.00. It was voted to set the building 20' back from Mill Street, and 12' back from Water St. Lake, Noble, and Trilling were appointed to serve as a Building Committee, at the February 18, 1898 meeting.

Early in March of 1898 it was decided that a Citizens Committee be appointed for the purpose of making arrangements for celebrating the laying of the Corner Stone of the new Library Building.

The ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone took place at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of Friday March 18, 1898. The placing of the stone and the contents in position was done by Mowry, Margaret, Carlton, and Julia Smith, grandchildren of Elisha D. Smith. It is interesting to note that a German song was sung by children of St. Mary's School, and that a Polish song was sung by children of St. John's School.

In August of 1898 a committee for the dedication of the new building was appointed. It included Mr. Lake, Mr. F. V. Lawson, and Mr. Elisha D. Smith. The library was opened October 21 of that year with appropriate exercises. The afternoon session was held in the auditorium of the library and the evening session was held in the Germania Opera House, with Mr. F. D. Lake as chairman. It was noted that many people from "abroad" were present for the ceremony. "abroad" including such places as Appleton, Ripon, Menominee, and Madison. In Mr. Smith's short address he said that he had felt that Menasha had a need for just such a library and a building suitable to its purposes. Our need was for a building good enough and large enough to meet the growing needs and wants of our city for many years and one that would be worthy of its use and worthy of our city. We wanted, he said, to feel that our library would be a constant and increasing benefit to our community.

The dedication of the library building was of great import at that time, a witness by the fact that a number of prominent persons were included in the

roster of speakers. Addresses were made by President Samuel Plants, of Lawrence University (Now Lawrence College) of Appleton, Dr. E. H. Merrell, of Ripon College, F. A. Hutchins, secretary of the state library commission of Madison, President Charles K. Adams of the University of Wisconsin, Honorable J. H. Stout, of Menomonie, Reverend S. T. Kidder of Ripon, and Reverend H. A. Miner of Madison.

Mr. Smith lived long enough to see the success of the library. It was a great pleasure to him, he was known to remark, to see the enthusiasm with which books were sought for and read by the children and youth of foreign families, Germans, Poles and others. He took great joy in seeing the reading room filled with children from such families and to hear them speak with pride of "our library." In June of 1899 the entire Library family was saddened by the death of Mr. Smith. The Board of Trustees of the library, in special meeting dedicated them selves to his unfinished task. They said "We pledge ourselves to administer according to his lofty purposes, this library, projected by his philanthropic zeal, founded and endowed by his bounty, and fostered by his loving solicitude."

It was noted that increased use of the library required more work by the employees and the salary of the librarian was raised to \$300 a year. An assistant librarian was engaged at \$200 a year. It was Miss Hattie Northrup. A janitor was hired at a salary of \$150 a year.

The officers were authorized to invest the endowment fund of \$10,000 in satisfactory bonds and securities, at the October 1 meeting.

The officers and directors voted that in addition to other opening hours, the library rooms would be open Sundays from 2 PM to 9 PM.

It was found that suitable investment of the endowment fund was being a little difficult. Mr. E. D. Smith proposed to pay interest at the rate of 5 per cent annum from October 24, 1898 on the \$10,000 fund to be provided by him until such a time as proper and safe investment can be made of the fund.

In November of 1898 the first movement to add juvenile books to the library was made. The board allowed an order for \$25 for their purchase.

Salary increases were ever present. The janitor was raised from \$150 to \$200 a year for his services.

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New officers were elected, being:

(1899)

President	E. D. Lake
Vice-president	P. V. Lawson
Secretary	Miss Lucy Pleasants

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A card catalog system was purchased in 1899.

In November of 1899 is the first mention of the association of the Economics Club with the Library. At that time the board gave permission to the club to tint the walls on the Auditorium and place in the room on the walls, shelving and fixtures suitable for placing statuary and ornaments.

A Portrait of Mr. Smith was accepted and paid for by the Board. The work was done by A. Y. VanWagner.

Thus ended the "Gay 90s" period for our Menasha Library.

THE LIBRARY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

The Library was in healthy condition and had a good start at the turn of the century. The directors had kept a watchful eye on expenditures and had given much of their personal time and effort towards the establishment of a longtime project for the city of Menasha. The library at that time was referred to as the "Menasha Public Library" but also, still occasionally called the original name of the "Menasha Free Public Library and Reading Rooms".

In order to help the board with investment of funds Mr. Smith, prior to his death had placed to the credit of the trustees of the library, with the Menasha Woodenware, the sum of \$10,000 on which the company agreed to pay interest at 5 percent, interest to be paid quarterly.

The matter of electric lights for the building was taken up, but decision on installation was delayed.

The assistant librarian asked an increase in salary to \$250 a year.

Board meetings were not held regularly for a number of months, so apparently all was well with the library and the board.

1901

An interesting note received in March bearing the signature of J. M. Pleasants, mayor of Menasha, indicated that for reasons personal to himself he did not wish to accept the \$100 which was paid to him as compensation for being mayor. He wished to turn it over to the use of the library. He did so.

Reinvestments of parts of the Endowment fund were made. A \$5000 total was loaned to the Masonic Fraternity of Menasha and \$2600 was placed to a local resident, both at 5 percent.

The Book Committee was given authority to purchase the use of one of the German Traveling libraries.

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1901 (Continued)

A stove was purchased and put in the vacant room in the basement for the St. Nicholas League.

Mr. H. S. Smith met with the library board. He stated that while on his trip around the world he had made a large collection of coins and desired to present it to the library, providing the board would make suitable provision for their exhibit. The gift was accepted.

1902

Mr. H. S. Smith presented additional coins for the library's collection in the month of May. He had procured them from the original collection of Mr. S. S. Roby.

It was voted to calcimine both stories of the library.

The Board appointed a Library Visiting Committee for the Third Ward. Mrs. A. N. Strange and Mrs. John Rupp were to serve on that committee. Mrs. J. F. Boynton was appointed for the Second Ward to invite people to visit and use the library.

It was voted to pay the janitor \$25 a month for Dec., Jan., Feb., and March, but only \$20 for the remaining months. The assistant Librarian was given a raise to \$30 a month.

1903

An uneventful year in the annals of the Library. An annual report was sent to the Common Council covering the work of the library.

1904

A most unusual innovation was noted. Previous to this time, any attempts to use any parts of the Library building for events for which money was charged were not listened to. However, it was decided that the Ladies of the Federated Clubs be empowered to use the auditorium for lectures, concerts, or entertainments, and to charge an admission fee. Such fee was to be used toward the purchase of a piano for the auditorium. The piano was to be the property of the Library Board.

The telephone was becoming an instrument of progress. In answer to a letter, not quoted nor in the files, is a communication from the Wisconsin Telephone Company of Milwaukee saying:

Although free telephones are exceptions with us, for the reason as we treat one, so we must treat all, it is a difficult proposition to deny you, in the face of the enterprise of your President, whose generosity equips this splendid institution out of his own pocket. We will not therefore do the thing by halves, but will instruct our Manager today to install as soon as possible, a metallic circuit line with a long distance transmitter which accept the use of for an indefinite time with the compliments of our company.

Jno. D. McLeod, General Manager

1905

The board accepted from Henry S. Smith a complete set of the Gentleman's Magazine published in London. The gift was in 228 volumes from 1731 to 1868 and was presented as a memorial to his father E. D. Smith.

Miss Pleasants the librarian was granted a leave of absence until November 1905 in order to take a trip to Europe. Her salary was to go on, but she was to arrange for and pay a substitute.

1905 (Continued)

The Board moved that "whenever the City of Menasha should desire it, for any public improvement and can give security, the board will loan all of the endowment fund on hand with interest to be at the rate of 5 percent for such a term as may be agreed upon, provided such a loan would be effected within one year from date."

As was the usual custom the president and the secretary had paid bills for which they had to be reimbursed since the last meeting.

In December it was decided to shut off the circulation of books on account of the prevalence of small pox until such a time as the board of health decides that it is safe to allow them to circulate again.

1906

The Board bought a city bond for street improvements, \$5000 payable March 1, 1926.

The City of Menasha was loaned \$4200 for a year to pay the American Deisel Engine Company, out of uninvested funds.

One stereoptican lanter was purchased at a cost of \$100.

1907

The Board repaid \$800 due on the \$1000 it had borrowed from the Endowment fund for the heating system, thus restoring the portion of the fund uninvested to the sum of \$5000.

A new roof was put on at the cost of \$1000.

The matter of allowing the Working Mens Temperence Club the use of the room in the basement was informally discussed in all of its phases. On motion the matter was laid on the table until the next meeting. (And never brought up subsequently)

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1908

A Library Institute was held in the library on March 7. Mr. J. M. Pleasants was appointed to deliver the address of welcome to the visitors.

1909

It was voted to install a telephone. Time marches on!

The Librarian was allowed to hire an assistant for evenings for the ensuing year at a cost not to exceed \$30. The expense was to be paid out of the fine money.

1910

The Phone bill for 7 months was paid in a total of \$14.00.

The Librarian was authorized to subscribe to the German Traveling Library for a year.

It was voted to procure two urns for the front of the Library.

The Economics Club proposed to arrange for a children's corner in the library building, at their own expense. The understanding was that the plans be submitted to the president of the Library board for approval.

From September forward, more regular meetings were held than had been the case since the founding of the library.

The matter of purchasing a typewriter for the Library was discussed, and laid on the table until the next meeting.

1911

The Board authorized the procurement of a typewriter, at a cost not to exceed \$50.00.

Board member Joseph Long passed away.

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1911 (Continued)

The matter of new street lights the city planned to place in front of the Library was discussed.

It was voted to procure a new drinking fountain the same as in use at the Menasha Club Rooms, and purchase sanitary drinking cups for same.

1912

A Committee was appointed to act as an adjusting board to settle the recent fire loss on the building and contents. The fire was caused by lightning.

The report of the Librarian read at the November meeting showed the Library to be in a very flourishing condition.

1913

Routine business was transacted and no outstanding events transpired.

1914

The President authorized the purchase of a Bird Chart, not to exceed \$20.

The janitor's salary was fixed at \$40 a month.

The Librarian reported that 30,080 books had been issued. The Board had spent \$709 for books during the year. On July 1 of 1913 there were in the Library 9,453 books, and on July 1, 1914, 9,982, a gain of 529.

M. M. Schoetz, who had been mayor of Menasha at the time when the City accepted the library, presented a picture of himself to the Library Board.

1915 - 1920

During this period much "housekeeping" was done in getting the building into good shape, inside and out. It was a period of uncertainty, the War Years of World War I, and the attendant feeling of jitters was obvious. Meetings were not held regularly.

The Library Board was saddened by the death of a longtime and most valuable board member, Joseph Fieweger.

Mr. Henry S. Smith donated a large and beautiful Japanese vase, which is still on display in the main room of the library.

The Red Cross used the Auditorium many times.

Of major importance to the Library was the resignation of Miss Lucy Pleasants, who retired upon the advice of her physician after 23 years of service to the Menasha Library. Hattie Northrup was appointed head librarian, and Daisy Trilling was appointed assistant librarian.

Salaries were again a consideration and the head librarian's salary was raised to \$110 a month. Other employees were raised accordingly.

1921 - 1926

Again the board was saddened by the death of two other valuable board members, Mrs. Wheeler and Miss Rounds.

The Henry J. Lenz Post of the American Legion was granted permission in 1922 to place a case for the preservation of flags in the library building.

Certification of Librarians became an item of import because of State Legislation. In 1923, therefore, the Board of Directors "acknowledging the abilities and services rendered by Miss Hattie Northrup, Miss Daisy Trilling, and Miss Charlotte Friedland, made application to the Certification Board that certificates as librarians be granted to all three."

1921 - 1926 (Continued)

A great loss to all was the passing of Miss Lucy Pleasants on October 29, 1925. Miss Pleasants had given her time and efforts for many years with the determination that Menasha should have a library that would be an honor to the city.

1926 - 1930

Okaying of bills continued to be a popular pastime with Board members but events of major significance were few the early years of this period.

In 1929 one of the best loved men on the Board, who had served for many years passed away. He was Henry Trilling. In June of 1930 J. M. Pleasants, also a valued board member for many years passed away.

Great plans came into effect in 1930 with the announcement that the Board planned to build a Children's Room as an addition to the Library. It was announced that the Library Fund had a balance considerably in excess of the estimated cost of \$20,000. The City Council was petitioned to grant permission to build and construct as soon as possible the children's wing. The Mayor and the Council authorized the board to expend the money in the fund as in their judgment it be necessary for the construction. Mr. Remmel was mayor at the time.

1931 - 1935

It was decided to call the children's room the "Lucy Lee Pleasants Memorial Room". A portrait to be given by members of her family was to be hung in a conspicuous place in the room.

The board was affluent. It decided to loan the city of Menasha \$12,500 of the funds on hand at 4 percent for one year.

It was found difficult to display many items which had been given to the Library from time to time and the Board moved to present to the Doty Loggery

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1931 - 1935 (Continued)

our collection of mementoes and relics of the early history of Menasha and region round about, which were stored in the basement. The items were noted to be returned at such time in the future as they should be wanted by any future board.

In 1931 the Board decided to join the American Library Association.

For the first time in many years it was decided to close the Library on Sunday.

In 1933 Hattie Northrup resigned and Daisy Trilling was appointed acting Librarian.

Juvenile delinquency reared it's ugly head. It was arranged by the Board to have a guard with police powers on duty each evening from 7 to 9. Payments were made from the regular budget funds.

The J. P. Shepard post offered the Library the Post flag which was given by the citizens of Menasha to the Post in 1883. The offer was made subject to withdrawal by the Post Secretary at any time. It was accepted by the Board.

The library was closed for a week for interior decorating in 1935.

Death brought sorrow to all with the passing of Board members Harry de Wolf and William Miner.

1936 - 1940

The High School fire changed the course of many events at the Library. It was moved that books charged to individuals and lost in the fire be regarded as lost through no fault of the individuals. The rooms of the Library not in constant use were turned into school rooms. The Economics Club, for the first

1936 - 1940 (Continued)

time in many years was asked to find other quarters for their meetings because of the constant use of the rooms for school purposes.

In 1937 the Library was visited by two members of the State Library Board who discussed local projects and reported suggestions for the improvement of the local library.

The Board moved that the Promissory Note of the City of Menasha, dated July 10, 1931 for the sum of \$12,500, which note was held by the Board, be cancelled and that the board accept the check of the City of Menasha in the sum of \$5,318.78 in full payment of said note.

The Librarian and the Associate librarian were granted an annual vacation of three weeks with pay and all others on the staff were voted two weeks with pay.

1940 - 1945

These were the days of the Second World War and they were filled with a feeling of the usual war frustrations.

The Library Board more than did its share in the purchase of War Bonds. Starting in 1940 with a token purchase of a \$500 bond, the continuing purchase of bonds led, by December 1 of 1943 to a total value of \$11,845.

A Flag Pole was erected on the Library property with the flag being flown every day.

Red Cross workers worked in the Auditorium constantly. Many Red Cross and allied meetings were held in the building.

The War Labor Board gave permission to grant a High Cost of Living Bonus to staff members and a total of \$7.50 a month was given to each.

During one of these years a balance of \$513 on hand at the end of the year was refunded to the city, and during another year an unexpended balance of \$334 was returned to the general city fund.

1940 - 1945 (Continued)

In 1942 the Board of Trustees started a plan of meeting monthly at the Menasha Hotel at noon for meetings.

Municipal retirement plans were entered into in March of 1944.

New lights were installed in the Main Room. New fluorescent lights were added in the Children's Room.

A guest at a 1944 meeting was Mr. Coughlin of Green Bay who explained with drawings and percentages how the Menasha Library could be enlarged and improved over a period of the next 26 years. His plans received much and enthusiastic endorsement but because of the tenor of the times they had to be relegated to a later date for working consideration.

1945 - 1950

During this period there were constant "Cost of Living Bonus" additions to the salary scales of the employees.

Luncheon meetings (Dutch treat plan, as always) of the board were continued.

Cleaning and painting and "housekeeping" problems were cared for carefully. Continuing library boards were constantly aware of the necessity for good and forward looking upkeep of the premises, a most healthy attitude, it has proved to be.

The idea of a new Children's Room was broached and the plans and preparations considered with great length and purpose. It was voted to convert the former Children's Room into an Adult Reference Room. The unsettled period of the war days prevented formal changeover and those plans too were relegated to a later date for final consideration.

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1945 - 1950 (Continued)

In 1946 Miss Mary de Jonge attended her first meeting with the Board.

With the approval of Attorney Fink, a member of the Board, it was established that the name of the library would henceforward be the Elisha D. Smith Public Library.

In 1947 the library joined the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Criticism of the library services reached the board from the Mayor and were discussed. The board agreed informally to refer certain of these matters to the librarian for full consideration.

In 1948 Noon luncheon meetings of the board were discontinued.

The Children's reading Program for these years had been most encouraging. At the conclusion of the program in 1949 the staff provided entertainment and refreshments for the children who participated.

The first meeting of the Great Books Group had an excellent and encouraging attendance.

The Librarian and board decided to allot a corner to the Teen-age group, a most forward-looking and highly successful move.

1950 - 1955

Repair and upkeep increased. It was noted that the lack of a fire-escape presented a serious hazard, and one was installed in 1952.

The Board purchased a new Radio-Phonograph combination. The Marathon Corporation donated \$100 towards the cost and the Economics Club donated \$25, to help defray the expense.

In 1950 the exterior of the library was painted.

A Movie Projector was added to the equipment of the library in 1952.

During the celebration of the Centennial of the city of Menasha the Library cooperated wholeheartedly. The Auditorium was used as a display center of

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1950 - 1955 (Continued)

centennial historical items, and staff members in period costumes spent a day of the celebration in the "good old days" atmosphere.

During these years especially the matter of the Mill Tax came up at frequent intervals, with appeals to the Mayor and the Council for final decision and action on the annual granting of the mill tax as a fund for maintenance for the Library. The original voting of a Mill Tax, in April of 1897 granted the tax but later councils did not continue the annual appropriation in accordance with the original stipulation. The Mayor and the Council did however allow that in the future the Mill Tax will be considered, as originally intended, to cover the Library budget of operation, and the Library will be expected to maintain and operate the library within that total.

A Polio epidemic during the summer of 1955 effected library operations.

The Library board was not completed in membership at any time during this period, which made for difficult functioning in some respects. During 1955 Mayor Jensen and City Clerk Ira Clough reappraised the appointments, and new appointments were made so that the year 1955 ended with but one vacancy existing on the board.

A great deal of needed building repair, inventory making, insurance adjusting and Public Relations contacts were accomplished in 1955.

1956 -

With the appointment of a seventh member to the board, the Board of Trustees was completed in membership for the first time in many years.

The School plans for bringing the library closer to the children

1956 - (Continued)

was continued successfully and well. Teen-age programs were added.

TV appearances by members of the staff were made over the local Television station to aid the program.

The Head Librarian presented her resignation at the February 15 meeting of the Board.

An Open House, celebrating the 60 years since the meeting of the first Board of Directors of a library for Menasha was celebrated Sunday afternoon April 15.

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THESE WERE THE OFFICERS

Menasha Free Public Library Association, April 18, 1896:

Officers of the group were elected as follows:

President	F. D. Lake
Vice-president	Mrs. R. M. Scott
Secretary	Miss Lucy Pleasants
Treasurer	A. B. Dunlap

Officers elected from the first meeting of the group after the City of Menasha took over the maintenance, and accepted the properties of the Association were:

President:

E. D. Smith	1897 - 1899
F. D. Lake	1899 - 1929
J. M. Pleasants	1929 - 1930
H. Gear	1930 - 1936
C. A. Peerenboom	1936 - 1948
O. K. Ferry	1948 - 1948
P. Jung (Acting)	1948 - 1948
W. Fieweger	1949 - 1950
P. Jung	1951 - 1952
W. Fieweger	1952 - 1954
H. Kind	1954 - 1956
H. J. Bachmann	1956 -

Vice-President:

F. D. Lake	1897 - 1899
P. V. Lawson	1899 - 1905
H. E. Trilling	1905 - 1929

Vice-President (Continued)

H. Gear	1929 - 1930
H. De Wolf	1930 - 1935
Mrs. D. T. H. MacKinnon	1935 - 1942
P. Jung	1942 - 1951
W. Fieweger	1951 - 1952
Mrs. L. F. Corry	1952 - 1954
M. Gegan (Acting)	1954 - 1956
Mrs. V. Fritz	1956 -

Secretary:

Miss Lucy Pleasants	1897 - 1901
W. H. Miner	1901 - 1935
C. A. Peerenboom	1935 - 1936
R. Fink	1936 - 1942
Mrs. G. W. Loomans	1942 - 1949
C. A. Peerenboom	1949 - 1951
Mrs. F. Heidtke	1951 - 1953
Mrs. C. Nebel	1953 - 1955
Mrs. R. G. Minarik	1956 -

THESE WERE THE DIRECTORS

Mrs. J. R. Bloom

H. Fitzgibbon

A. B. Dunlap

Miss L. Pleasants

P. V. Lawson

F. D. Lake

Mrs. R. M. Scott

E. D. Smith

J. L. Fieweger

H. E. Trilling

J. Wons

S. Bullard

G. Banta

L. J. Noble

W. H. Miner

J. M. Pleasants

J. Callahan

G. W. Dodge

Mrs. W. Hewitt

Mrs. P. V. Lawson

Miss M. P. Whipple

J. Long

Miss Harriet Rounds

Dr. J. C. Capron

Mrs. T. D. Wheeler

Mrs. George Walters

O. H. Plenske

S. H. Clinedinst

H. De Wolf

Mrs. D. T. H. MacKinnon

Mrs. R. N. Hine

H. Gear

J. Kitowski

Mrs. E. McGillan

C. A. Peerenboom

F. Younger

Mrs. George Pierce

E. E. Ruby

A. Weber

R. Fink

P. Jung

O. K. Ferry

Mrs. G. Loomans

M. Gegan

W. H. Fieweger

T. G. Gerlach

Mrs. F. C. Heidtke

Mrs. L. F. Corry

H. Kind

Mrs. D. McKechnie

Mrs. C. Nebel

Dr. G. Loomans

Mrs. R. G. Minarik

H. J. Bachmann

Mrs. V. Fritz

Mrs. H. Heller

THESE WERE THE STAFF MEMBERS

Miss Lucy Pleasants
Miss Hattie Northrup
Miss Daisy Trilling
Miss Charlotte Friedland
Mrs. C. Berglund
Miss E. Clinton
Miss Joan McGillan
Miss Ruth Commentz
Mrs. Auer
Miss Elaine Odermann
Mrs. F. Langlais
Miss Jane Chandler
Miss G. Friday
Miss AnnaJane Grode
Miss Betty Younger
Mrs. Daisy Bruehl
Mrs. Evelyn Nelson
Miss Marjorie Koop
Miss Norma Churchill
Miss Cecelia Speel
Miss Joan Quella
Mrs. LaVerne Knoll
Miss Donna Beaude
Mrs. Dorothy K. Weber
Miss Lois Sturm
Miss Joyce McAllister
Mrs. Thelma du Chaine