



History of Highland Park Library

In 1924 The Highland Park Society of Arts was organized and started collecting books for a library.

The Society of Arts held a Book Week in 1926; enough books were given and purchased to open a library as part of the art gallery. This Society was instrumental in establishing the permanent library.

A petition was presented to the Highland Park Town Council in 1929 requesting the issuance of Library Bonds. A committee was appointed to investigate and report "as to the kind of building needed, the cost of such building and necessary equipment, and as to where such building should be located. That Committee was comprised of Mrs. Edward T. Moore, Tom G. Leachman, Mrs. Walter A. Crow, and Chairman C. M. Smithdeal. On June 11 the Committee reported that the Town needed a public library building "which can be used also as an Art Gallery;" that the cost of such a building would be between \$55,000 and \$60,000; and that the Committee further recommended and requested that the Council "at an early date, order an election for the issuance of the bonds of the Town of Highland Park in the sum of Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$75,00), not less than \$55,000 of which shall be used for the erection of the aforesaid building, the other \$20,000 of which shall be used to install necessary and proper equipment."

On July 3 the bond election was approved by the Council for September 14, 1929 in the amount of \$75,000.

Highland Park residents approved the bond referendum to build an addition to the Town Hall to include an art gallery, Council chamber and library by a vote of 60-55. Architects Otto Lang and Frank Witchell, who had designed the Town Hall, designed the Library, and Rogers and O'Rourke were awarded the contract to build it for \$49,981.

On November 19 bids were awarded for the construction of the addition in the same Spanish Colonial Revival style as the Town Hall.

In 1930 a contract was awarded to Parker Bros. Inc. on February 4 for the installation of book stacks in the Library for a bid amount of \$2,250. On July 30 Louise Childress was hired as the first Librarian at a salary of \$125/month to begin August 1, 1930. \$4,000 was appropriated from the Library Building Fund to purchase books. The actual opening was November 3, and the formal opening, with 2,000 books, was December 5.

Miss Childress retired in 1967 and Maxine Anderson was appointed her successor.

In 1980 Mrs. Anderson retired and Bonnie N. Case was appointed Library Director.

The Friends of the Highland Park Library was established in 1981, and with their financial help the Library was automated in 1990.

A generous gift from the Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Owen Brown Fund of the Communities Foundation established the videocassette collection in 1983. That support continues to purchase movies for the library, in both videocassette and DVD formats.