

**BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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Brighton, MI 48116-0481

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**The Library in Brighton (Part 2)**

By mid 20th century the Brighton area, which includes surrounding townships, continues to experience a constant promotion of education as vital to area residents; proven by the continued growth of the local library facility. From fewer than 100 memberships and fewer than 300 books in 1928, the library board’s biggest problem was the continued need for more space.

By 1950, that little library upstairs in the city hall outgrew its location again. When the jail was moved and the fire department relocated from the city hall to a new facility, the library moved downstairs. To provide a larger, more pleasant library, the fire hall doors were removed and windows and a door installed. More shelves were provided, ceiling lights installed and the library opened to a more welcoming space. (For 22 years patrons had to climb the stairs to the second floor.) It should be noted, city offices still retained their presence in the building.

Previously, the city had purchased the old Detroit Edison substation, across the mill pond, and in 1957, the Kiwanis Club renovated the structure and prepared for a move by the ever flourishing library with its 4261 volumes. Library services soon included: the use of films, projector—receiving 12 new films a month. The 8mm and 16mm films included sound, with many in color. Library hours are on a full-time basis from the previous 18 hours per week.

In less than 10 years, area residents’ use of the library forced serious research as the facility again proved inadequate for the assistance requested by library patrons. The library and its services were in high demand.

By 1965, the Old Town Hall was again undergoing remodeling. The March 27, 1966 Open House function found the 39 year old library back in its first, original home, the former Town Hall. The old building had been renovated and modernized upstairs and down; the Library again sharing space with the city government.

Head librarian, Carol Hills, reported there were now 6298 books, and subscriptions to 53 magazines and a total of 1483 registered patrons. The Library was open 40 hours a week plus four week nights.

By 1968, more desired services were available. The Library subscribed to the Michigan State University Film Circuit. Each month, 12-16 subscriptions to 16mm films were available for free use by “...area clubs, organizations, professional groups, etc.” The Library’s audio collections began with the purchase of 50 records. After the retirement of head Librarian, Carol Hills (21 years) in 1970, Dorothy Demorest was appointed. With new leadership, continued growth in materials, services and patronage occurred.

In 1976, the city council was acutely aware that the Old Town Hall would soon prove to be inadequate. A library feasibility study examined possible other locations for the library.

To be continued...

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: Newspaper clippings, Society Archives and material compiled by Mark Mullinax, Genealogy and Local History Librarian, Brighton District Library.)