

**Welcome to the Historic  
Charles H. Moore Public Library**  
Lexington, Michigan 48450

The Charles H. Moore Library of Lexington was opened in the present building January 17, 1903. Mrs. Mary Moore Sleeper, married to Albert E. Sleeper, governor of Michigan (1917-1920), along with her sisters Ella and Emma, deeded the property and building to the Village for library purposes only. They named it in honor of their father. The building had been constructed in 1859 by John Devine for his law office and was remodeled for a library during the early part of the 1900's. The library was launched with 1300 books from Oscoda, donated by J. L. Wood, an uncle of the Moore sisters.

The first recorded meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on November 3, 1902. Miss Anna Henry was hired to catalogue books and act as librarian. She resigned in 1911. Miss Florence Walther replaced her and was paid a salary of \$6 a month and \$4 twice a year for cleaning. She remained librarian for 57 years, until she retired in 1968. Her salary in the late 1960's was approximately \$100.00 a month, with a little extra for cleaning. The Board of Trustees met once or twice a year or not at all until 1930. From then on meetings were more frequent and regular.

Many improvements have been made over the years. The heating system changed from a coal stove to a coal burning furnace, eventually to oil and now, gas. The current back room of the library was the "back shed." In 1930, an electric light was installed there and by 1939, water was piped into the room upstairs. The 1940's saw the placement of a stool and lavatory in the small room under the stairs and a new roof put on the building. Numerous collection improvements and building renovations were made in the 1950's and 1960's. Most notably, the 50-year old set of encyclopedias was replaced and patron-accessible bookcases were added in both the front and middle rooms. The "back shed" was made into permanent room in the 1970's. A book cataloguing project was undertaken. Carpeting and drapes were installed downstairs, heat was added upstairs and the lighting was brought up to code. In 1982 the second-floor was renovated for use as a magazine and reference area. The library acquired an Apple IIe computer during the 1980's as well.

The Board of Trustees and Village Council realized in 1989 they needed to take action on the critical need for additional space for young people's books. Children's books were crowded behind the circulation desk, now the staff office area, and young adult books were on the back of the reference shelves. First, the Board consulted the Historic Preservation Office for the options available on this Historic Site. Next, the Village secured a State Equity Grant for over \$38,000. Then, the architect, Mr. William Vogan designed the addition to blend with and enhance the original building. Finally, the construction by Vander Graff's was completed. Besides the 21' by 25' room for young people, the addition consists of a barrier-free entrance and rest rooms, and a storage area for library supplies. Awarded a LSCA Title I grant for \$6,000 to purchase youth materials in 1991, 4 reference sets and 500 books were added within the year. The main room in the new addition is named the "Philomena M. Falls Youth Room" and was

dedicated on June 23, 1991 with State Senator Dan DeGrow and Representative Keith Muxlow among those in attendance.

The 1990's continues to see updating and renovations done to the building and the collection. A new roof, replastering and painting, landscaping and replacing the front porch covering all have been worked on recently. Air conditioning was installed. An extensive number of classical music records, as well as the stereo system on which to play them, and a slide program, with many slides that were donated by Famsworths Gorton, which follows the Lexington Walking Tour are two of the newest parts of the library collection. Two IBM compatible computer systems and software for the staff and the public to use were added early in 1995, in preparation for library automation.

Professor Wayne Weigand from the University of Wisconsin spent several days in 1994 at the library doing research. He is including our library as one of five in his book "Old Libraries in Mid-America." Also find references to our library in "Traveling Through Time" (p. 325), and "Michigan Off the Beaten Path" (p.25). Other local references include "A History of Sanilac County, 1834 - 1984."

Librarians at the Moore Library, after Miss Walter's tenure, included Mrs. Gladys Kessel, 1968 to 1977, followed by Mrs. Rose Mary Macklem, 1977-1978, Mrs. Alice Ketchum, 1978-79, and Mr. Les Brandl, 1979-1981. Mrs. Patricia Rzepka, was head librarian from 1981 until her retirement in 1994 when Mrs. Judith L. Chelekis, from Jackson, MI, was hired for the position and resigned February 28, 1997. Mrs. Marlene Bombard was hired March 10, 1997 and retired July ,2000. Mrs. Marjorie Fruge' was hired July 5,2000.

The Moore Public Library was a member of the Blue Water Library Federation, with head quarters in Port Huron, MI. Through this membership, up to 150 books was selected each month for use at the member library for a period of three months. The Federation also provided many non-print materials in rotating packs that remain at the library for two to four months, depending on the type of material. They also provided such equipment as fax machines, TV/VCRs, computers, printers, microfiche viewers, CD-ROM's and materials for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Interlibrary Loan (ILL) was processed through the St. Clair County Library System, site of the BWLF Headquarters. This material exchange program allowed patrons access to books from throughout the United States.

The BWLF was dissolved September 30, 1996. The holdings were divided between the 10 branch and 8 member libraries. We received 19,000+ in cash as well as equipment we chose.

The Library of Michigan notified us that the Legislative Council approved the Moore Library's request to transfer membership to the White Pine Cooperative, headquarters in Saginaw, retroactive to September 1, 1996.

The Winnebago automation system was purchased and by the first of August 1996, the computer network was put together. Volunteers helped the staff with the inventory and bar coding. On January 17, 1997, the library's 94<sup>th</sup> birthday we went on line.

The Library Michigan FV, 1996 LSCA Statewide Internet Access Grant was secured by the Director. Four more computers were purchased.

In the fall of 2000, the library received a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to purchase two new Gateway computers and a laser printer.

Winnebago Spectrum Software and one computer system Pentium were purchased in 2000. It was necessary to buy a computer office desk, an ADA compliant desk, 3new task chairs, and an additional computer desk for public use.

After the 2000 Census was tallied the Library Of Michigan promoted the library from a Class I Library to a Class II Library, due to the population increase from 3850 to 4883. The class size helps determine the amount of State Aid it will receive from the state of Michigan.

The present collection as of October, 2001 totals 16,386 materials. In the 2000 fiscal year (March 1, 2000 to February 29, 2001), the total circulation was 12,904 materials. The Moore Public Library also holds children's storytimes throughout the fall, winter and spring and an extensive Summer Reading Program. Visiting school classes from nearby Meyer Elementary School, youth organizations and adult service groups tour the library. Summer sees the increase in use by summer residents. The library is also visited by many tourists, who are interested in local genealogy and history.

Fall 2001

Philomena M. Falls