

NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS



OF THE HUNTINGTON BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

FOR REFERENCE
NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM LIBRARY

VOLUME II

ISSUE 3

SPRING 1988

THE LIBRARY IN EARLY HUNTINGTON BEACH

History researcher Barbara Milkovich discovered an article on microfilm from the 1919 *Huntington Beach News* written for the Library's tenth anniversary. We share it here in abridged form.

"*Something About The Public Library*" written by Miss Bertha D. Proctor, the second librarian to run the HBL, begins with initial efforts by the Women's Club of Huntington Beach to raise interest in procuring a public library.

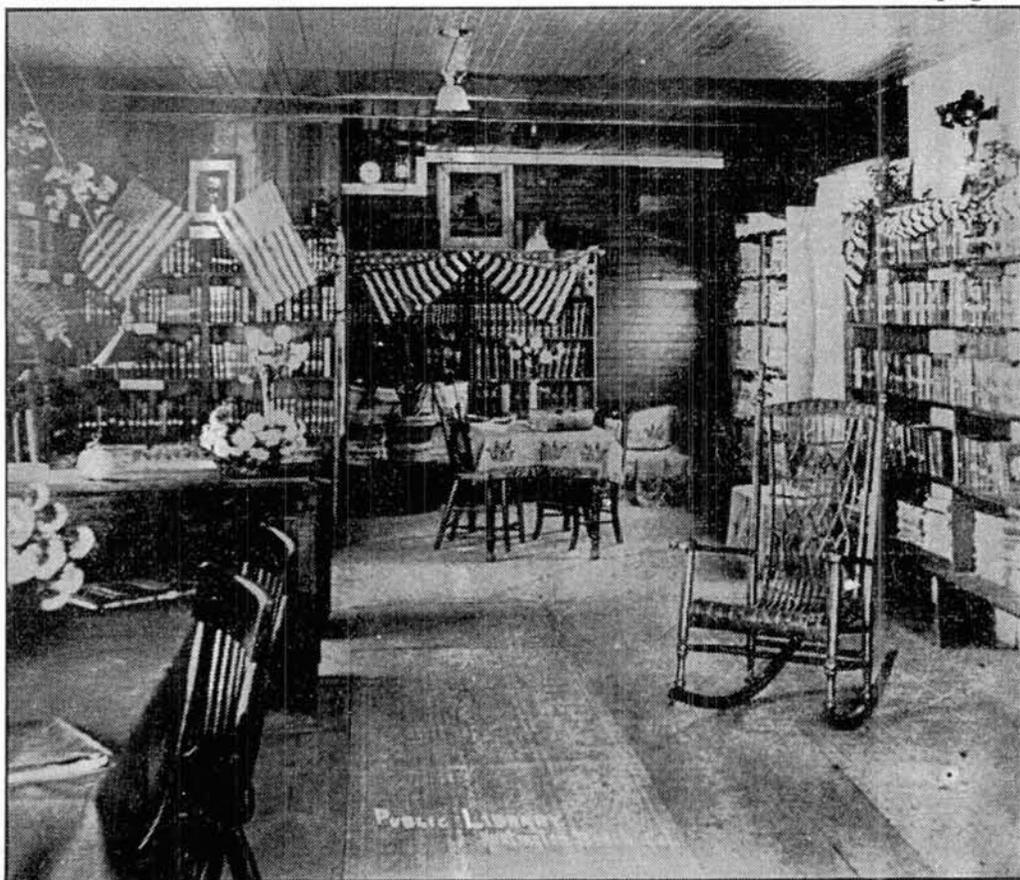
Early in 1909, the year the City was incorporated, a "mass meeting" was called, and a grand total of six individuals attended. These six, however, formed a Library Association and chose a Board of Trustees including representatives from the WCTU, the Women's Club, young people, the schools and the Board of Trade. Payment of one dollar entitled a person to membership in the association and "privileges". Next came

successful fundraising and membership drives.

A roofless, old building purchased for \$50.00 was moved to the corner of Walnut and Main to serve as the first library. Carpenters and painters contributed their labor, and second-hand furniture, curtains and books were all donated to improve the building for opening day. Fuel was furnished by a gentleman for the first winter, and electricity and water

were underwritten by the Huntington Beach Company. Later that year the City agreed to provide for the library.

In 1914 the Carnegie Corporation of New York granted \$10,000 for a new library building at the corner of Eighth and Walnut. In Miss Proctor's words, "*The new building has a face of red tapestry brick trimmed with a light gray brick, a white mission tile roof and is 61 by* . . . continued on page 4



HUNTINGTON BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY CIRCA 1914

DUES ARE OVERDUE. Those with a red dot have not paid dues.

THE LIBRARY IN EARLY HUNTINGTON BEACH

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35 feet. The height of the basement is ten feet. Well lighted by windows, it contains a large lecture room, reference room, work room and furnace room. The first floor contains a general reading room, children's room and librarian's room.

The furnishings are steel, and the floors are carpeted with battleship linoleum. A tall grandfather's clock stands at

the entrance, a gift of the high school class of 1914."

The busy lecture room hosted regular meetings of the Chamber of Commerce, HB Produce Association, Boy Scouts, Spanish night classes, OC Poultry and Pet Stock Association and the Red Cross.

With 6,000 volumes, 66 magazine subscriptions, the newspapers of Southern

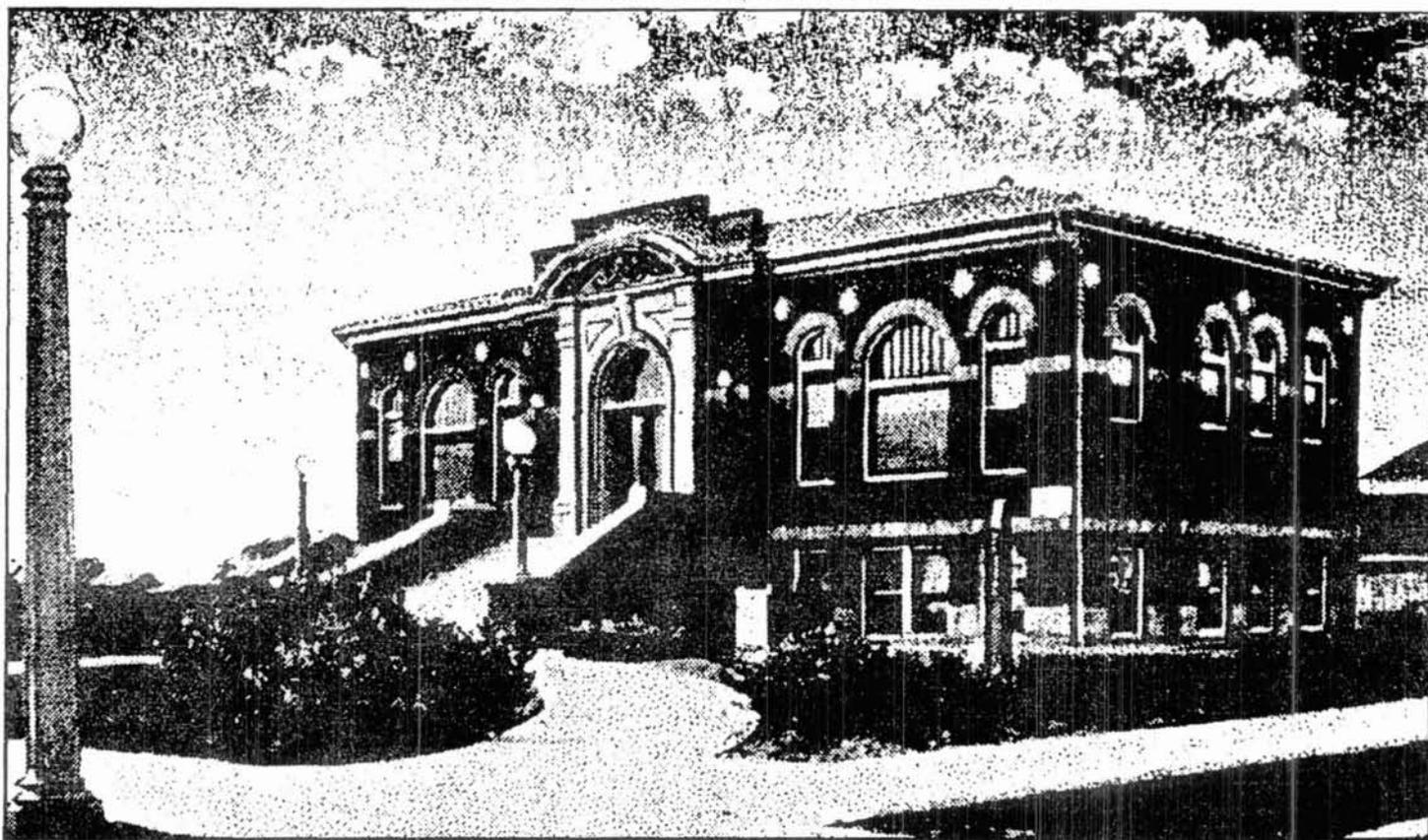
California, stereoscopes and stereoscopic views of different countries, pictures for circulation, both bound and unbound pamphlets, all government reports and the Government Patent Magazine, the Huntington Beach Carnegie Library was considered quite "up-to-date", and it was generally felt that many of the tourists chose Huntington Beach as their vacation site especially

because of the excellent library facilities they could enjoy during their visit.

The article concludes with numerous lengthy letters of endorsement for the library by prominent citizens expressing pride and gratitude for their outstanding library.

Does any of this sound familiar? It looks like the more things change, the more they stay the same.

CARNEGIE BUILDING at Walnut Avenue and 8th Street



BOOKS AT FREE LIBRARY

In 1907, when the first Huntington Beach Library was just a twinkle in the eye of the Women's Club, residents still had access to books.

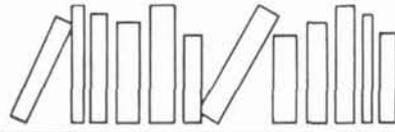
The Huntington Beach News reports: Following is a list of books at the new Huntington Beach Library, being the California State [Traveling?] Library No. 37. Any resident of this locality, town or county may borrow books as long as he complies with the rules. Books should be asked for by number."

And the number was 50 arranged under 12 subject headings. Under Practical Ethics was 1 title; Philosophy,

1; Religion, 1; Social Science, 3; Science, 3; Useful Arts, 3; Cats, 1; Photography, 1; Poetry, 1; Humor, 1; Fiction, 14, including Gertrude Atherton, Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens and Jack London; Description and Travel, 3 about Hawaii, the "Continent" and Mexico; Biography, 3 including a sailor, a medieval princess and Joseph Le Conte; History, 3 including one by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Especially for Young People, 10 including Samuel Clemens, and Rudyard Kipling.

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Library Garden Blooms Anew

The eye-catching burst of color in front of the Central Library is the new Library Patrons Garden. Successor to the former Literary Heritage Garden, today's garden blooms with thirty unique types of roses and other brilliant annuals selected especially for their beauty and suitability for our location.

The original garden featured plants mentioned in literature and was conceived by former school teacher, Shirley Kerins, who later went on to become a licensed Landscape Architect. Her clients have included the Huntington Library Gardens in San Marino and the Sherman Gardens in Newport Beach. From the Mulberry Bush of the nursery rhyme to the Biblical, mythological and classical plants growing in sections between circular walkways, the garden was maintained by Kerins and a corps of volunteers from the American Association of University Women.

From the start it was a community project and included the support of former Library Director Walter Johnson and the Department of Parks and Recreation. This spirit of cooperation still persists as volunteers from the Library Patrons Foundation shoulder the responsibility for weeding, planting, fertilizing, watering and fund-raising. Myrtie and Larry Hayden, Mary DeGuelle and Rita Anderson have the garden thriving, and the stone benches invite you to sit a while and enjoy the beauty. The flowers, the hilltop view and the Central Park in the background make this a peaceful spot perfect for putting your mind in neutral for a bit of reflection and contemplation.

FRIENDS' SPRING BOOK SALE

Spring Book Sale will be held in the Talbert Room

- Friday, May 29, 4 to 7 PM – *Members Only.*
- Saturday, May 30, 9 to 5 PM – *Open to the public.*
- Monday, June 1, 1 to 5 PM – *Open to the public.*

Members . . . please bring your membership cards with you for quick entrance at the door.

