

THE KING MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Mechanics Institute Library was organized in 1893 by Mr. J. W. Crossley. The funds were raised by subscription and an equal amount was given by the Ontario Government. The books were kept in the office of Bailiff Crossley, 35 Keele St. S. There was a good selection of books, a total of 800, but few for children. Membership was \$1.00 per year per family or 50¢ per person. The books later moved to the home of James McClement and again to Frank Egan's home. It became difficult to find a supervisor and the library was discontinued.

In 1945 the King Women's Institute began a book club among members under the leadership of Miss Marjorie Jarvis. A committee of two, Mrs. A. E. Kelley and Miss Doris Patton, was appointed to look into the project of a library and in 1947 1000 books, most of which were donated, The King Memorial Library was officially opened. Miss Marjorie Jarvis, who had worked in the Reference Library, College St., Toronto, before coming to King in 1938, was its guiding light.

The library was founded and named as a memorial to the men fallen in World War 11, and the book plates said "For King and Country". The Lake Marie Athletic Association donated space and shelving in the library room, in the old barn, in Memorial Park. The Library was open every Wednesday afternoon and evening. Miss Marjorie Jarvis was Librarian, also Chairman of the Board. Mrs. James Rock was treasurer and Mr. Victor Hall, Secretary. At the official opening the Rev. M. R. Jenkinson was chairman and Mr. Angus Mowat, Superintendent of Provincial Libraries was the speaker. This was an Association Library supported by grants from the Township, the Village, the Ontario Government as well as by fees and fines. The fee was 50¢ per year for adults, children were free. The Provincial Library Department gave a special grant of \$100.00.

The new library was amazingly very successful considering its disadvantages. Subscribers numbered 114 and children read 1074 books. In the year following the opening 2116 books were circulated and 163 books purchased. The fee was increased to \$1.00. A big, woodburning stove in the main part of the barn was supposed to give heat to the library in the back room. This stove had to be lighted by the librarian after she had carried wood from the frozen woodpile outside. Even so it hardly heated the backroom, the books or the Librarian. Later an oil space heater was purchased and the fuel was donated by Mr. David Glass,

who operated a garage at that time. But in the spring the library, in fact, the whole barn flooded and on more than one occasion the lower shelves were under water. The library had to close while the barn and the books dried out. In spite of this the library survived, but a new location had to be found.

In February 1952 the new library was opened. A small building, at one time the King Barber Shop, was bought and installed in the park for a library. This building is now a tool shed in Mrs. Eleanor Scott's garden, Keele St. S. The new library could not house all the books, some were stored, but it was dry although even colder than the barn. In the winter the ink froze and snow sifted through the cracks. Mr. Ray Burt kindly lit the oil burner every Wednesday morning and librarians had to wear their warmest clothes. Mr. Burt also filled in as librarian in emergencies. The Lake Marie Athletic Association paid the hydro bill.

Meanwhile, there was more help, and interest was growing, as the village grew. In 1949, Mr. John L. Grew had become chairman of the Library Board, Mrs. Gordon Wells was secretary, Miss Marjorie Jarvis, Librarian, and Mrs. Jas. Rock, Treasurer. Books were borrowed from the Travelling Library and 1,789 books read in the year. Miss Jarvis said, "My main interest is to see that no child is denied access to the books he needs for his growth, mental and moral."

In October 1949, the library sponsored an Art and Photograph Contest and Exhibition for children and adults. There were 90 entries in the art section and 30 in the photography. Judges were Mr. Frank Fog, Mr. Oscar Cahen, Commercial Artists, and Mr. James Snelgrove.

In 1950 the Punchinello Players of Toronto presented a three-act comedy, "Widows Learn Fast" and the proceeds benefited the library \$45.00.

A summer art school for children from 5 years to high school age was conducted by Mr. Frank Fog, fee \$1.00 was given to the library.

Young Canada Book Week was observed with a display of children's books borrowed from the Travelling Libraries and also a collection of old books for children, many over 100 years old.

In 1953, owing to the illness of Miss Jarvis, Mrs. J. Rock became chief librarian and Mrs. H. G. Ratcliff, treasurer.

In the spring of 1954 the Library suffered a great loss in the death of Miss Marjorie Jarvis. In 1955 Mrs. A. E. Jarvis took charge when Mrs. Rock moved from the village.

MARCH 1956

New quarters were opened at 45 Springhill Rd. The Librarians canvassed

the village. It was so successful that the new building with all new shelving was secured and a mortgage of only \$1,650.00 needed. The mortgage was paid off in 1961. The T.Eaton Co. donated and laid the tile flooring and the Rob't. Simpson Co. the acoustic ceiling and florescent lighting. Mr. Norman Taylor, Electrician, donated the electric wiring and installed the lights. The King Women's Institute supplied a table for adults and one for children and six chairs, in memory of Miss Marjorie Jarvis, also, two books, "THE CHIEFTAN" and "THE YOUNG POLITICIAN" by Donald Creighton.

FEBRUARY 17, 1959

King Memorial Library became a public library after a poll of King City taxpayers, one citizen voted against having a public library. We now have a library free to all village residents but a fee of \$1.00 a year is charged all township members. Children are free from fees and fines. On the overdue books the fine is 51¢ per book per week.

The King Women's Institute has given books to the value of \$30.00 each year until the library became a public library supported by the village taxes.

In 1959 the circulation of books increased to 8,282, members totalled 472 of whom 241 were children, the books on the shelves numbered 3,503. In the fall of this year the back room was renovated, wallboard put on, congoleum laid and drapes made, shelves from the former building were adjusted. Total cost was \$400.00. The books were re-arranged.

In 1962 the village population was 1800. Number of books in library-4495. Members---adults 398,---children 534. Circulation---10,827.

Childrens Librarian---Mrs. Q. Hardy. Head Librarian---Mrs. A.E. Jarvis.

Volunteer Librarians for many years---

Mrs. A. E. Jarvis

Mrs. J. L. Grew

Mrs. G. Wells

Mrs. H. Ratcliff

Mrs. E. White

Mrs. G. Berry

Mrs. B. Wyer

Mrs. E. Wallas

Later Mrs. Q. Hardy, Mrs. D. M. Findlay, Mrs. R. Case joined the staff, making nine Librarians in all. Some former librarians were Mrs. J. Rock, Miss J. Wilson, Miss E. Dennis, Miss D. Patton, and Miss J. Gellatly.

The library hours in 1963 were ---MONDAY 7-9, WEDNESDAY 2.30-5.30, 7-9,
FRIDAY 2.30 - 5.30

For some time a story hour was a feature but was discontinued because
of lessened attendance.

LIBRARY CHAIRMEN

Miss Marjorie Jarvis	1947-1949
Mr. John L. Grew	1949-1955
Mr. Edmund Wallas	1955-1959
Mr. P. R. Cheetham	1959-1961
Mr. Ian Gilchrist	1962
Mr. Wm. Reynolds	1963