



Happy 80th Birthday

St. Clair Shores Public Library!



On September 27, 1935, the St. Clair Shores Public Library opened its doors for service, staffed by St. Clair Shores Study Club volunteers in a room of the old Municipal Building. Over 500 books that had been donated or purchased comprised the collection. One of the largest contributions came from Edsel Ford, who donated money for 60 books. The first library card was registered to Walter Pratt, the Village Clerk, who also checked out the first book. In October of that year, Lake Township and the Village



of St. Clair Shores donated \$25 to purchase the first set of encyclopedias. The library was open Mondays and Fridays from 3:00 PM to 5:00

PM and 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. In 1936 Mrs. Ida Hanson was appointed Librarian and Village Clerk by the Village Commission. The library board was formed in 1937 when the library was turned over to the Village by the Study Club.

As the library grew, the old Lake Shore Presbyterian Church, was purchased for \$300 and moved from Grove Pointe to Eleven Mile and Jefferson in 1941. The new library opened May 2, 1943 under the direction of Mrs. Delia B.



Waldner. The first children's story hour was held on Saturday, January 11, 1947. By 1955 the library had grown to 18,000 volumes and added bookmobile service. During that year over 76,000 books were borrowed. Mrs. Waldner now had a staff of five employees.

Construction on the present library building began in 1956, just west of the old wooden library. The 7,200 square foot building had shelving for 40,000 volumes. Mrs. Virginia MacHarg was appointed library director in October,



1959. Two of her major projects were the expansion of the reference collection and the development of the Michigan

History/Great Lakes Collection. In 1964 the library joined the Library Network of Macomb. This enabled the library to offer improved reference service, reciprocal borrowing privileges and cost savings on book purchases. St. Clair Shores' population had grown to 88,000 by 1970, and the library had outgrown the 1959 building. On January 5, 1970 the city council approved the sale of bonds to fund a \$735,000 library addition and remodeling plan. Dedicated on April 16, 1972, the new addition had a shelf capacity for 100,000 volumes and seating for 200 people.

Arthur M. Woodford was appointed Library Director in February, 1977 following the retirement of Mrs. MacHarg. In May 1981, the library circulation system was automated. The library received a \$46,000 Michigan OutState Equity (M.O.S.E.) grant in 1986 that greatly expanded the Michigan History/Great Lakes Collection. Four study rooms, an expanded meeting room and an Internet service area were added to the Library in 1993-1995 through an \$80,000 M.O.S.E. grant. The Reading Lounge (Café and Friends Gift Shop) and the Local History Center renovation were funded in 2000-2002 in part by a \$200,000 Michigan Grant for Arts and Culture and a \$330,000 Federal Block Grant.

Assistant Director Rosemary Orlando became Library Director upon Mr. Woodford's retirement in May, 2005. The biggest change in the following 10 years has been in library technology. In its 80th year, the library currently has over 150,000 items in its collection, and has greatly expanded its digital services. The library circulates over 300,000 books and materials around the Suburban Library Cooperative and the state of Michigan. Currently, there are over 25,000 St. Clair Shores library cardholders!

In 2005 the library received a grant from the Michigan Historical Newspaper Project to microfilm local newspapers. An English as a Second Language and International Language collection for children and adults was established. Grants in 2007 to 2008 included a \$5,000 Metro Detroit Book and Author Society award to purchase books and conduct Family Book Discussions, a \$2,500 Target Grant for Family Reading, and a \$5,000 Macomb Intermediate School District and State of Michigan grant for children ages 1-4 to receive a book and literacy packet in their birthday month.

In 2008 the library joined MelCat, a library catalog and resource sharing project among all types of Michigan libraries. 2009 brought the world of e-books and audio-books to the library through Overdrive.

Paws for Reading, a therapy dog reluctant reader program, and 1st Stop for Tots which models reading skills readiness for young children and adults were introduced in 2011. In September, 2012 we "Geeked" the Library as part of a country-wide library awareness campaign. A self-check out system was installed along with an RFID software system to manage circulating materials. In 2013 text messaging was introduced so that patrons could be notified about book holds and overdue items.

In 2014 Zinio was introduced to provide digital magazines to patrons. The library

joined the MLibrary Card reciprocal borrowing program, that allows patrons to visit participating libraries and check out materials. On-line and in-library credit card payments were introduced to allow patrons to pay overdue fines and fees. The library was re-carpeted in December following water damage from a summer storm.

During 2014/2015 over 50,000 Internet users browsed the web using library computers and the library wireless system. There were over 100,000 library website logins, and the library was visited by an average of 800 patrons per day. In partnership with the Friends of the St. Clair Shores Public Library, a Buy a Chair Campaign in 2015 helped replace worn out meeting room chairs. Local History Center bookshelves were also replaced due to the previous year's water damage. Freegal music, an online music service that offers patrons access to over 7 million songs to stream or download, was launched.

The St. Clair Shores Public Library staff strives to fulfill its mission "to serve people of all ages by actively providing easily accessible information, materials, services and programs designed to meet the community's evolving educational, recreational, cultural and informational needs."

Let's see what the next 80 years brings to the library!

