

Richmond, MO

Club found way to keep folks reading

By Linda Emley

While looking over my files, I found one more story about our early libraries that I want to share. The Literary and Civic Improvement Club of Richmond was the group of ladies that established the library in the basement of the Methodist Church in 1916. This same group also tried to secure the Carnegie Library a few years earlier.

These fine ladies were actually successful with a small public library a few years before they opened the library at the Methodist Church.

Richmond Conservator, Jan 29, 1914: "Public Library Here. Civic Improvement Club Makes Start in Library Line. Through the effort of the Literary and Civic Improvement Club Richmond now has a public library consisting of fifty volumes – histories, biographies, classics, art, science and the popular novels. Also books for children. This is one of the circulating libraries located at Jefferson City and furnished by the state. Any town can secure one of these divisions by conforming to certain rules and regulations. The books may be kept for three months and by request the time extended to six months. These books are under the care of **the librarian of the Club, Mrs. Clarence Hubbell** and are kept at her home. The library is open every day from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Any person or child may get one of these books by calling upon the librarian and pledging to conform to required rules and regulations. Parents are responsible for their children under 16 years of age. These books may be kept two weeks and by request the time extended two more weeks. By this means the members of the club are desirous of encouraging the use of a library by the school children as well as grownups. From this small beginning the ladies hope to soon see a permanent public library established for Richmond and vicinity. They are to be commended for the energy they are showing and their efforts should be crowned with success." Fifty books may not sound like a lot, but it is better than not having any books. The next time you are in a waiting room at the doctor's office without any magazines to read, just think about the people of Richmond and how eager they must have been to get their hands on one good book to read. We are truly blessed to live in a world where we have so much available for our reading pleasure.