

In September 1894, the organization known as the Tuesday Evening Club of Salida was organized, having among its objectives the founding of a public library for Salida. The eleven charter members of the club were Mrs. Mary C. Ridgeway, Mrs. Georgia Morrison, Mrs. S. Innes Frame, Mrs. Sarah A. Disman, Mrs. Hattie W. Cornwell, Mrs. Ora Rech, Miss Amelia Evans, Mrs. Katherine D. Rudolph, Mrs. Lily Mosgrove, Mrs. Martha Deen and Mrs. Mary Imlay Sisson.

The few books purchased the first year from club dues were kept in a small room of the Central School building (now McCray School). In 1896 a small store room on West Second Street was secured to accommodate the growing needs. To meet expenses a charge of \$2.00 a year was made to all subscribers, except club members. Funds for carrying on the work were obtained in this way and also by contributions and entertainments. In 1898 the library was moved into a small brick building on the corner of "F" and Third Streets where the large brick building occupied by the Cooper and Rosengren Garage now stands. From there the library moved to a large second story room of the City Hall building - in which the Town Council held its sessions and the police magistrate held his courts - where it remained until a permanent Public Library building was provided in 1909, with a paid librarian in attendance. Until this time the members of the Tuesday Evening Club took turns donating their time to working in the library.

The intensive campaign for procuring a site and funds for building the public library was undertaken in the summer of 1905. Upon being approached, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, under certain conditions imposed, agreed to provide a substantial sum for the library building. Mrs. Mary C. Ridgeway, first president of the club, and her husband, A. C. Ridgeway, made the first large subscription by giving \$1200.00

for the purchase of the library site. Then the campaign was on in earnest and its appeal was rewarded through substantial subscriptions by public spirited citizens.

In early 1906 the public library movement was given added encouragement and impetus by William P. Harbottle through his bequest of his home and personal library to the trustees of the Salida Library Association in establishment of a strictly noncirculating reference library as a memorial to his mother, to be forever known as "The Juliana Reference Library" and housed in the home he bequeathed, or exclusively maintained by the income from that home if housed elsewhere

When funds were reasonably assured, the architectural plans to provide a substantial Public Library building, including a separate and exclusive room for the "Juliana Reference Library", were a subject of much earnest thought and planning. The pioneer women, who had by then accumulated an excellent library of books in the City Hall quarters, suddenly realized that they would have no place to hold their meetings. All plans were halted and a general discussion of the matter took place for several weeks before the solution was reached, that of adding to the building plans an assembly hall to be leased by the Salida Public Library Board to the Tuesday Evening Club for its meetings at a nominal rental, the hall to be furnished and maintained by the club at its own expense and by it, as the constituted agent of the public library board, sub-rented on a basis providing for the paying over to the library board of all such rentals received, less actual expenses, for the purchase of books. Additional funds were then again subscribed by the citizens. In due time the contracts were let and the library building completed under most watchful supervision at a cost of \$15,000.00, of which \$9000.00 was paid by Andrew Carnegie and \$6000.00 by gifts and subscriptions of

local Salida people.

In May 1908, the donated corner stone of the library building was laid with appropriate ceremonies. About February 1909, a memorable and brilliant ceremony of dedication was held and the formal opening of the Salida Public Library took place. The library of the Tuesday Evening Club, then numbering 1967 volumes, had been moved to its permanent home from the city hall and placed on the shelves awaiting them, as had also the Harbottle reference library into the "Juliana Reference Room" prepared for it, and everything was turned over to the city. Mrs. Florence Lippard, then president of the Tuesday Evening Club, made the presentation speech in behalf of the club and Mayor "Scotty" Buchanan accepted for the city.

The first Board of Trustees of The Salida Public Library were W. G. Sisson, Mayor and ex-officio chairman by virtue of his office, J. J. McKenna, Mrs. D. P. Cook, A. R. Miller, Mrs. C. L. Snively, J. U. Moch and Mrs. S. J. Spray. The first meeting of the Board was held in the office of the city clerk of Salida on February 5, 1909.

On May 10, 1909, the Board of Trustees executed the prearranged lease for a term of five years with the Tuesday Evening Club for the Assembly Hall and kitchen in the basement of the library building. This original lease has been officially extended from time to time at the expiration of each leased period. It is now a historic document in full force and effect, and the co-operative relationship which has existed under this lease for many years between the Board of Trustees of the Salida Public Library and the Tuesday Evening Club is regarded in other localities as unique, however, there seems to be a well united opinion that the arrangement may continue indefinitely as a most amicable and satisfactory way of best promoting the cultural interest of our community.