



Flint Public Library

LEARN FOR LIFE

Ladies Library Association of Flint

Founded:	March 22, 1851
Incorporated:	April 6, 1853
Given to the Citizens of Flint:	June 6, 1885

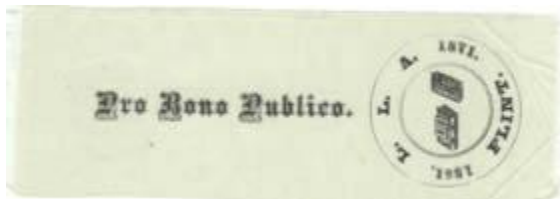


Maria G. Smith Stockton
Organizer and First President

On March 22, 1851 a group of women, concerned about the lack of cultural and educational opportunities in their community, met at the home of Maria Smith Stockton. As a result of the meeting, the group adopted a constitution written by Sophia Gotee Jenney that established the Ladies Library Association. They selected the following officers: Maria Smith Stockton - president; Almira Simpson Walker - vice president; Sophia Gotee Jenney - recording secretary; Mary Dodge Miles - treasurer and Hattie Stewart became the first librarian.

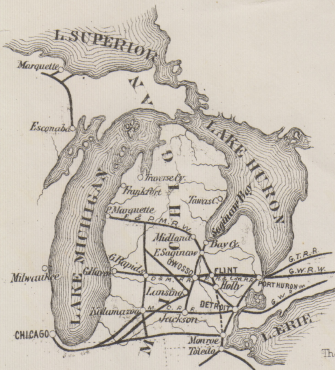
Along with a variety of fund raising activities, the founders raised money through member and subscriber dues. In 1853 the Association was incorporated under the presidency of Louisa Smith Payne. The group provided the funds necessary to build a library that was located at Beach and Kearsley Streets. Governor Henry H. Crapo spoke at the dedication of the building on June 30, 1868. He had several daughters who were members of the Association. In 1871, the Association was presented with a copy of the first American edition of John James Audubon's *Birds of America* that can be viewed today at the Library. The letter of donation is shown on the following pages.

As the City of Flint grew, so did the need for a public library. In 1884, the Association offered to give to the City the building and its contents to be used as a public library for the people of Flint. City officials declined the gift. Fortunately, the Board of the Union School District of Flint did accept the offer and created the first public library.



A souvenir bookmark commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Ladies Library Association of Flint. "Pro Bono Publico" translates as "for the public good."

Rev. April 2016



Port Huron & Lake Michigan RR

Superintendent's Office

Port Huron, Mich. Dec. 18 1871

Mr. J. W. Beale

President First Ladies Library Association

First Wicks.

Madam: I have this day forwarded to the care of Mrs. Thayer, a box containing a copy of the original folio edition of Audubon's work on the "Birds of America" which please present to your Association as a contribution to its already highly valuable Library.

Permit me to say, that the organization of your Association, during the earlier days of this generation, excited considerable curiosity. To carry it prosperously through the vicissitudes of its long career, must have required in its managers, much of the same audacity which inspired and of the energy which crowned Audubon in the grand and beautiful pursuit of his life. As it gave pleasure to assist in diffusing the knowledge he has so delightfully garnered. And may the future of your Association be as luminous as the notes of the sweetest songster in his list of western melodists.

I am, Madam,

Very truly
Yrs
A. Hancock

Copy

Port Huron, Michigan

Dec.18,1871

Mrs. J.W. Begole
President Flint Ladies Library Association
Flint, Michigan

Madam: I have this day forwarded to the care of Mrs. Thayer, a box containing a copy of the original folio edition of Audubon's work on the "Birds of America", which please present to your Association as a contribution to its already valuable Library.

Permit me to say that the organization of your Association during the earlier days of this generation, excited considerable curiosity. To carry it prosperously through the vicissitudes of its long career, must have required in its managers much of the same ambition which inspired and of the energy which served Audubon in the grand and beautiful pursuit of his life. Be it your pleasure to assist in diffusing the knowledge he has so delightfully garnered. And may the future of your association be as harmonious as the notes of the sweetest songster in his list of nature's melodists.

I am, Madam,

Very truly yours

W.L. Bancroft