

The Library

The doors of the Scotch Plains Public Library, on Bartle Avenue, are open from 1 to 6 and 7 to 9 p.m. weekdays, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. The hours of the Children's Room are from 2 to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays.

Story telling hours for pre-school children are conducted by the Scotch Plains Junior Woman's Club.

A "bookmobile" is stationed at Brookside Park twice weekly during July and August.

Free borrowing privileges are given to residents of Scotch Plains, to teachers who teach in Scotch Plains and to Scotch Plains business and property owners. Non-residents must pay a small fee.

Subscribers have 10,507 books, 39 current magazines, 210 pamphlets, numerous pictures and a comprehensive collection of maps for their use.

The Library has a long and colorful history. In 1800, thirty-two pioneers had a noble vision that became the Scotch Plains Reading Society. In January 1816, a meeting was held to form the Scotch Plains Library Company. In the minutes of a meeting of the group in 1826 the constitution was amended so that a branch of the Library could be taken to Plainfield to get that new railroad town rolling on cultural wheels. The present private association was incorporated November 15, 1888. It is under the direction of a board of twenty trustees who are elected for five year terms, four elected each year.

In the beginning the library was housed in the second floor hall of the Excelsior Hook and Ladder Company. In February of 1936 the Excelsior building was closed due to damage in a severe storm. The Library Board was able to get the help of the WPA to build the library now in use. It was completed in 1937. The Children's Room has been a popular addition since its start in 1957.

The Township Committee has appropriated money for the library's support since 1909 and in 1962 gave approximately 95 per cent of the library's total budget. In 1946 the library became a part of the Community Fund. Scotch Plains has grown so fast that it has outgrown the present library. A program for the accumulation of funds for a new, enlarged library was established three years ago by the Township Committee. Recently the Committee authorized that a study of the town's library needs be made and that the type of building and site needed for a new library be recommended.

The Library Board has advised the Township Committee that when a municipal library is formed the present library association will turn over its assets to the new library.

A new library that would be a department of the municipality must be approved by a referendum.