

The Library

Until preparing for this talk I was certain that Grandview's library was started in 1914. Most of the records say so but an article in the Yakima Herald, Jan. 26, 1962, by Peggy Baker, wife of J. Thomas Baker, says it was 1910. This may be a matter of semantics since it was in May 1910 that the Women's Improvement Club heard a presentation and then called for a vote on whether the club should work for a library, a club house or a restroom. The library won. The group voted to provide \$50 to purchase supplies, books were donated, and volunteers kept it in operation in the early years, according to Mrs. Baker.

In 1914, the Women's Club organized a library department and appointed a library board. The library moved into a vacant store room in the Iowa Building. According to Volume 1 of the History of Grandview, the Sage Bush Sisters donated additional books, giving the library a stock of 200. That fall, the library was moved to the Swain Building on West A Street. The following spring, the library was discontinued for "lack of patronage" and moved to Coe's Drugstore where books were loaned "to the few who cared to borrow them." In the fall of 1915, the Women's Improvement Club formed a new library board and the library was relocated in the Swain Building. A library card was 50 cents per year, a fee that remained into the 1980s.

The library moved into the Keck Building in 1916 where it stayed until 1922. It then moved to the Brown Building on Division in 1931 and to City Hall in 1937 where it remained until the present building was erected in 1958. In the Legion Hall, the library had 2,000 square feet of floor space. In moving to City Hall, the floor space was cut in half and squeezed into 600 square feet. Presently we can barely fit in a space over ten times that size and for the next move we plan to have a 12,000 square foot facility to be shared with the Grandview campus of Yakima Valley Community College.

Thanks to a Rural Heritage Grant, the early history of Grandview is now permanently available, complete with reproduced photograph, on the Washington State Library web site which can be accessed through both the city's and the library's web sites.