

JACOB EDWARDS LIBRARY

FUNDING A LIBRARY RENOVATION/EXPANSION PROJECT

in

Southbridge, Massachusetts

“THE LITTLE TOWN THAT COULD”

On April 10, 1996, the Board of Library Trustees of the Jacob Edwards Library applied to the “MBLC” (Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners) for a grant under Round II of the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. This culminated several years of preparation, and intensive work with Richard C. Smith of Stahl Associates, Architects, of Boston.

The proposed renovation and expansion would preserve the beauty and integrity of the 1914 building, part of the Center Village Historic District of Southbridge, while offering state-of-the art facilities and services to the townspeople. A 9,993 square foot, three story addition on the north elevation would include a main entrance facing the parking area, on axis with the Main Street entrance. Old-fashioned, hazardous stacks would be replaced with modern shelving, bathrooms would be accessible, the original barrel-vault ceiling would be restored. Patrons of all ages would find browsing more enjoyable, and internet and other computerized services would be designed with an emphasis on flexibility for phasing in future innovations.

The cost was estimated to be \$2,782,714. The MBLC determined that the potential grant award would be \$1,137,836. The Town of Southbridge had shown support for this project from the outset. The Education & Human Services Committee recommended in November, 1995, and the full Town Council approved, to appropriate \$25,000 for a feasibility study. The Town Manager and Community Development and Public Works Directors helped refine our Letter of Intent. The Town Council earmarked \$345,000 of capital funds toward the local share of the project, and the Board of Library Trustees committed \$125,000, while promising to raise as much as possible of the remaining cost through private donations. Communities would have six months from the awarding of their grant, to achieve full funding of their projects.

Before unveiling the construction grant awards, the MBLC announced a "Waiting List" for any libraries in this second round who might qualify for funding, but not be able to be funded at that time, due to insufficient funds for all worthy projects. In September, 1996, it was announced that Southbridge was fifth on a list of 21 "Waiting List Libraries."

State Senator Richard T. Moore and State Representative David M. Peters were co-sponsors, of "An Act to Improve Public Libraries," to provide funding for all the libraries on the waiting list. The MBLC voted a grant of \$1,137,836 on October 9, with an April 9, 1998, funding deadline. With only six months to achieve full funding, we would need a hard local fund drive. The Librarian and the Friends President made presentations to the Rotary, Lions and Women's Clubs. The Trustees worked to develop presentation materials for face-to-face meetings with leaders of local business concerns, winning an initial three-year pledge of \$75,000 from United Lens Company.

On December 1, 1997, the Education & Human Services Committee voted unanimously to recommend, and on December 8 the Southbridge Town Council voted unanimously to "bond," the entire remaining cost, over one million dollars, of our renovation/expansion project, less \$100,000. The Trustees made a commitment to collect at least \$100,000 in pledges before the deadline, to complete the financial package.

The Chamber of Commerce held a Library-sponsored "Business After Hours" event in January, to introduce our project to the Tri-Community. The Friends of the Library held a Mardi Gras gala in February, highlighting gifts of \$100,000 or more from The Hyde Group, The American Optical Company, and the George Wells Foundation, as well as many five-figure gifts from area businesses and individuals.

As of September 2, 1998, the Town has received \$548,632 in corporate and personal pledges, of which \$193,632 has been received and placed in the Jacob Edwards Library Capital Campaign fund.

Southbridge truly is "The Little Town That Could!"

SPEAKING AT THE GROUNDBREAKING

Marilyn Travinski, Board of Library Trustees, Master of Ceremonies
Raymond Lenti, Library Trustee and Building Committee
Lawrence Gaine, Library Trustee and Building Committee
Honorable Richard T. Moore, Massachusetts Senate
Honorable David M. Peters, Massachusetts House of Representatives
Bernard A. Fiorelli, Chairman, Southbridge Town Council
Florence C. Chandler, Southbridge Town Manager
Harry R. Williams, Library Director
Paul A. Mills, Chairman, Board of Library Trustees

CORPORATE GIFTS

Aero Company
American Optical Company
Friends of Jacob Edwards Library
Hyde Group
Incom
Jaeger & Osberg, Inc.
Moore for Senate Committee
Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home
J. I. Morris Company
Savers Co-Operative Bank
Schott Fiber Optics
Southbridge Credit Union
Southbridge Lions Club, Inc.
Southbridge Permanent Firefighters
Southbridge Rotary Club
Southbridge Savings Bank
Straetz Foundation
United Lens Company
Wells Foundation

Personal & Memorial Gifts

John T. & Geraldine A. Allen *
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Ashton
Dot Aucoin Real Estate *
Mark V. Barter *
Amy B. Bernstein *
Angela & Greg Borruso *
William & Jocelyn Bouvier *
Donald & Gretchen Brierley *
Louis C. & Mildred Broughton
Central Mutual Ins. Co/Tom Uzdavinis *
Joseph & Lorraine Chouinard
CNA/ Ronald J. Lais *
Mr. & Mrs. John Colognesi *
Ken, Ron, Bob and Dave Cotton *
David B. Cotton
Central Mass Chapter CPCU *
Margaret DeAngelis
Irene & Edward Desrosier *
Mr. & Mrs. Albert J. DiGregorio *
William H. DiGregorio *
George D. Dumas
Kathleen A. Gallery *
Albert & Shirley Gaulin *
Theresa Gaulin *
Carl M. Olson and Janet Gilman *
Steve & Beverly Gray *
Bill & Pat Haggerty *
Rev. Mary K. Hicks *
Lucy Hollenberger (Lucy's Cleaners) *
Insurance Professionals of New England, Inc. *
Rita Trainor Julian *
Lori and Jeff Kaszowski *
Gordon E. Kollett *
Linda S. Kollett *
Mr. & Mrs. Sofoclis Kollios *
Bruce G. & Donna F. Kosa
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Kroll *
Derek, Linda, Elizabeth & Brett Lamica *
Yvette R. L'Ecuyer *
Lensmaster Optical Co., Inc. *
Raymond & Evelyn Lenti **
Sylvia E. Lenti *
Jay F. Livernois *
Barbara M. Maurer *
Esther J. McCann *
Honey Meyer
Alice J. Miller *
M. Terry Mills, D. V. M. *
Walter, Linda & Jackie Misiaszek *
Catherine M. Monroe *
Marvin P. Morse *
Mr. & Mrs. Francis S. Moriarty *
Daniel Morrill
Carol Muschler
Richard G. & Ruth A. Nichols *
Gereen O'Grady *
Patricia Gallery O'Neil *
Evelyn A. Petrelli **
Normand E. & Constance T. Plouffe
Maurice & Virginia Poirier
Ruby E. Prince *
Paul & Lillian Quigley *
Doris A. Rennell & family *
Carlin, Charron & Rosen, LLP *
Alwin E. & Darthia P. Schmidt
Schonning Insurance Services, Inc. *
Arthur S. Schrader
R. G. Shakour, Inc. *
Samuel V. Sotir *
Southbridge Park N Shop *
Ray & Marge St. Jean *
Anne Marie Tobia *
Tri-Community Exchange Club *
3S Stainless, Inc. *
Marcelle B. VanVooren
Helen Vespucci *
Village Photo *
The Webber Family

* Gifts in memory of Albert E. Bouvier