ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Annual Report
1939
Athens, Georgia  
February 12, 1940

Hon. Mayor and City Council of Athens  
Board of County Commissioners of Clarke County  
Citizens of Athens

Gentlemen:

Herewith, we tender you the report for the year of 1939 of the Athens-Clarke County Public Library. The Library serves the public from 9 A.M. to 9 P.M.

The Athens-Clarke County Public Library Board of Trustees expresses its appreciation for the courtesies and assistance extended to them by Mr. Clayton Bowers and the Board of the Y.M.C.A.; to the Banner-Herald and to Station WGAU.

**ANNUAL REPORT**

Number books in library Jan. 1, 1939 . . . 4,091  
Number books added ......................... 1,047  
Total number books in library end of year (Dec. '39) .................. 5,138  
Number books given for year of 1939 . . . 341  
Number books bought for year ...... 706  
Registration Jan. 1, 1939 (City and County) .................. 4,047  
Registration during year (City and County) .................. 971  
Total registration end of year (City and County) .................. 5,018  
Total circulation .................. 66,395

**Distribution Points**

8 in County; 1 in City

How often distributed: Semi-monthly  
Radio programs: Tuesday and Friday, 7:00 P.M.; Story Hour Wednesday, 6:15 P.M.

Number persons employed: 4 W.P.A.

Fees charged: For books overdue 2c per day; New books, 3c per day

No registration fee charged  
Donations: Cash and books
On the steps of an old bank building on Broad Street sat a young boy garbed in overalls. It was very early in the morning, there were few people on the streets and the new library which was housed in the former bank office did not open until 9:00 A.M. But the boy waited patiently, for he was thrilled at the opportunity to borrow books—free!

This small insignificant library opened on April 7, 1936 under the auspices of the Woman’s Club, with the A.A.U.W. donating some 300 old books to form the nucleus of this W.P.A. library. The use of the bank building without charge was generously donated by Mr. John White Morton and the National Bank of Athens.

The scene opened on April 7 with one W.P.A. worker, a $25.00 monthly appropriation from our City Council, 300 old books and two rather shaky bookshelves, some chairs and a table, clean windows and cheerful, hopeful people. The library opened the day after the Gainesville tornado—hardly an auspicious day when every citizen was so concerned over the tragedy near at hand. But twenty-five people came in, registered and took out a book.

A second worker was soon added, N.Y.A. workers came and went. An interested patron who had charge of a Children’s Story Hour in Connecticut volunteered to help start one here. This soon grew with the help of N.Y.A. students and many others,
until today our Children’s Story Hour is conducted over the radio every Wednesday evening at 6:15 through the kindness of WGAU. For the first few months little chairs were borrowed every Saturday at 8:30 from the Episcopal Sunday School for the 9:30 Story Hour and returned afterwards. It was indeed a proud and happy moment when our own small reading table and chairs were purchased and delivered.

Last year we had four people working in the library and we hope W.P.A. will put another person on to mend books all the time.

The city and county yearly appropriations are used to purchase books and supplies; salaries of the staff are paid by W.P.A.

Our county residents were anxious for the service. Through the increasing facilities of W.P.A. and a county appropriation a county-wide service was started. Every two weeks or oftener a box of books is delivered to Holly Heights, Oconee Heights, and Fowler’s, and schools at Princeton, Whitehall, Gaines, Hinton-Brown, and Winterville.

At present Miss Edwards delivers these in her own car. We need desperately a book truck to facilitate this service—a truck specially built and equipped with bookshelves. A county resident is so dependent upon the printing presses for his information, inspiration and instruction. He has less contact with daily outside influences
and ideas, and more than the city dweller needs books.

During the past year 1047 books were added to our shelves, of which 706 were purchased and 341 were given. We are deeply grateful to those givers.

However, during the coming year the Board of Trustees hopes to see the present number of 5600 books doubled; to see the fulfillment of a cherished scheme—a book-truck; to establish a service for the colored people, and a service for hospitals.

We attempt to meet the varied needs and interests of our community, but with only 5600 books we are not able to keep all the books, pamphlets and periodicals we need. There should be special collections for a reference room, children's department, technical, art, business men and women, Braille divisions. Books will wear out in service and need to be replaced. In a city of 10,000 to 99,000 a library should have two books per capita.

Miss Mattie Julia Nichols, Miss Lucile Edwards, Miss Bertha Kate Davison, Mrs. Roy Barnes and Miss Alma Hughes dispensed 66,395 books to 5,018 people during 1939.

Ours is a democracy which has given to its people better free public libraries than any other country in the world, but it is our privilege and our duty to enlarge upon what Athens has today.

Mrs. John J. Wilkins, Jr.
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Receipts

W.P.A. and N.Y.A.
  Salaries ............ $2,409.23
City of Athens ........ 900.00
Clarke County .......... 300.00
Authors’ Dinner ........ 57.15
Donation .............. 25.00
Woman’s Club .......... 17.00
Overdue fines and rentals 150.12

$3,858.50

Bank balances beginning
  of year ............. 387.25

Total receipts .......... $4,245.75 $4,245.75

Disbursements

Books purchased ........ $1,055.81
General expenses ...... 174.75
Heat, etc. ............. 73.51
Periodicals ........... 73.25
Re-binding books ....... 87.37
Salaries .............. 2,467.04
Supplies .............. 165.24

Total disbursements .. $4,096.97 $4,096.97

  Plus check #123, outstanding.... .43
  $ 148.78

Total bank balances Dec. 31, 1939 $ 149.21
Outstanding bills ............. 220.99

Deficit ..................... $ 81.68

Yours sincerely,

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
Mrs. John J. Wilkins, Jr.,
Secretary-Treasurer.