

# A MERCANTILE LIBRARY TIMELINE

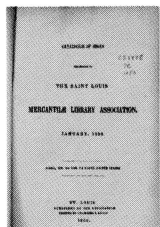


1845

In December, a group of St. Louis merchants met to form a general library, "where young men could pass their evenings agreeably and profitably, and thus be protected from the temptations to folly that ever beset unguarded youth in large towns."

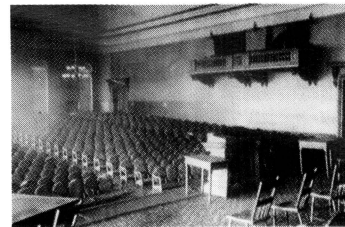
1846

The St. Louis Mercantile Library opened at the corner of Main and Pine streets on April 19.  
 James E. Yeatman became the first President of the Library.  
 Josiah Dent accepted post as first librarian.  
 \$1,100 worth of books were bought, forming the earliest collection. Works included: Catlin's *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians*, Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, and Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.



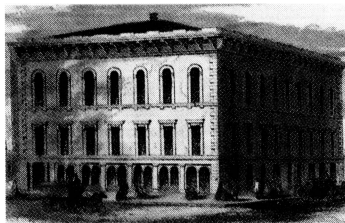
1850

The first catalog of the Library was published.



1851

The St. Louis Lyceum, possessing the books of the St. Louis Library, merged with the Mercantile Library, creating an impressive collection.  
 A lecture series begins.



1854

The first building at 510 Locust Street was opened in November.

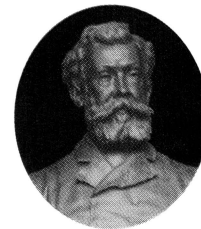


1857-8

Audubon's *Birds of America* was acquired, among many other special collections of American history and art.  
 Harriet Hosmer's *Beatrice Cenci* was presented to the Library by an anonymous donor who commissioned the artist for this purpose.

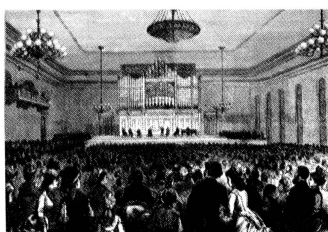
1861

State convention met at the Library putting down secession.  
 Only Dicken's *Great Expectations* was purchased for the library.



1862

John Napier Dyer becomes Librarian after his predecessor, Edward Johnston resigns, refusing to take an oath of allegiance to the Union.  
 Grand Hall is used for drilling militia.



1865

The State Convention passed ordinance at the Library abolishing slavery in Missouri.



1867

Twain, Emerson and Carl Schurz are among speakers at the Library.

1882

Oscar Wilde visited St. Louis, speaking at the Mercantile.



1884

Robert S. Brookings elected President of the Board. He initiates "Improvement Memberships" (Perpetual Memberships) to raise funds for a new, fire proof building.



1887

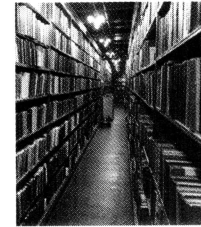
Old building demolished.  
 Cornerstone of 2nd building at 510 Locust laid by Henry Shaw, founder of the Missouri Botanical Garden.

1890

Horace Kephart, Assistant Librarian at Yale University and noted author, becomes the 6th Librarian.

1891

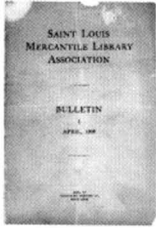
The Collection classified in the Cutter System.  
 Reference Room established.



1901

Library of Congress printed cards first used.  
 Electricity replaces candles in stack areas.

# TIMELINE continued



- 1909  
 🦋 *New Books Bulletin* begins publication.



- 1915  
 🦋 Book Delivery Service established with a Model T Ford.  
 🦋 Telephone service begins.



- 1951  
 🦋 Microfilming of early newspapers begins.

- 1950  
 🦋 The Library's Tax Exempt status upheld in court.



- 1973  
 🦋 St. Louis Heritage of Urban Design Commission designated the Collection of the Mercantile Library a St. Louis landmark.



- 1983  
 🦋 John W. Barriger III library of railroad history given to the Library.



- 1985  
 🦋 The Herman T. Pott National Inland Waterways Library created.

- 1986  
 🦋 National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Historic Publications and Records Commission funded a series of projects designed to expose the Collection of the Mercantile to national users.



- 1987  
 🦋 The Newspaper photo morgue and clipping files of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, established in 1854, comes to the Library.



- 1994  
 🦋 Board of Direction began long-range self-study and plans to make the Library more accessible to modern scholarship.

- 1996  
 🦋 In its 150th year the members of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association voted to approve a Board action which affiliated the Library with the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

- 1997  
 🦋 On March 31, President Ruth A. Bryant and Chancellor Blanche M. Touhill signed documents to create the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.  
 🦋 Plans began on the design of the third major Mercantile Library building in the 150 year history of the institution.

- 1998  
 🦋 On October 2nd, the Mercantile Library is rededicated at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.