

## **The Pekin Public Library**

**Est. 1896**

The Pekin Library Association – a private group of Pekin citizens – convinced the Pekin City Council to establish a city library in 1896. Councilwoman Mary Gaither took the initiative and wrote a letter to the great benefactor of libraries around the country, Andrew Carnegie.

“There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the Earth as the Free Public Library -- this republic of letters, where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration.”

--Andrew Carnegie

Carnegie, known for his philanthropic works, approved the request and, by 1902, the Carnegie library building was completed.

The building was notable for its red tile roof, grandiose dome, and imposing shape. Original stained glass windows, grandfather and grandmother clocks, and an ornamental lamp were salvaged from the Carnegie building for the new library building completed in 1972. In 2009, the library’s lobby was renovated and updates to the Adult and Youth Services Department are underway this year. A notable service the Library provides is home delivery to seniors, people with physical or developmental disabilities, and people recovering from injury or illness.

Serving the residents of Pekin since 1896, the Library Association left a legacy for generations of citizens to use the Pekin Public Library as “the community’s information center and gathering place.”

Congratulations to The Pekin Public Library on becoming a Peoria Historical Society Centenarian organization.