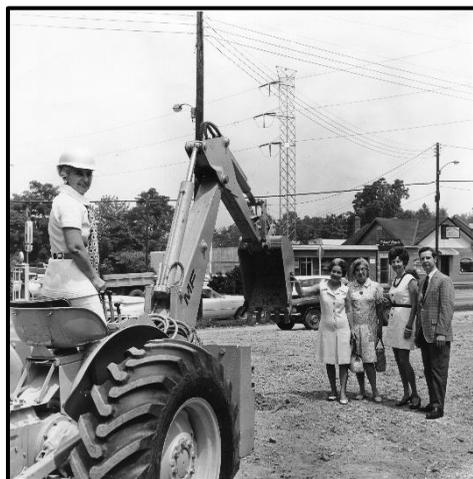




The branch storefront library became more and more crowded between 1961 and 1971

The Little Library, as it is now known, found its current home on Mill Street near the historic Freeman Store when the Vienna Town Council, in 1969, voted to move the building yet again in order to preserve it and its long history. Its previous location is now home to the Patrick Henry Public Library, which was opened in 1971.



June 12, 1970 – Breaking ground for the Patrick Henry Library at the old Little Library location on Center Street



The Little Library at the Center Street and Maple Avenue location.

The Little Library Today

The Little Library is currently operated by Historic Vienna, and the preserved one-room clapboard building is one of the oldest museums of its kind in Fairfax County. The library opens on special occasions and the first Sunday of every month except January and February. The library is included on tours of the nearby historic Freeman Store, much to the delight of schoolchildren and scholars alike.

The Little Library is also home to several special events, including readings and children's book signings. Stories and Sprinklers take place on the lawn behind the Little Library. There is a replica of the Little Library serving as a small free lending library in front of the Little Library, where anyone may borrow or leave books.



The Little Free Library

Timeline of the Little Library

1897: Edward Pierce constructs the Little Library building located at Maple Avenue and what is now Library Lane.

1912: The library building is moved to the corner of Center Street and Maple Avenue.

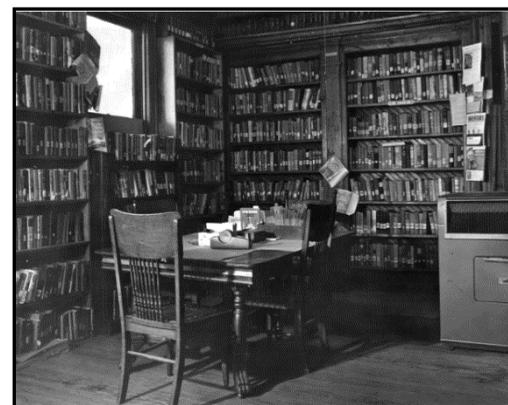
1913: The Vienna Library Association is established in order to manage the library.

1938: The town of Vienna begins to support the library with tax revenue.

1962-69: The library reduces operation to a few hours a week. The Fairfax Public Library system opens a branch in a store front in Vienna.

1970: The library is moved to its current location on the historic Freeman Store property.

Today: The Little Library functions as a museum, a location for readings and events catering to children and adults alike, and a proud emblem of Vienna's history.



The Interior of the Little Library

Special thanks to Sarah J. Brady and Maud Robinson for their work on preserving the Little Library. For more information on the history of Vienna, check out *This Was Vienna, Virginia* by Connie and Mayo Stuntz, available at the Freeman Store.

Photos from Historic Vienna, Inc. archives and the Fairfax County Public Library Photographic Archive.

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Historic Vienna, Inc.

History of the Little Library



The Little Library Move on June 17, 1970

“THE LITTLE OLD VIENNA LIBRARY....which has long been a landmark, is moved to make room for the new Patrick Henry Library.”¹

Explore Historic Vienna at the
Little Library

Corner of Church and Mill St.
703.938.5187

historicvienna@gmail.com
www.historicviennainc.org

Open 1:00-4:00PM
First Sunday of Each Month

Strengthening Community Through an
Awareness of Vienna's Past

amazonsmile

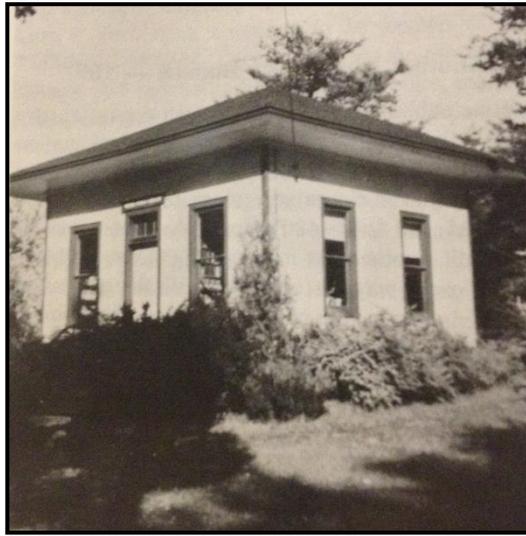
Use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/51-0205248>, for a percentage of your purchase to be donated to Historic Vienna, Inc. by Amazon.

 **Instagram**
follow us at *FreemanStore_Museum*

 Join our Facebook page
Historic Vienna Inc.

¹ *Vienna Globe*, Thursday, June 25, 1970, photo by Bob Baird

History of the Little Library



An Historic Photograph of the Little Library

The history of the Little Library is defined by community engagement. After a push by the Vienna Current Events Club, an organization of Vienna women with an interest in the community, to establish a library, Edward W. Pierce constructed the library building in 1897. At this time, the building was located at the corner of Library Lane and Maple Avenue, where the Jades Shopping Center stands today. The construction took place on land donated for the purpose by William Burdette Lewis, an early settler in the town and a Union sympathizer who voted against secession. The creation of the library was thus the result of a concerted effort of Vienna citizens.

The library underwent its first move fifteen years later in 1912, possibly to make it more convenient and accessible for the citizens of the growing town of Vienna. The building

was moved onto land at the corner of Center Street and Maple Avenue donated by Charles Delano Hine. Hine, known as Vienna's native son, was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, serving in both the Spanish-American War and World War I, as well as a lawyer and a railroad worker. Hine eventually became a government advisor, and in 1901, President Taft directed him to provide recommendations for how to improve the business practices of the government.

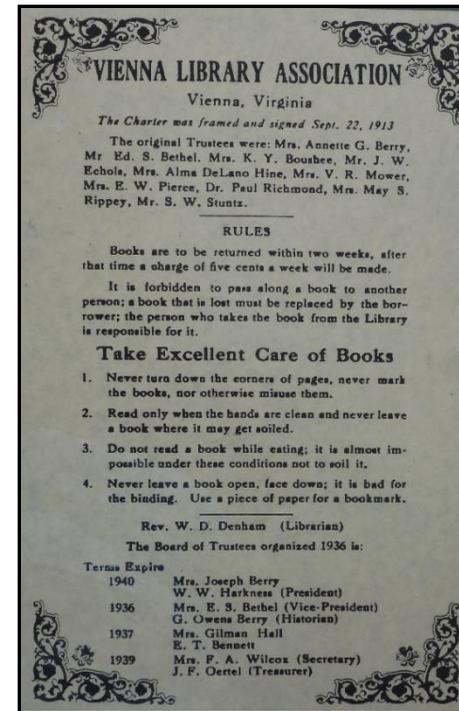


The Interior of the Little Library

In 1913, the Vienna Library Association was established in order to manage the library. Before the Vienna Library Association was founded, it is believed that Hine on occasion used the Little Library building as a law office.

The Association's board of trustees was unusual, with five men and five women serving at a time. At this point in its history, the library was only open to white inhabitants of Vienna. Initially, the library's collection consisted entirely of books donated by locals, and to this day the names of these patrons can

be found written in the volumes in the Little Library.



Rules of the Little Library, circa 1935

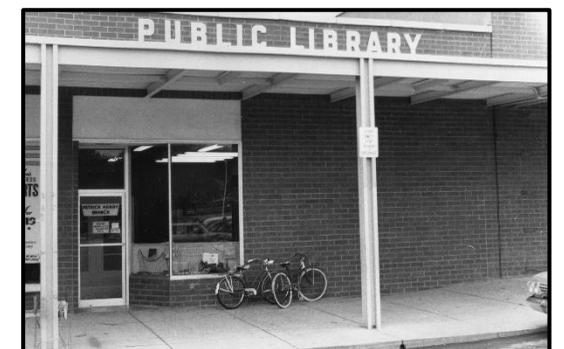
According to a 1935 Vienna Library Association handout, visitors to the library were allowed to check out books for a period of two weeks with a late charge of five cents a week, and were told not to read their books while eating or to leave a book open and face down. Late charges were the main source of revenue for the library until 1938, when the town began to make appropriations from its tax revenue to support the library.

Town funds were used by the Vienna Library Association for building maintenance, insurance, library office supplies (book pockets, borrower's and membership sign-up cards), wood and later kerosene to heat the library, as well to purchase new books

selected by the Vienna Library Association librarian and President. Book donations were received from Town residents and from as far away as Maine and New York.

The Little Library was, however, solely operated by volunteers. That is the main distinction between it and the FCPL branch library. Fairfax County only opened and operated the branch library after the citizens of Vienna raised the funds to pay for a librarian for the first year. Thereafter the county paid the salary of the librarian. That allowed the Branch library to stay open throughout the week and it dominated book borrowing in Vienna from 1962 onward while the Little Library could only be open a few hours a couple of days a week at most.

The Vienna Library operated at the Center Street location until late 1969, at which time it was the oldest operating library building in Fairfax County. Between 1962 and 1969, Fairfax County officials and the Friends of the Vienna Library ran a storefront library in the Giant Shopping Center.



The Fairfax County branch library was located in Vienna's Maple Avenue Shopping Center between W. T. Grant and the Aristo Cleaners (where Popeye's Chicken is today).