As we enter the 80th year of library service to the residents of Euclid, it’s interesting to take a look at the 53 years that the Friends have been a part of the library. It was A.Z. Sherman who was the first chairman of the Friends and who wanted the Friends of the Euclid Public Library to be organized.

Mr. Sherman said that the F.O.E.P.L. should be organized for four main reasons. These reasons included:

a. To act as a liaison between the library and the community.

b. To develop needed cultural programs geared to Young Adults (students).

c. To prove to the community that this is a painless way to become better informed.

d. To create a desire to seek more knowledge on such matters by using their library.

In 1962, the Friends of the Library had separate Men’s and Women’s Committees that would meet jointly every few months. The locations for their meetings were at the Cuyahoga County branch library on Euclid Avenue near to East 260th Street.

By 1983 the Friends became instrumental in wanting to preserve the history of our community and twenty oral history tapes were made with equipment donated by the Friends. Myra Jerkic, a Friends board member who currently serves on the board of the Foundation of Euclid Library, spoke with then staff member, Ruth Lidower, about promoting and expanding the oral history program. These tapes have been digitized and can be found on our library’s website.

In February of 1983 a computer was put on the floor with 10 staff members being sent to computer school to learn about it. This computer was shared by children and adults for research. Today the library has 68 computers for the public to utilize.

1984 was also the year when the Hillcrest Concert Band began visiting the library on an annual basis. This past year they completed their 30th visit!

The Arm Chair Travel series has been popular for 30 years at the library and it was made possible by a gift from the Friends for a Bell and Howell 16mm projector that was purchased for $620. Travel films are still shown every other Tuesday and remain popular to this day!
In November of 1990, Rebecca McFarland gave a talk on “Cleveland: 100 Years Ago and Today” for one of several visits. At the time she was a visiting historian from the west side, but now she both lives and works in Euclid serving as the library’s Marketing and Communications Manager.

On January 11, 1998 the Friends of the Library participated in the Euclid Public Library Dedication Ceremony. In the program, it stated “After the ribbon-cutting, everyone is welcome to tour the new library and become familiar with its resources. Maps will be available and staff members will be stationed throughout the library to answer questions. Friends of the Library will be on hand to enroll new members. Each person attending will receive a memento of the day.”

Bill and Bonnie Kale remain on the Board of the Friends of the Library and have served on the Board longer than any other members. Together they have volunteered for the Friends for over 20 years adding valuable expertise, with Bonnie also working as a Children’s Librarian. Bill has coordinated the semi-annual book sales for many years, following the leadership of John Kendal who also served on the Board for many years.

In 2014, the Friends of the Library support the Euclid Public Library renovation by donating funds for a new entry for the Children’s Library. The door is interactive and allows children to see special displays, interact with technology, and learn their colors and shapes.

It is only with the dedicated army of volunteers for the Friends of the Library that it has been the amazingly successful group it is today. Hundreds of members look forward to regular programs, events and the wonderful book sales that the Friends host.

Thanks to all of you who are a part of the Friends and who have made an impact on our “gem” of a library!