

uncertain memory, and the scarcity of records, it is difficult to focus on any definite date, and equally difficult to ascertain the names of those members who took part in these discussions. However, Messrs. A. Marshall, H. M. Chappell, W. W. Tanner, and A. Rountree agree that it was about the middle of 1908 that the subject was first informally brought up at a meeting of the Linwood Citizens' Association by Mr. D. Richardson, who expressed regret that a growing suburb like Linwood had neither a Public Library nor Reading Room. It was this remark that set things moving, and finally led to a definite project. Mr. Harvey, who later was elected first Secretary to the Linwood Public Library, states that he discussed the question with Mr. G. W. Russell, who was elected member for Avon at the General Election in November, 1908, displacing Mr. W. W. Tanner, the representative of this constituency for eighteen years.

Careful consideration of the data gathered, points to the conclusion that of the members of the Association who either publicly or privately mentioned the formation of a Library, to Mr. D. Richardson must be given the credit of having first of all suggested the idea. But on one point there is no doubt whatever, viz., that the Library is one of the results of the activities of the Linwood Citizens' Association, and easily one of the best of its accomplishments.

Once the idea was mooted, it appealed strongly to the more active members of this Association, and as they mostly resided within a limited area, would frequently meet, and, as frequently discuss the projected Library.

It is evident that no time was lost, for, amongst the estimates submitted to the Christchurch City Council by the Finance Committee, on August 7th, 1908, was this item: "Library, Linwood, £40."

There is neither letter nor deputation recorded in the City Council records as being the cause of this item appearing on the minutes, and from this date a period of over five months elapses ere we find another date mentioned.

The reason for the delay was probably the General Election in 1908, which would naturally interest all members of the Citizens' Association, especially as Mr. W. W. Tanner, who had many friends and supporters among the members, was seeking re-election.

On February 27th, 1909, however, the following letter appears in the minutes of the Christchurch City Council as having been received from the Secretary of the Association:—

Mr. H. R. Smith, Town Clerk.  
Dear Sir,—

Feb. 20th, 1909.

At the meeting of the Linwood Citizens' Association, held on February 19th, the matter of a Library for Linwood was discussed,

and it was decided that all possible information be gathered and submitted to the Association meeting in April. I have been instructed to inquire from you whether, in the event of a Library being formed, the old Borough Council Chambers would be available for such purpose, and under what terms it could be had.

Apologising for troubling you, and thanking you in anticipation,

I am,

Yours faithfully,

H. M. CHAPPELL.

The result of this request was that, upon the recommendation of its Reserves Committee, the City Council granted the application, as recorded in a minute of March 22nd, 1909, to that effect. The permission was subject to a rental of 10/- per annum, and the recognition of the representatives of Linwood Ward on the Council, as ex-officio members of the Library Committee.

The project was now gaining ground, and interest therein was increasing. There were two meetings at the house of Mr. G. W. Russell, M.P., about this time, and on April 30th, 1909, a public meeting was held in the Rolleston Street Hall, to discuss the proposal "to establish a Public Library in Linwood." Mr. W. W. Tanner presided, and Mr. G. W. Russell, M.P., was the principal speaker. He said that the City Council had placed the sum of £40 on its estimates for the purpose of stocking a Library at Linwood, and had offered the use of the old Borough Council Chambers at a rental of 10/- per year. Unfortunately the offer of £40 had lapsed, as it had not been claimed by March 31st, the end of the Council's financial year, but he had that day seen the Town Clerk and Councillor Otley, in the absence of the Mayor, and had ascertained that the £40 would probably still be available, and that it would be added to by an annual grant of £25. To this, Mr. Russell continued, would have to be added a share of the annual Parliamentary grant of £3000, which would probably be about £10, and with the money so provided it would be possible for the residents of Linwood to stock a fairly large number of books. He thought that a subscription of 5/- per annum would be sufficient to defray expenses, and that 300 subscribers might be expected. In moving "That a Library be established in Linwood with headquarters in the old Borough Council Chambers," Mr. J. Clarke expressed a hope that they would not follow the example of other libraries who had installed billiards rooms in connection with their libraries. On being seconded by Mr. M. Riddington, the motion was carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks was passed to the City Council for its offer of the old Borough Council Chambers as a site for the proposed library, and Mr. W. W. Tanner moved that the Linwood Citizens' Association be thanked for the interest it had taken in the matter.