

History of the L.E. Smoot Memorial Library

The Library was built in 1969 by Ann Hopewell Smoot in memory of her husband, Lewis Egerton Smoot who died at the age of 82 in October of 1962. Mr. Smoot was president and chairman of the board of Smoot Sand & Gravel.

The Memorial Room of the Library is paneled in burlled maple, topped by plaster cornices colored to match. The parquet floor is covered by a 22 foot Imperial Kirman rug. Draperies of Scalamandre brocade reported to have cost \$300 per yard originally hung in the three windows. Brass chandeliers hang above a 16 foot table of solid cherry with cherry side chairs.

A portrait of former Congressman Howard W. Smith, painted by Mrs. E. C. Hubbard of King George, hangs in the Memorial Room. A 1957 portrait of Mr. Smoot was hung in the Memorial Room at the time of the dedication. The 1960 portrait of Mrs. Smoot was hung in the Memorial Room at a private ceremony following the presentation of the 1977 American Library Trustee Association Honor Award. The two paintings on either side of the bookcases are views of Caledon, Mrs. Smoot's home.

The Library dedication took place on February 22, 1970. Because Lewis Egerton Smoot was a descendant of George Washington's sister, the dedication was timed on Washington's Birthday. In honor of Mr. Smoot who did not like speeches, formalities were kept to a minimum. The Smoot's long time friend Howard W. Smith was there along with many of their family and friends. Prayers of dedication were conducted by Reverend Harrison Simons, rector of the Episcopal churches in King George and Reverend Albert N. Jones, rector of Pobick Episcopal Church near Alexandria. Rev. Jones, former rector of the Episcopal churches in King George, married Mr. & Mrs. Smoot at on October 1, 1953. Included in the service was Albert Smoot; a nephew of the late Lewis E. Smoot. Mrs. Ann Hopewell Smoot introduced several guests who had roles in the Library project. For the dedication Mrs. Smoot wore a dress made of the same material as the drapes in the Memorial Room.

The Library opened its doors on March 2, 1970. On its first day, 110 King George County residents received library cards and 155 books were checked out.

Mrs. Smoot ran and privately financed the Library from March 1970 until November of 1973. On October 18, 1973 an Ordinance to Create the Board of Trustees was adopted by the King George County Board of Supervisors. On November 1, 1973, Mrs. Smoot donated the land, the library building and its contents to the County. At that time, Mrs. Smoot donated \$700,000 to establish an endowment fund to help maintain the Library as a free public library. The income from this fund is expended for library purposes. The principal amount remains intact and is held for investment.



Mr. Lewis Egerton Smoot



Mrs. Anne Hopewell Smoot