* DEDICATION *

*of the*

# Afro-American Collection

**— Honoring —**



## MRS. VIRGINIA Y. LEE

**Roanoke**
**1882 — 1982**
**Centennial**

## Gainsboro Branch

- of the -

## Roanoke City Public Library System

15 Patton Avenue, Northwest
Roanoke, Virginia 24016

**September 26, 1982**
**3:00 P.M.**

# DEDICATION OF THE AFRO-AMERICAN COLLECTION

Mr. Lewis Peery, *Presiding*

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

MEDITATION ..... Reverend Edward T. Burton
*Sweet Union Baptist Church*

WORDS OF WELCOME ..... Mrs. Caralene M. Pullen
*Gainsboro Branch Librarian*

PRESENTATIONS:
Mrs. Virginia Reeves
Delegate Ray Garland

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER, Mrs. Demetria Tucker Lewis
*Children's Coordinator*

SOLO ..... Mr. Willis Ferguson

DEDICATORY ADDRESS ..... Mrs. Mary Hackley
*Principal, Forest Park Elementary School*

DEDICATION OF COLLECTION . Mr. Alfred T. Whitelock
*City Librarian*

DOWN MEMORY LANE:

Rev. Enos Glaspie, *Shiloh Baptist Church, Salem*
Ms. Emily Keyser, *Assistant City Librarian*
Ms. Faye Claytor, *Hurt Park Elementary School*
Mr. George Heller, *Gainsboro PAC*
Mrs. Rose Hackley-Hale, *Fairview Elementary School*

REMARKS:
Mrs. Elizabeth Drewry, *Library Board Member*
Mrs. Virginia Y. Lee

PRAYER OF DEDICATION and
BENEDICTION ..... Reverend Kenneth B. Wright
*Pastor, First Baptist Church*

# *My Dream*

One of my main concerns and hobbies was to build and assemble a collection of "Black History" books during my tenure of service at the Gainsboro Branch Library. I knew the day would come when there would be a wide spread interest in the artistic treasures of Africa, as well as the heritage of other Blacks and their contributions to America.

With the cooperation of the incumbent Director of the Roanoke City Public Library, Miss Nancy E. Himes, my successors Mrs. Rebecca Cooper and Mrs. Caralene M. Pullen, Gainsboro Branch Library inherited one of the best Afro-American History collections in the State of Virginia so the report shows.

*— Mrs. Virginia Y. Lee*

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The person we salute today is known by name to most of the citizens of Roanoke as a friend to thousands, and as a pioneer Librarian with a deep-seated conviction and a dogged determination.

Her fortune is not the kind you deposit in a bank but the kind you deposit in the hearts and minds of people you serve ably.

The Gainsboro Branch of the Roanoke City Public Library where this lady has served as Librarian for 43½ years, was made possible and built largely due to her zeal, zest, vitality and vision to forge ahead amid many obstacles of the early 1920s. She remains ever mindful of paying tribute to the loyal supporters who cooperated with her to make this dream a reality.

Prior to serving as librarian of Gainsboro Branch Library, this lady worked in the library of Hampton Institute while attending the School of Library Science there. From Hampton she served as Librarian at LeMoyne Junior College in Memphis, Tennessee for one year.

Due to the illness of her father, she returned to Roanoke in 1927, taught school at the old Gilmer School and in 1928 became Librarian of Gainsboro Branch where she served until 1971.

She was educated in the public schools of Roanoke, Virginia and graduated from the Roanoke Public School System as Valedictorian of her class. Our subject for today continued her education at Hampton Institute where she was numbered among the members of the first class graduated from the School of Library Science.

Our subject for today has devoted her life to helping others, especially young people. Through her efforts two young people from this community have received college training and many others so inspired that life became easier and happier for them.

This individual has deep religious convictions, unswerving faith in community commitments where she has many, as well as a soul-inspired altruism which transcends her profession in trying to do research on and about members of her race that will inform and enlighten young Blacks as well as older ones to become more determined to sustain and enrich their great heritage.

This she feels is the only medium of making relative and extending knowledge about the "Blacks." With this in mind she has been a "slave" to duty and a friend to "merit" in trying to bring together an Afro-American book collection at the Gainsboro Branch of the Roanoke City Public Library System inclusive of source material that will motivate Blacks from lethargy to pride.

In her life as a writer, public speaker, lover of art, books, music and flowers as well as in her profession, Mrs. Virginia Dare Young Lee reaches out to find her life-line and develop it.

Mrs. Lee was born in McComas, West Virginia, November 22, 1906 to Robert D. and Lula B. Young.

THIS LADY OF SERVICE:

* Was never too busy to give guidance and council to young people and directed them to the book that would help unravel their confusion or to the right individual or agency that could furnish help.

* Always tried to bring courage to young and old who were facing a crisis;

* Always had an outstretched hand to help others, on the job or off;

* Trained many young people during her long tenure of service, some failed to develop their potential, others have taken their places in the top ranks of citizenship;

* Was never too tired or worn to keep her promise to those whom she served;

* Always considered herself a servant and comrade to her profession, playing the vital role of upgrading her community and each individual;

* Made high quality service undergird every act of her dedication;

* Loved every minute of her profession; she looked to the future, built for the future, withstood the test of time and now she looks to the evening time of life knowing there are still those who will cherish and preserve those things others have worked for in trying to bring the rich blessings of liberty and abundant living to themselves, others and our posterity.

# MRS. VIRGINIA DARE YOUNG LEE

**Education:**

Graduate, Roanoke City Public Schools
Graduate, Hampton Institute School of Library Science
Further Study, University of Virginia
Virginia State College
Roanoke College
Federal School of Arts
Hampton Institute

**Work:**

Hampton Institute Library
Reorganized Library,
*LeMoyne Jr. College, Memphis, Tennessee*
Taught in Roanoke City Schools
Gainsboro Branch Librarian (43½ years)

**Church Membership:**

First Baptist Church—over 55 years

**Affiliations and Achievements:**

Founder and organizer, Golden Rule Bible Class
President, Junior Missionary Society
Director, BYPU
Vacation Bible School
Religious Education Program for Young Adults
Coordinator, First Baptist Church News
Pianist, Noon-day Prayer Service
Citizen of the Year
Black History Collection, Gainsboro Library
Organized GB Library Reading Club for Community
Public Service Award

**Writer and Producer of the Following Pageants:**

"The History of First Baptist Church"
"Vacation Bible School Auction"
"The Builder"
"One Brotherhood"
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"
"This Is Your Life—Founders of Burrell Hospital"
"Recruiting for Hospital Careers"
"Your Hospital and the Community"
"Missions Around the World"

**Community Services:**

Secretary, Trustee Board, Burrell Memorial Hospital
Member, Advisory Board of Senior Citizens
Member, Roanoke Valley Safety Committee
Volunteer Worker, TAP
Public Speaker for:
Churches
Schools
Social Organizations
Director of "People's War College,"
*Sponsored by Hampton Institute to help rehabilitate soldiers returning after World War II*

Encouraged and motivated many young people to remain in school, also helped them get placement with organizations or individuals who could direct and develop potential talents

Writer of Poems - Pageants

Active member of several church and social clubs

Contributed towards education of large number of young people in the community

**Services Connected to Gainsboro Branch Library:**

Interceded in securing present site through St. Andrews Catholic Church when others said it could not be done.

Solicited donations from individuals and clubs to equip the building after being told all funds had been depleted in the construction and there was nothing left for furnishing.

Drew rough draft plans for present Gainsboro Branch Library.

Organized "Gainsboro Branch Library Reading Club"

Planned many public relations programs and exhibits cited in Library and Professional Journals.

Sent by City of Roanoke to Chicago in 1936 to represent the Library and Library Board.

Speaker on panel at "Negro Library Conference" held at Fisk University, 1930.

**Roanoke City Public Library Centennial Committee**

Ms. Carol Tuckwiller
Mrs. Carla M. Pullen
Mrs. Louise Mills
Mrs. Susan Hughes
Ms. Altie Giles

## * USHERS *

Ms. Wendy Jones*
Ms. Rhonda Price*
Mr. Ricky Preston*
Mr. Eldridge Chambers III
Ms. Lynette Lynch
Ms. Delores Jones
Ms. Bernice Powell
Mr. Cedric Pullen
Mr. Darryl Brown

(* 1982 Volunteers)

Please accept our sincere appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for all you have done to make this dedication a success.

*— Gainsboro Library Staff*