

The idea of a "Free Public Library for the Town of Jackson, New Hampshire" was initiated by John K. Porter of Boston, who was a guest at the Thorn Mountain House in 1879.

In 1896, Boston architect William Ralph Emerson was retained by artist Frank Shapleigh to design a house overlooking Jackson Village. Upon completion of the residence, Shapleigh or his wife asked Emerson if he would design a small library for the town. The Shapleighs paid Emerson \$100 for the completed plans. The laying of the stone foundation on the west bank of the Wildcat River began on August 22, 1900.

The building was constructed at a cost of about \$1,900, including \$200 paid to Nancy Meserve and Flora Stilphen for the site, \$1,497 for the building and about \$200 for furniture including a cabinet, reading table, library table and leather cushions. The town paid \$500 and the remainder was raised by subscriptions and donations. The Shapleighs gave \$50 for twelve chairs and General M.C. Wentworth donated a table.

The new library was open to the public on August 1, 1901.

The library was originally built at right angles to and facing the Jackson Community Church. It was moved in November 1931 when the stone bridge was constructed to make way for the redirected Route 16. The building was moved approximately thirty feet down the bank of the Wildcat River and rotated to face north rather than west as it had originally. The library now stands on land owned by the Protestant Chapel Association.

Adapted from a report by Lisa Mausolf for the Jackson Historical Society, August 2001