



The Mercantile Library, founded in 1835, is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit membership library. The name refers not to the collection, which is general, but to its founders. The Mercantile is located in the heart of downtown Cincinnati, one block from Fountain Square. The Library is comprised of an 11<sup>th</sup> floor Reading Room and 12<sup>th</sup> floor Lecture Room. The 2010 renovation of the Reading Room retained its historic graciousness while bringing improved function and adaptability to the space. The 12<sup>th</sup> floor lecture room has been called one of the most beautiful rooms in the city.

Mercantile at a glance:

- 1550 memberships
- 80,000 volumes
- Investment funds: \$4, 600,000.
- 2015 operating budget: \$650,000.
- 10,000 year lease (9830 years remaining)

The Executive Director reports to a volunteer board of 24 trustees and manages a staff of 3 full-time and 1 part-time employees.

The Library calendar features year-long activities including discussion groups, author readings, civic forums, and concerts. In addition to these ongoing events there are 8 signature events per year:

The **Annual Meeting & Mercantile History Lecture**. The Mercantile History Lecture, delivered at the Annual Meeting, highlights an aspect of the Mercantile Library's storied history.

The **1835 Lecture**. This history-focused lecture sheds light on a historic person or event from the period of the Library's founding in 1835 to the present.

The **Hearth & Home Lecture**. This series takes advantage of the burgeoning list of bestselling authors and personalities who are writing about the fine arts of living. Topics include food and wine, interior design, and landscape architecture.

The **Harriet Beecher Stowe Lecture & Award**. Lecture by award-recipient whose work best exemplifies "writing to change the world". Past lecturers include Gail Collins, Samantha Power, David Simon, and Jose Antonio Vargas.

The **Modern Novel Lecture** brings to the city novelists who are writing at the top of their form and whose works are favorites of local book groups.

The **Pyle Urban Lecture**. Inaugurated in 2014 to honor Albert Pyle's two decades of service to the library, this lecture features urban thinkers speaking on issues important to the vitality of our city.

The **2035 Lecture**. With a nod to forward-thinking young business leaders who founded the Mercantile Library this annual lecture looks at the future of business and technologies and the ways those will shape the economy of Cincinnati and its region.

The **Niehoff Lecture** presents a significant literary figure to an audience of 400 at a black-tie dinner in the autumn. The Niehoff Lectures, which raise funds for the Library's operations as a collecting institution and literary center, have brought John Updike, Joyce Carol Oates, David Halberstam, Seamus Heaney, and Robert Caro to Cincinnati (David Brooks will be the 2015 lecturer; 2014 featured Ann Patchett). This is the most important date on the Library's calendar and one of the city's leading cultural events.

2014 circulation: 3769

2013 circulation: 4150

2014 event attendance: 3757

2013 event attendance: 3431

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