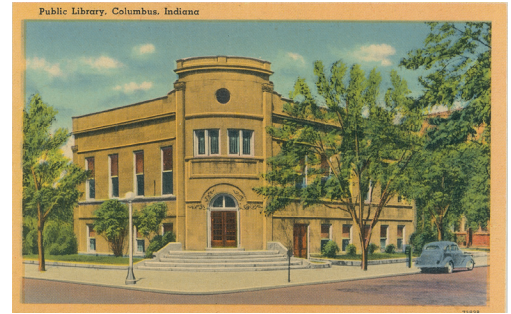


Bartholomew County Public Library



A Brief History of Bartholomew County Public Library

August 1894 The Columbus school board and local women's groups petitioned the City Council to establish a public library. To support this effort, the Columbus school board authorized a levy to fund a public library.

February 1899 The Columbus City Council made two rooms available in the [Historic] City Hall for library purposes.

August 1899 The Columbus Public Library opened to the public in [Historic] City Hall for the first time. At that time, the library served only residents of Columbus.

January 1902 The Commercial Club appointed a committee to assist the School Board in securing a library site. The corner of 5th at Mechanic (now Lafayette Avenue) was identified and Joseph I. Irwin & Harriet C. Irwin, his wife, purchased the site.

June 1, 1903 The dedication of the Carnegie Library (also known as the Columbus Public Library) was held. The Carnegie Library was built in 1903 for \$20,000, using \$15,000 from the Carnegie Corporation, on land donated by Joseph I. Irwin & Harriet C. Irwin, his wife. John W. Gaddis of Vincennes, Indiana was chosen as the architect. When the Carnegie Library was built, the library collection included 4,500 volumes and was serving the approximately 9,000 residents of Columbus.

1922 Library service was extended to all Bartholomew County residents and the library was renamed the Columbus-Bartholomew County Library.

1923 Eighteen library "stations" are established in homes and businesses throughout the county, paying individuals to administer them.

1959 Responsibility for administering and maintaining the library was transferred from the School Board to an independent, city-county Library board composed of eleven members. County-wide bookmobile service was established in 1959 and the bookmobile made its first trip on May 19, 1959.

1962 The library reorganized as Bartholomew County Library and is governed by a seven-member board of trustees.

1963 I.M. Pei was chosen as the architect for a new library building to be built on property adjacent to the Carnegie library building. The land currently occupied by the Main Library and the Visitors Center was donated to Bartholomew County Public Library by the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation.

June 1966 In 1966, the library rented space on the west side of the Hope Town Square for its Hope branch. Mildred Kennedy was the first Hope branch librarian, serving from 1966 to 1969. She began story hours for children.

October 1969 The Cleo Rogers Memorial Library, named in honor of Cleo Rogers (1905-1964) to honor her 37 years of service to the library, was opened. Columbus Subregional of Talking Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped was established in 1968 and began being distributed via BCPL Extension Services (now the Outreach department) in December 1969.

1971 The library plaza was completed and dedicated on May 16, 1971, after the installation of "Large Arch" by British sculptor Henry Moore (1898-1986). "Large Arch" was donated to the library by Mr. J. Irwin Miller and his wife, Xenia S. Miller.

1980 Bartholomew County Public Library joined the OCLC consortium, now known as WorldCat. Technical Services received an OCLC dedicated computer terminal and became the first department to be equipped with workspace computers.

1983 The library purchased the first computer for patron use, an Apple IIe.

June 1987 An addition to the library, designed by architect James K. Paris, was completed. The addition included the popular Indiana Room and a glass atrium, which housed an expanded nonfiction and reference area, that was meant to preserve the feeling of an outdoor space adjacent to the original 1969 building.

October 1990 Automated circulation, public access terminals, and dial-up catalog were established.

October 1994 Planning began for a new Hope Branch Library, and Deborah Berke was selected as the architect.

1998 The Hope Branch Library, on the east side of the Town Square, was dedicated on June 28. The new Hope branch would begin offering services to the public on July 13.

1998 The library website www.barth.lib.in.us was established and was first available to the public on October 2.

1999 The online public catalog became accessible via the library website on January 6.

2005 Online databases were added to the library website.

2008 Downloadable audiobooks and music were introduced to the library for patrons to check out via Overdrive and Net Library.

2010 Downloadable eBooks become available for patrons to check out via Overdrive.

2010 – 2013 BCPL began promotions via social media including Facebook (2010), Twitter (2013), YouTube (2013), as well as an app for Apple and Android devices (2012).

October 2011 The current Bookmobile was delivered and began serving 40 stops in townships throughout the county.

2012 BCPL entered the statewide "Reciprocal Borrowing" program, giving patrons access to more than 160 other Indiana public libraries.

2013 The Teen Services area at the Main Library was created. Additionally, the domain www.mycpl.org was officially created and implemented.

June 2014 The renovation of the library plaza was completed with alterations designed by landscape architect Randy Royer. The reopening of the plaza was celebrated by the dedication of "Modern Totem", sculpted by Martin Beach, and an outdoor concert.

April 2015 The Digital Underground media lab for video, music, and computer creativity was open to the public at the Main Library. It is now known as BCPL Create.

2018 The Book Express program began. It makes neighborhood stops to help residents in low-income neighborhoods foster a love of reading through the distribution of new and gently used free books. Book Express has expanded its services and is now the BCPL Express.

Today Bartholomew County Public Library serves more than 80,000 residents and houses over 180,000 items at its Columbus, Hope, and Bookmobile locations, including books, audiobooks, magazines, and an ever-expanding Library of Things of games, instruments, craft equipment, and much more. Helpful online resources and downloadable books, music, movies, and magazines are available 24/7.

Fourteen librarians have served as Library Director:

Jennie Elrod	1899 – 1902
Annie Owen	1902
Josie Sayre	1902 – 1903
June Deming	1903 – 1906
Carrie Ong	1906 – 1910
A.J. Dipboye	1910 – 1919
Lenore Bonham	1919 – 1925
Mary R. O'Bryan	1925
Gladys Walker	1925 – 1936
Cleo Rogers	1936 – 1964
Gerald M. Born	1964 – 1966
Stephen W. Suckow	1966 – 2003
Elizabeth Booth Poor	2003 – 2015
Jason L. Hatton	2015 –

