

# Pieces of the Past

## *Historical Sketches of the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning Co.*

305 Wick Ave., Youngstown, OH 44503  
Note: Original document written in 1957.  
Edited and last updated: May 2018



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*The Youngstown Library Association, now the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County, was founded October 27, 1880. This Library has a rich history of dedicated directors and staff members and equally dedicated and notable trustees. The pages below contain current, as well as historical information. The history is provided as written by library staff members and directors throughout the years, giving the document the flavor of a rich fabric, woven throughout the past, and providing the essence of today's library system.*

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## **History of the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association to 1957**

**By James C. Foutts, Director 1944 - 1964**

The first legal steps to provide public library service for the city of Youngstown were taken on October 27, 1880, when the Superintendent of Schools [Reuben McMillan], two of his teachers and two physicians signed the Articles of Incorporation establishing the Youngstown Library Association. These charter members were Reuben McMillan, Sarah E. Pearson, Julia Hitchcock, Dr. F. S. Whitslar and Dr. J. S. Cunningham. At this time the library already has been operating as Youngstown School Library for about 10 years and was located in the offices of the Board of Education and the First National Bank Building on West Federal Street.

The historical beginning of the library was some time in the 1840's after the General Assembly of Ohio passed a law providing for the furnishing of books to every school district in the state. The books were sent to the various Boards of Education in the State, but with the outbreak of the Civil War, the statute was suspended. In 1870, when the library was located in the Old Wood Street School building, there were 168 volumes. The books were marked "Ohio School Library" and were in a locked case which was opened once or twice a year to a class that exhausted the readable contents in one or two visits.

In 1878 the library was moved downtown to the rooms of the Board of Education and the First National Bank Building on West Federal Street and was open to the public on Saturday evenings. When the association became a legal non-profit corporation in 1880 in order to receive gifts and legacies, its official name became the Youngstown Library Association.

In 1890, through the efforts of some public-spirited men, notably John H. Clarke, a law was passed by the Ohio General Assembly, applying especially to Youngstown, by which a tax could be levied on the property of the city for library purposes. True public library service was inaugurated with the subsequent appropriations of tax funds in 1891. At this point the library, located on the entire second floor of the Reel and Moyer block at 129 West Federal Street, owned 792 books and had 678 juvenile patrons and 627 adult borrowers. The total circulation for the year ending May 5, 1891, was 7,383.

Reuben McMillan retired from his position as Superintendent of Schools in 1886, but continued as president of the library trustees until 1890. When the Association members chose John H. Clarke for their second president, they recognized the interest and effort which had been contributed to the library's development by this enterprising young attorney with deep convictions about the importance of good books and libraries. He later moved to Cleveland where his eminence in the legal profession was recognized by an appointment as a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He resigned that position at the death of President Wilson to champion the cause of the League of Nations.

Many years later Justice Clarke wrote, "I have lived a long, very busy, and not uneventful life, and as I look back on its activities, other than professional, it seems to me that the most useful, certainly the most satisfying part of it, was

striving as I did as a young man to obtain a public library for the city in which I lived, and to carry forward its good work when it was once secured...a public library is an essential to the good government of a city as pure water, and streets well paved, lighted and policed." At his death in 1945 he left a trust fund of \$100,000, the income from which is to be used to purchase books for the public library.

Early in 1897 some of the pupils and friends belonging to "The Ladies' Reading Circle" held a social gathering at which the subject of memorials was discussed by the group. The idea of dedicating the library to Mr. McMillan was conceived on this occasion and it was discussed afterwards by a number of citizens, though much against the expressed desire of Mr. McMillan himself.

Later, through efforts of Robert McCurdy, who in those days was considered the great "money-raiser" of the town, public interest was aroused and funds were subscribed by local citizens. On October 27<sup>th</sup>, Mr. McCurdy, Mr. John C. Wick and others agreed to purchase and present to the library, the Richard Brown property at Front and Market Streets, on condition that the name of the Youngstown Library Association be changed to "Reuben McMillan Free Library Association."

Richard Brown very generously agreed to sell his property to the library at the extremely low price of \$17,000. A total of \$36,562.65 was raised for the new library and memorial. The name of the association was changed from the Youngstown Library Association to the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association on March 5, 1898.

The house was remodeled and was dedicated February 16, 1899, with the association president, Mason Evans, Mayor Moore, Robert McCurdy, F. Truedly, J. T. Brooks, and John H. Clarke delivering the addresses. It was then that Mr. Clarke so beautifully characterized Reuben McMillan as "A man who sought neither wealth nor honor save as these were to be found in the faithful doing of his duty. He spent a long life for a meager salary in training the youth of this city to live the highest intellectual life, and when his name was chosen for the library, it was because his generation chose to honor and revere the type of manhood which finds its best expression in 'the high stern-featured beauty of plain devotedness to duty.'"

In 1903, another milestone in the library progress was passed as the first Youngstown separate children's room library was established. Proper books were purchased and regular story hours were arranged to encourage the enjoyment of our heritage and legends and folk tales. Because there were no branch libraries, a group of volunteer women was organized to take small collections of books to youngsters who would congregate at a designated home in such outlying parts as Steelton, Brier Hill, Craven Street, Willow Street, Hubbard Road, St. Louis Avenue and Caldwell Street.

### **Andrew Carnegie Helps with \$50,000 Gift for Library on Wick and Rayen Avenues**

When the County Commissioners decided in 1907 that they must have the library site at the corner of Market and Front for the new Court House, the association had no other course but to sell. The selling price finally was set at \$141,255 by an arbitration committee of five citizens representing the interests of both parties. After some preliminary contacts by the Chamber of Commerce which were not too promising, the librarian, Anna Louise Morse, made a trip to New York and returned with a \$50,000 gift from Andrew Carnegie to help with the new building. Several downtown sites were considered in the Phelps, Front and Boardman Street areas, but the prices were considered too high and the W. S. Bonnell property at Wick and Rayen finally was purchased at \$50,000 with \$5,000 of that amount being a gift from the Bonnells. An architect was then commissioned to design the best possible building for \$150,000 and the result was the present structure as it stood for 45 years prior to the extensive remodeling program which was completed in 1954. Few libraries built in that era were so well or so easily convertible to modern use.

There followed a decade of phenomenal publicity and growth in the use of library books in Youngstown. Books were loaned from deposit collections in factories, department stores and schools. Downtown service first was set up in the Hippodrome Arcade, then moved to a temporary building on the public square. In 1922, the first branch library building was erected on the square as a community effort with the trade unions furnishing free labor and the building suppliers the materials. Circulation figures for the rapidly growing library system soared from 144,355 in 1915 to 689,770 in 1925.

### **First Library Levy in 1920**

Library finances suffered severely during the years of the First World War when city council reduced their appropriations to the library in spite of the rapidly increasing load of work. However, by 1920 the legislature had made provision for a voted real estate levy which could be earmarked for library purposes and in that year the voters of Youngstown overwhelmingly endorsed a .2-mill levy for the library. In 1925, the voters approved an increased levy of .3 mills.

## **First Branch Libraries in 1927**

The time was now right for the branch building program which had been the goal of each librarian and board member since the beginning of the century. Within three years of hectic activity, four permanent branch buildings were erected: Brownlee Woods at 4010 Sheridan Road in 1927, West Side at 2815 Mahoning Avenue in 1928, South Side at 1771 Market Street and Bredan at Jackson and Himrod in 1929. The Jefferson branch was moved from Jefferson School to a small storeroom on Jefferson Street. A total cost for land, building and equipment was \$164,967.42 of which \$99,234.20 was provided by the city of Youngstown through council improvement bonds and appropriations, while \$65,733.22 was raised by popular subscription and gifts from the people of Youngstown.

Bedside book service to the three city hospitals and the county Tuberculosis Sanitarium was established in 1928 with a ten-day campaign for gift books which resulted in the collection of 20,000 volumes. At end of 1929 the library owned 144,278 books; circulation of the year totaled 849,028; and tax income increased to \$104,233.13.

Events were to prove that the new facilities came none too soon. As the trough of the depression deepened, Youngstown people had more and more unoccupied time and the demand for the services of the library skyrocketed. Idle folks not only wanted to read for diversion, they wanted to read for understanding, for inspiration and learning. On many occasions every chair in the libraries was filled and the number of books borrowed for home reading jumped to an all time high of 1,194,140 in 1932.

## **Tax Laws Reorganized and Reuben McMillan Free Library Becomes Library for All of Mahoning County**

The year 1934 marked the beginning of the modern era in library development. The Ohio Legislature had reorganized the tax laws in an effort to meet the financial crises faced by all departments of government. The tax on investments and other intangibles was set up as the source for the support of public libraries and libraries were denied any fixed share of the real estate tax without a special vote. This tax was collected on a countywide basis and libraries had to make their services free to all residents of the county in order to qualify for these funds. Thus by a stroke of the governor's pen, the Reuben McMillan Free Library became the library for all of Mahoning County.

Immediately communities outside Youngstown wanted libraries of their own so it was necessary to set up a policy for establishing county branches. Because the city had paid for its branch library buildings and because most of the intangibles taxes were paid by residents of the city, it was decided that any community in the county which wanted a library would have to furnish suitable quarters with heat, light and janitor service and the library association would then supply the librarians, books and management.

## **First County Branch Opens in Poland in 1935; More Branches and 'Book Trailer' Follow**

The first county branch was opened in Poland on the first floor of the community building in 1935. Other branches followed quickly with Struthers, Canfield, Campbell and Lowellville all beginning in 1937. The Beaver Township branch in North Lima opened in 1938 and Boardman in 1939.

During the period of World War II, it was evident that more space was needed for the ever-increasing number of printed books, periodicals and scientific journals. In 1948, funds were solicited from industry amounting to almost \$20,000 which was used to purchase shelving and equipment in setting up an enlarged, full-time Science and Industry Division on the main floor of the central library [the Main Library at 305 Wick Ave., Youngstown, OH 44503].

The same year saw the launching of what was then the world's largest mobile library, the Book Trailer, which circulated 130,000 books during the first year of its visits to the county schools located in townships without a branch library. Due to increased demands on the Book Trailer, another was added in January of 1957.

Belmont, the first adequate branch library for the north side, was opened in a storeroom on Belmont Avenue at the edge of the new shopping center in 1950. It replaced the old Jefferson Branch, which originated in Jefferson School and had continued in obscure storerooms on Jefferson and Griffith Streets.

A drastic cut in tax allocations on the library in 1953, during a period of rapidly rising costs, brought serious cuts in the library's services. Still not restored are the downtown branch, bedside service at the three city hospitals, and the educational film lending service.

## **Renovating the Main Library**

Four years were required to finance, plan and execute the remodeling of the main library building, the largest building project undertaken by the library since the branch buildings were constructed in 1927-29, and, because of inflation, the

most expensive undertaking in the 77-year history of the association. With no important structural change except in the entrance, it was possible to double the amount of usable public floor space in the 1910 building. This additional area provided for a separate Youth Room for high school readers, twice as much space for the Science and Industry Division, a separate Children's Library on the ground floor away from the adult services, an enlarged general reference, periodical and local history division, work space for all divisions and a greatly enlarged popular library collection on the main floor all well lighted. Cost of the work and new equipment (which consisted of a large quantity of GF furniture) was approximately \$220,000, which the association feels represents a net savings to the communities of approximately \$1,000,000, since it has deferred the need for a new building or a costly addition for another fifteen or twenty years.

As 1957 drew to a close, the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County had evolved into a county-wide library owning 345,338 volumes and lending over a million books each year to 68,679 registered borrowers from a rejuvenated main building, 5 city and 7 county branches, and 2 book trailers.

## **History of the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association -1989**

**By Robert H. Donahugh.** *Director 1979 - 1989*

As far as libraries were concerned, the 50's weren't all rock and roll in Youngstown. The school population rose, book circulation climbed--it exceeded a million for the first time in 1955--and one facility closed, and another opened. The Square Branch, in what was then Federal Square, had been extremely popular with downtown workers and visitors. Over two million books had been checked out there since its opening in 1923. But the library was asked to leave, and the branch was closed in 1953. The opening of the new facility was in Sebring, in 1956.

While money has always been a problem in libraryland, the demands on the staff and collection during the recession of the late 50's accentuated the negative. At this time the library's chief source of funding was the intangibles tax, a tax on dividends, collected on the county level. Mahoning County was near the bottom in intangibles tax collections--\$2.14 per capita in 1958. The Board of Trustees was suddenly considering some kind of additional revenue--perhaps a supplemental real estate tax levy.

Money was also a factor in staffing the library. The salaries offered were not attracting enough professional librarians. So the library decided to train its own. The Apprentice Program was reviewed and stressed. This program basically involved hiring college graduates, giving classes in library science, providing them with on-the-job training and sending them to the front lines. First mentioned in a 1903 annual report, it was only in the 50's that full commitment was given to the program. From 1950 to 1965, 62 apprentices had been hired. The average length of service was less than a year, but 20 of those 62 were still working for the library in 1965. (The program, in a modified form, would be reincarnated in the 80's as the Work/Study Program.)

The 60's started off with a budget cut and rising book circulation. The one-half mill library levy was put on the 1961 ballot and approved by a 2 to 1 majority. Winifred Smeltzer, a prominent member of the community, headed a Citizens' Committee that was instrumental in impressing on the public the needs of the library. More good news in 1961--plans were being made for newer and larger branch libraries, and Trustee William F. Maag was named "Library Trustee of the Year" by the Ohio Library Association. Another trustee, Guion Osborn, would receive the same honor in 1978.

During this time political subdivisions in the county were feeling financial pinches and began sniffing cautiously at library funds. The sniffing turned to growling in 1962 when the City of Youngstown challenged the legality of tax support for the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association. This was a somewhat paradoxical move since the city itself had provided the principal tax support for the library from 1894 to 1931. Library director James C. Foutts fought long and hard throughout this suit and was vindicated when the Attorney General once again upheld the right of an association library (the Youngstown system was one of several such in Ohio) to receive intangibles tax funds. But the tax suit and a budget appeal had delayed the branch building program.

## **The 1960's: First County-Wide Levy in 1961 and Several New Branches Built**

The funds generated by the 1961 levy, the first county-wide levy, were to provide something for nearly everyone, starting a branch building and remodeling program that was unprecedented in Northeast Ohio. Five new buildings were dedicated in 1965--Boardman, North, Poland, Sebring and Austintown (a new outlet for the system). In addition, a remodeled and expanded West opened in 1965. Campbell was dedicated in 1966, North Lima in 1967, Brownlee Woods in 1968 and Canfield and Lowellville in 1969. Most of these facilities had been partially funded by LSCA funds, Federal monies administered and granted by the State Library.

Mr. Foutts died in August of 1964; and the library system was directed by a triumvirate during the period of the search for a new director. The three persons were Catherine Harkness, Director of Adult Work; Katherine Ashley, Director of Children's Work; and Robert H. Donahugh, Head of Technical Services. On January 1, 1965, a new director was appointed--David W. Griffith.

The 60's saw changes in the library system as dramatic as those in society. In 1966 the levy was renewed, with a 58.8% majority vote. In 1967 Katherine Ashley retired as Director of Work with Children and was succeeded by Madeline Margo, who had achieved national recognition for her work with young adults and also with bookmobiles and hospital service.

### **Staff Union Beginnings**

In January, 1967, an election conducted by the American Arbitration Association resulted in the staff's turning down representation by AFSCME Local 1143. Shortly afterward the Federation of Library Employees was formed. An in-house union, growing out of the Staff Association, it was headed by Hazel Ohl and recognized by the Library's Board of Trustees as the bargaining agent for all library employees. It was succeeded in 1973 by SEIU (Local 627) and PLAY (Public Librarians' Association of Youngstown) representing supportive staff and librarians respectively.

As the decade came to a close, it became obvious that a full-time Personnel Office was needed, and Jane Umbel was appointed as the first Personnel Director.

### **Bookmobiles Go, Small 'Station Libraries' Opened**

The building program neared completion in the early 70's with South Branch rebuilt in 1971-1972. (During the period South was closed, a storefront operation was opened in the Fosterville area.) Since the Bookmobiles were becoming increasingly expensive to operate and Federal funds had beefed up school libraries, it was decided that the bookmobiles would have to go. Small station libraries were created to take their place. Some of these stations would inspire local citizens to build new facilities in community efforts that would prove to be "grass-roots" accomplishments at their finest.

In 1971, Project Outreach (YO-MAH-CO-CO) was established. This was a federally funded, LSCA experiment administered by the State Library to provide special services to the homebound and the handicapped. It was so successful that subsequently it was absorbed into the library's regular program and renamed SOS, Special Outgoing Services, [which later became Special Delivery].

Among other important events of 1971: a John Cotton Dana Award for the library's promotion of Earth Day; the establishment of the Public Relations Department, under the direction of Jeanne Dykins; and the voters' approval of the .46 library levy renewal.

### **Library Strikes from 1972-1980**

While the library has had three strikes against it [between 1972-1980], those strikes differed in cause and length. The first took place on November 13, 1972, with librarians performing various tasks so that libraries could remain open. The strike was settled on November 18 with the Board's recognizing clerical and maintenance staff's affiliation with Local 627, AFL/CIO. The second strike went from February 24 to April 8, 1975. In 1980 the longest strike in this library's (or probably any library's) history took place. It began March 12, 1980, and forced the closings of all public library outlets in the County. The librarians' union (PLAY) settled on May 21; and Local 627 settled June 19. Later the librarians would sign on with 925, so that both library unions would be affiliated with AFL/CIO.

Labor problems weren't the only things facing the library in 1972. The newly remodeled South Branch reopened, and a storefront library in McGuffey Mall was established on an experimental basis. It was to prove a failure.

The levy renewal in 1971 continued to help the library's always-shaky balancing act with the budget. The Citizens' Committee for that campaign had been composed of the local Jaycees, the same group that had started in Youngstown what eventually came to be known as "National Library Week."

As part of a statewide effort to provide networks that would enhance reference and other library services, the Northeast Ohio Library Association (NOLA) was established, with Hazel Ohl as the first director and Youngstown as the resource library. The five-county association would grow to seven.

### **Library Strikes in 1990 and 1993**

**1990** - On January 30, 1990, members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) AFL-CIO Local 627, representing the Library's clerical and maintenance employees, voted to strike. Their contract with PLYMC expired on January 31, 1990. Due to the strike, libraries in the PLYMC system closed effective February 1, 1990. On February 28, 1990, Local 627 voted to accept the latest Library offer and end the strike with a three-year agreement. Libraries reopened March 1, 1990. Local 627 representative was Ken Lewis. Library Director was Theresa Trucksis.

As a result of happenings during the 1990 strike, the Library Board of Trustees voluntarily made changes to board membership. The Youngstown City Mayor and Mahoning County Auditor were added as non-voting members. Trustees approved designating six seats on the board to be nominated by the following: Mahoning County Commissioners, Mahoning County Board of Education, Youngstown State University Trustees, Youngstown State University Foundation, Ohio State Senator, and Friends of the Library. Trustees retained the right to vote on the nominees to add them to the Board. A Board policy was created to reflect the changes.

**1993** - On March 5, 1993, members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) AFL-CIO Local 627, representing the Library's clerical and maintenance employees, voted to strike. Talks between PLYMC and Local 627 continued past the contract's expiration on January 31, 1993, and the union members continued to work without a contract up until the strike. All 21 libraries in the system closed were closed beginning March 6, 1993. The Union voted to end the strike on March 29, 1993, and libraries reopened on March 30, 1993. Library SEIU representative was Ken Lewis. Library Director was Theresa Trucksis.

### **Friends of the Library Founded in the 1970's**

While library goals had always been discussed and argued, it was at this time that some definite ideas were formalized and put on paper. High among the priorities was the creation of Friends groups at all locations. Throughout the 70's, librarians and patrons met and talked, sparked by the enthusiasm and dedication of Jeanne Dykins, Community/Public Relations Director, and Dr. James A. Houck, who would eventually become President of Main Library's Friends, Chairman of the Citizens' Committee for several Library Levy Renewal campaigns, and eventually a member of the library Board of Trustees. The closing years of the decade saw the first annual "Friends of the Library Open House" and the first observance of "Friends of the Library Month."

The library was among the first public libraries in the state to join OCLC (Ohio College Library Center)--in 1973. This is an on-line cataloging tool, designed to assist academic libraries in acquiring cataloging information as rapidly as possible. Through a grant from the State Library all of Youngstown's retrospective holdings were fed into the system. In 1979 the interlibrary loan subsystem was instituted, thus putting the library in touch with nearly every major library in the country. In future years, OCLC would expand its services, its clients and go international. It would also change its name to simply "OCLC," (Online Computer Library Center).

The first time the library levy renewal failed was in the spring of 1976. Fortunately it passed in that fall's election.

As its contribution toward celebrating the U.S.A.'s Bicentennial, the library sponsored an area-wide mural program, in cooperation with the schools. The successful venture resulted in Bicentennial murals hanging at Main Library and branches--and another John Cotton Dana Award for library promotions.

David W. Griffith, Library Director since 1965, retired in 1979. Following a nation-wide search, Robert H. Donahugh was appointed by the Board in June.

### **Fire in Main Library in 1978**

One of the most horrific incidents in the library's history was the fire at Main Library in October, 1978. An unknown arsonist caused incalculable damage, including the destruction of historical documents and the official records of the Nuremberg Trials. In October, Mr. Donahugh was elected President of the Midwest Federation of Library Associations. (He had been previously elected President of the Ohio Library Association in 1974.)

### **Celebrated 100 years in 1980**

As birthday celebrations go, the library's 100th (in 1980) was as joyous as possible following a 98-day strike. There was a special edition of BIBLIO-FILES, the official library newsletter, centennial mugs, a steel bookmark (which had to be made outside Youngstown), articles, talks and media coverage (including a Happy Birthday from Willard Scott on the TODAY TV program).

At the end of 1980, Madeline Margo retired after 38 years of service to the library.

The library's real estate levy came up for renewal in 1981 and passed handily--56,074 for and 29,716 against. The following year saw the highest book circulation since depression days.

It goes back to the 30's--public libraries in Ohio had been funded primarily through the intangibles tax, a tax on dividends, etc., paid on the county level. In July, 1983 the State repealed the intangibles tax. Beginning in 1986 public libraries would, by law, be funded (through a special formula) from the State Income Tax.

At its meeting in 1983, the Ohio Library Association named Robert H. Donahugh Librarian of the Year. In 1986, Jeanne Dykins, Community/Public Relations Director of the library, would receive the same honor.

Grass roots endeavors were prominent in the hinterlands, with communities in Ellsworth, Greenford and North Jackson planning and building library buildings which were turned over to the county system.

In 1985 Jane Umbel, Assistant Director, retired and was succeeded by Theresa A. Trucksis, former Director of NOLA.

### **Earthquake Damage in 1986**

An earthquake in January 1986, did some damage to the Main Library Building. This would necessitate the pointing and cleaning of the building, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Later in the year, champion prizefighter Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini assisted in the promotion for the Library Levy renewal. Following a successful campaign (which was to win the library its third John Cotton Dana Award), the levy passed with nearly 70% positive vote.

A long, arduous series of labor disputes (unrelated to the library) hampered the asbestos removal program in the library throughout most of 1987. North, Struthers and Main Library were closed. Books were stored in vans in parking lots--all of Struthers and North's books, and Main Library's Reference books.

A major achievement in 1988 was the creation of a policy manual for the Board of Trustees. For the first time in the library's history, policies were gathered together in one place. Each was reviewed by a Policy Committee and approved by the full Board.

The trustees of this library system have traditionally been active on the state and national level, as well as serving on the board. Guion Osborn, James A. Houck and Myron Roh have been particularly noticeable in the Ohio Library Trustees Association. Trustees were also busy planning a new regional library in Boardman. A special committee, appointed by President William L. Spencer, was talking with bankers, planners, architects and library staff members.

The new "regional" library was part of the reorganization of the system, which had begun in 1985 with the dividing of the county into three regions--Central, South and West. Three new positions were created to take charge of the regions: Regional Director (Central)--Barbara Malek; Regional Director (South)--Raffaella Pazak; and Regional Director (West)--Mary Pullin. Each region would have its own headquarters and coordinators (adult and juvenile) for scheduling, programming, materials selection, etc.

The Long-Range Plan, in development for many years, was approved by the Board in 1989. In March of that year, Robert H. Donahugh announced his retirement.

## **LIBRARY SERVICES**

### **BRANCHING OUT**

*Written in 1980 by Deborah McCullough, for the THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS, the **Oct./Nov. 1980 issue** of BIBLIO-FILES, the library's former monthly publication.*

With an increase in circulation and demand for books and materials, the public library was faced with the decision early in its history to branch out. In 1919 without any advance announcement, a branch of the library formerly in the Hippodrome Arcade, moved to the Public Square. This central location made for convenience of use by all patrons of the city and not only housed fiction but also featured books on business and technology. In 1923, a new Square Branch building was dedicated--a result of donated labor and materials. This building was sold in 1954.

The South Side Branch was one of the first of the city branches to open. It was located in South High School from 1912-1915 and moved to 1708 Market Street in 1915. After more than 10 years of dreaming and 2 years of intensive

fund raising, a new branch was built and dedicated in 1929. In March of the following year, 20,000 books circulated at this facility. South was remodeled in 1971.

Brownlee Woods Branch began as a sub-station in Walkers Confectionery Store in 1922 and moved to the Fire Station at Midlothian and Sheridan in 1925. Funds were raised for a new structure at Sheridan and Everett; the new building was completed in 1927. The structure that stands today was dedicated in October 1968.

West side residents also campaigned for a branch in their area. West Branch was first located at the Mahoning Avenue ME Church (1925) and by July 1928 moved to a new building on Schenley and Mahoning, which was a source of pride to the community, West Branch was remodeled and expanded in 1965.

In 1939 Boardman residents began using the library when it was housed in the old St. James Parish house on Market Street. A new library was dedicated in February 1954, replacing an older structure that was an institution in the community. Today the library at Glenwood Avenue is the busiest in the county.

North Branch changed names and locations several times during its development. It began as a room in Jefferson School. In 1926 it was located at 315 Jefferson Street and in 1930 moved to 1578 Griffith Street. In 1950 the Jefferson Branch, overcrowded and inadequate, became Belmont Branch (1520 Belmont Avenue). In 1965 Belmont moved to its present location at 1344 Fifth Avenue and became North Branch. This beautiful structure was dedicated to the late Justice John H. Clarke, associate justice of the U. S. Supreme Court and second president of the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association.

Poland Branch was the first of the county branches to open. In 1936, it began service in a small room on the ground floor of the old town hall (now the Fire Station) and in 1941 moved to larger quarters on the second floor. In May 1962 the branch moved to the ground floor of the Kennedy House across the street from its present location. The new building along the banks of Yellow Creek was dedicated in November 1965.

The old Community Building (formerly a Theater Auditorium) in Canfield was the first home for Canfield Branch (named Boughton Branch) in 1936. The branch expanded to the entire first floor by 1960. A new branch building located at 73 W. Main Street was dedicated in June 1969.

In 1937 Struthers Branch began serving its community from an old building rented from the Knights of Pythias. A site for a new building was acquired in 1941 and a building fund was established. Funds came from savings of the Struthers School District Library Board that had been set aside for 20 years. The new branch located at 95 Poland Avenue was the result of this effort and was dedicated in September 1957.

The citizens of Austintown had been served for years with a bookmobile. In 1961, the passage of a library tax levy made the library expansion program possible. In 1962 the building program began. A new branch building for the Austintown community was dedicated in February 1965.

The following branches are now part of Extension Services: East Branch Library was established in May 1928 on the corner of Himrod and Loveless Avenues. The new branch at 6 N. Jackson Street, established in February 1930, was named the Breaden Family Branch to honor the generosity of this family to the library. By 1968, the name was changed to East Branch. Lowellville Branch began serving its community in the City Hall in 1937. The new building at 151 Second Street was dedicated in 1969. North Lima Branch began as the Beaver Township Library in 1938. The original building has been preserved in Pioneer Village at the Canfield Fairgrounds. The new branch at 1822 South Avenue Extension was dedicated in 1967. Sebring Branch began in a store at Fifteenth Street in Sebring in February 1956. The new building at 195 West Ohio Avenue was dedicated in August 1965. **[Note: See updated information about Main and individual branches below.]**

All of these branch facilities are the result of a community-wide effort for expanded library service in the county and are a source of pride to the library and the patrons they serve.

### **SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY: YOUNGSTOWN BUSINESS AND THE LIBRARY**

*Written in 1980 by Diane Vicarel, for the THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS, the Oct./Nov. 1980 issue of BIBLIO-FILES, the library's former monthly publication.*

Specialized services to Youngstown's business community have been provided by the Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County since 1924, when the Reference Department began offering "technical service" to its patrons. Mildred Ziegler became the "technical reference assistant" in 1938. Her dedication and organization, coupled with the concern and contributions from local businesses, resulted in the formation of the Science & Industry Division in May,

1949. The \$17,125 contributed by area businesses and individuals (among them Commercial Shearing, General Fireproofing, Strouss, McKelvey's, Republic Rubber, Standard Slag, Valley Mould, The Vindicator, Youngstown Sheet and Tube and Youngstown Steel Door) established and furnished the S. & I. Room, which was combined with the General Reference Room, and headed by Miss Ziegler. Five years later, in March, 1954--when the entire building was remodeled--the Science and Industry Division moved to its present location in the South Room, where Miss Ziegler continued as head of the department until her retirement in 1961. Successive department heads were Dimitri Teodorescu, Norma Allen, and, most recently, Orin Cole.

The current (1980) "Science and Industry" collection contains over 40,000 circulating books, 5,000 reference books, 8,000 rolls of microfilm and 200 periodical subscriptions to meet the information needs of the community's 8,500 plus businesses. These needs are varied--investment information, company addresses, information on the management of small businesses, historical information on the development of Youngstown business, practice guides for licensing exams in nursing, engineering and other fields that demand them, repair and how-to information for the machine trades, and the like.

As business conditions across the nation and in the Valley change, so do the information needs of the area's businesses. Rising inflation causes people to look for ways to cut back costs, so there is more demand for do-it-yourself materials, for consumer/buy-it-right materials, for personal finance and personal investing information. High unemployment rates and closing job markets--of which the Valley has firsthand knowledge in light of the recent steel mill decline--increase the demand for job-hunting materials, information on how to write resumes, and information on comparative cost-of-living in other cities, as some people consider moving into/out of the area. These changing conditions generate still more information needs--market analyses, historical information, and company information.

During the development of the Science & Industry Department at the Library, some things have never changed. Youngstown business--whether in decline or prosperity--has always needed, used, and supported the library, and the Science & Industry Department--from its creation at the urging of the business community--has served it well.

***(Note: The Science and Industry materials are located in the Information Services Department in Main Library. IS still provides a strong collection of materials for business, industry and investment in what is now called the Business & Investment Center or BIC.)***

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

*Written in 1980 by Madeline Margo, for the THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS, the **Oct./Nov. 1980 issue** of BIBLIO-FILES, the library's former monthly publication.*

From 1903, the main thrust of children's work has been to introduce books to children--to get even the youngest hooked on books and reading. Storytelling and book talks are one way and they have always been an integral and vital part of the program, whether at playgrounds, schools, library story hours or groups such as the Scouts and Head Start.

There have been other ways, as well, of encouraging the use of the libraries by children. Former Director Clarence Sumner's planning and subsequent opening of the Mother's Room for parents and preschoolers in 1935 was an outstanding achievement, unique in its field. (Changing times saw its dissolution in the 1950s). The moving of the Children's Library to the renovated ground floor in 1953 was another milestone. The growth of the branch libraries in the '50s and '60s and appointment of Children's Librarians at that time signified the importance of work with youth. Emphasis on programming--movies, puppet and magic shows, special holiday story hours, speakers, after-school programs, summer reading clubs--all tied in with reading--emerged in the 1970s.

In 1917 school house stations were opened and in 1918, a "Ford car" was purchased to visit stations more often.

## **Services for Children of All Ages Has Changed Over the Years**

*Submitted in 2018 by Josephine Nolfi, Director of Youth Services and Programming*

Librarians have always known intuitively that library programs modeled developmentally appropriate reading techniques, early literacy extension activities, and hands-on learning experiences that are important first steps in a child's ability to become a good reader. However, the results were indisputable when scientists began using brain imaging technology that allowed them to map brain stimulation and neural pathway development in young children *as it is occurring*. Children who are conversed with, read to, engaged in language activities that support the growth of receptive language skills and provide opportunities for developing expressive language, develop more advanced

linguistic skills than do children who are not verbally engaged. It has been since been proven that children who do not receive this early stimulation, certain skills—particularly grammar and pronunciation, may be permanently impacted.

### **How the Library's Baby Brilliant Initiative Began in 2006**

This research changed forever the way preschool programs are prepared and presented in libraries throughout the United States. The American Library Association developed Every Child Ready to Read, a program designed to help librarians plan programs that reinforce the development of the six preliteracy skills kids need to acquire before they can learn to read. In 2006, the library began training its librarians to incorporate the skills into all preschool programs. Traditional story times became "Baby Brilliant" programs. Parents were encouraged to participate in story time. Handouts with literacy tips were given at each program so that parents could extend the learning opportunities at home.

The Library also developed Baby Brilliant-To-Go Kits. Designed for parents, teachers, and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2 and 2 to 5, the kits help adults apply concepts learned in the Baby Brilliant programs. Organized by theme, the kits contain a variety of age-appropriate books, music, and toys that work together to reinforce the development of the preliteracy skills. The kits also contain an informational booklet that helps caregivers extend and reinforce the literacy experience in simple activities and language games. Funding for these kits was made available through the "Growing Readers, Creating Leaders" project, an grant coordinated by Easter Seal Society of Mahoning, Trumbull, and Columbiana Counties on behalf of Mahoning County Family and Children First Council and 15 Mahoning Valley.

The grant also funded parent, teacher, and daycare provider classes that were presented by the Library's Early Literacy Specialist. During the grant period alone, the Library provided literacy instruction to 2,155 parents and 430 childcare providers. The coming together of research, funding, programming, and training truly benefitted Mahoning County's children, parents, and caregivers.

This work continues to mold library programming for babies, toddlers and young children. Additionally, Early Learning Centers have been incorporated in new library branches built in the 2000s, such as Newport, East, Boardman, Canfield and Michael Kusalaba branches.

### **TEENXTREME – SERVICES FOR TEENS**

TeenXTreme, a program aimed at young adults ages 12-18 in grades 7-12, began at the Library in September of 2001. Since that time, the program has successfully attracted many new teens to the Library. A Teen Advisory Board, formed to give input into teen programming and services, is comprised of teens from throughout Mahoning County. Xtreme Team librarians *Beverly Chearno, Cindy Beach and John Waller* create programs and services which draw teens into the library. The Library's teen website, [TeenXTremeOnline.org](http://TeenXTremeOnline.org), is continually updated and designed to appeal to the grade 7-12 market.

### **SPECIAL DELIVERY (Formerly Special Outgoing Services or SOS)**

A new name, more services. In 2007, the Library's outreach program to those who can't get to a library was renamed "Special Delivery." The service was formerly called "Special Outgoing Services" or "SOS." Special Delivery is a library agency dedicated to serve qualifying Mahoning County patrons with special needs – those who can't come to the library. The agency on which SOS is based was established in 1971 under a grant known as "Project Outreach," funded under the U.S. Library Services and Construction Act through the State Library of Ohio.

When federal funds ran out in December 1976, the Library assumed responsibility for continuing these special services, and created the new Library agency, Special Outgoing Services. SOS continued to operate from the old Project Outreach location on the lower level of West Library. In 1981, due to staffing considerations and location, SOS and West Library were combined into one agency, SOS/West, operated by a single staff. In November 1982, "SOS By Mail" replaced home delivery of materials by van. The postal service absorbs some of the postage for qualified patrons. Due dates are extended, so patrons have time to read their materials. "Special Delivery" has retained the "Books By Mail" service, sending books and other library materials to those who qualify for this service. Large-print books and magazines are available, as well as Talking Books and Descriptive Videos.

The Department's name changed to Special Delivery in 2007.

## THE GRANT CENTER

The Library's Grant Center was accepted as an affiliate of the Foundation Center, headquartered in New York City in June of 1993 and officially opened in October of 1993. The Grant Center is located in Main Library.

## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The newly formed Friends of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County (PLYMC), started in 2003. The Friends of PLYMC Bookstore and Gift Shop, located in Poland Library, is one of the main projects of this new group. Friends are special volunteers who give of their time and efforts to support the Library. Several branch libraries have individual Friends of the Library groups, as well.

## STRATEGIC PLAN – LIBRARY 2011

Library 2011, the Library's 7-year system-wide improvement plan, was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2004, makes extensive recommendations for five key aspects of the Library's operations: Financial Stability, Service Infrastructure, Meeting Community Needs, Staff Development and Civic Responsibility. For more information on Library 2011, brochures are available at county libraries and information is available on the Library's website at: [Library2011.org](http://Library2011.org).

## STRATEGIC PLAN – LIBRARY 2020

Library 2020, the PLYMC strategic plan, was approved by Library Trustees in June of 2014. The plan was drafted from conversations and input with community members, library staff and trustees, plus data gathered by the Youngstown State University Center for Urban and Regional Studies. The plan focused on six areas: Learning Opportunities (programs and services); Community Presence (communication, outreach and partnerships); Collections and Spaces (facilities and materials); Technology (public and internal-future focused); Staff (internal development); and Fiscal Stewardship (budget and development).

## WHAT IS A LIBRARY TRUSTEE?

(From *THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS*, the *Oct./Nov. 1980 issue* of *BIBLIO-FILES*, the library's former monthly publication.)

Definitions from THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:

trustee: A member of a board elected or appointed to direct the funds and policy of an institution.

trust: Firm reliance on the integrity, ability, or character of a person...

These phrases will give some small indication of the importance of a library trustee. As a holder of the public trust, the trustee adds a duty of the highest community importance to what is already a busy schedule. Only dedicated community leaders are sought as trustees. They give valuable time, knowledge and expertise to establish policy and determine funding.

A trustee is accountable to the public for the kind and quality of library service delivered to the community. A trustee is a citizen working without pay on behalf of a publicly-financed institution, a citizen whose only authority is collective within the context of the board.

A good library system is as necessary to the total health of a community as a good school system. Trustees work toward the very best possible library service. This community has indeed been fortunate in having (and having had) some of the finest and most dedicated men and women available.

## TRUSTEES THROUGH THE YEARS...

Mrs. Asael E. Adams (Anna Julia Shook)	1922-1947
Chauncey Humason Andrews	1883-1893
J. Cameron Argetsinger	1930-1955
Mrs. J. Cameron Argetsinger	1956-1971
Myron I. Arms	1902-1926
Mrs. Olive Freeman Arms	1899-1900
George T. Arrell	1883-1884
Thomas Atwood	1999-2002
Richard Atkinson	2008-Present

William H. Baldwin	1894-1899
Daniel H. Becker	1989-2002
James L. Beeghly	1965-1970
James E. Bennett, Sr.	1935-1963
Mrs. Harry Bonnell	1900-1919
Kathryn Bennett	1992-2014
Alex Benyo	2009-Present
Alexa Sweeney Blackann	2017-Present
Timothy Bresnahan	2008-Present
Richard Brown	1881-1903
William J. Brown	1964-1981
Paul C. Bunn	1949-1957
Henry A. Butler	1928-1932
Joseph G. Butler, Jr.	1915-1927
Andrew Lyman Button	1934-1935
Richard Calvin	1972-2008
Mary D. Campbell	1888-1893
Emanuel N. Catsoules	1985-2004
Dr. Novetus H. Chaney	1903-1915
Dr. Ida Clarke	1900-1922
John Hessin Clarke	1883-1900
Augustus B.Cornell	1881-1894
Millicent Counts	1990-2017
Arabella Crandall	1920-1941
Alvin C. Craver	1908-1912
Delores Crawford	1993-Present
Dr. John S. Cunningham	1881-1885
Anna Jean Cushwa	1983-1988
Harry Dechend	1926-1935
Benjamin F. Defendeifer	1949-1969
Judge Mary DeGenaro	2003-Present
Terry Dimascio	2015-Present
Louisa Maria Edwards	1919-1940
Arthur W. Einstein	1940-1951
The Rev. Dr. Homer J. R. Elford	1973-1988
J. Fred Essig	1957-1958
Mason Evans	1889-1921
Susannah A. Felton	1904-1920
Dr. Thomas D. Y. Fok	1973-2009
John Willard Ford	1933-1954
Tod Ford	1889-1901
George Lincoln Fordyce	1903-1931
Joseph Friedman	1951-1957
Thomas Frost	2011-Present
Rebecca Fordyce Gayton	1932-1963
Dr. David Genaway	1993-1998
William T. Gibson	1881-1908
Hugh W. Grant	1934-1943
Wells R. Griswold	1905-1934
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Alfred J. Heinrich	1957-1964
Judge Charles P. Henderson	1953-1981
James A. Henderson	1925-1928
Bernard Hirshberg	1904-1930
Julia A. Hitchcock	1881-1888, 1891-1901

William J. Hitchcock, Jr.	1942-1972
Mrs. William J. Hitchcock	1881-1891
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Glenn W. Holdbrook	1966-1971
Dr. James A. Houck	1985-1990
Josephine Houser	1993-2011
R. Frank Huntley	1979-2008
Betty J. H. Jagnow	1981-1993
C. Gilbert James	2005-2014
George F. Jewett	1894-1901
Dr. Howard W. Jones	1937-1982
Mrs. Julius Kahn	1934-1937
Kenneth M. Lloyd	1940-1985
Michael J. Lyden	1949-1973
Robert McCurdy	1884-1904
James Harris McEwen	1891-1897, 1901-1919
Samuel W. McKeown	1885-1889
Reuben McMillan	1880-1898
Mrs. Reuben McMillan	1899-1902
Kenneth L. McMillin	1971-1985
William Frederick Maag, Jr.	1922-1964
William A. Maline	1897-1933
John L. Marsh	1926-1970
James J. Meehan	1996-Present
Jacobus Meerman	1987-1993
Jerold S. Meyer	1957-1981
Harold E. Moore	1990-2010
Henry C. Muckley	1885-1886
Mrs. David Nicolls	1971-1972
Norman L. Norris	1919-1925
Guion Osborn	1963-1989
Sarah E. Pearson	1881-1886
Robert L. Pegues, Jr.	1971-1980
Mrs. Sarah J. Peterson	1886-1897, 1901-1948
J. F. William Ritter	1928-1948
Dr. David Ritchie	1997-Present
Henry M. Robinson	1901-1905
Myron Roh	1971-1993
Judith Schmutz	2011-Present
Ms. Virginia Shorten	1973-1992
Dr. Thomas A. Shipka	2003-2011
Cyrus B. Sill	1887-1889
Ralph Skerratt	1981-1986
Clarence R. Smith	1989-2014
William L. Spencer	1955-1997
John Stambaugh	1884-1889
Ron Strollo	2012-Present
Elizabeth Szabo	1981-1982
Marshall Tannehill	1973-1996
David Theobald	1881-1887
Mrs. David Theobald	1889-1903
Paul J. Thomas	1958-1972
David Tod	1903-1917
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph N. Trainor	1944-1956
Frederick Truedley	1886-1903

Chase Tomson Truesdale	1917-1926
Carole Weimer	2015-Present
Dr. Frederick S. Whitslar	1880-1885
John C. Wick	1883-1903
Paul Wick	1883-1890
James P. Wilson	1897-1933
Kenneth J. Wilson	1981-2002
John H. Yerian III	2003-Present
Ralph Meacham, Mahoning Co. Auditor	Current Ex-Officio Member
Mayor Jamael Tito Brown	Current Ex-Officio Member

### 2018 Trustee Officers

Dr. David Ritchie	President
Carole Weimer	Vice President
Mark Mrofchak	Fiscal Officer
Tina McBane	Deputy Fiscal Officer/Secretary
Aimee Fifarek	Executive Director

### Board Changes in 1990 to Better Represent Community

In October 1990, to ensure a more broad representation of the community which it serves, the Library Board of Trustees reorganized to include seats nominated by the following: Mahoning County Commissioners, Mahoning County Board of Education, Youngstown State University Board of Trustees, Youngstown State University Foundation, Ohio State Senator, Friends of the Library. At that time, the Mayor of the City of Youngstown and the Mahoning County Auditor were added as ex-officio non-voting seats.

*"I have lived a long, very busy, and not uneventful life, and as I look back on its activities, other than professional, it seems to me that the most useful, certainly the most satisfying, part of it was striving as I did as a young man to obtain a public library for the city in which I lived, and to carry forward its good work when it was once secured."*

--Justice John H. Clarke, Second President, Library Board of Trustees  
Associate Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, 1916 -1922

## LIBRARY DIRECTORS

Annual reports from 1880, when the present library was incorporated, were obviously typed from handwritten records long after the events--and the handwritten records were gone. The following is the best that can be pieced together from the conflicting records.

1872 - 1881	Sarah Pearson
1881 - 1889	Leila McKay
1889 - 1890	H. A. Farmer
1890 - 1898	Julia Hitchcock
1898 - 1901	Minnie E. Gibson
1902 - 1914	Anna Louise Morse (First Librarian)
1914 - 1915	Fannie A. Smith (Mrs. Franklin Powers)
1915 - 1926	Joseph L. Wheeler
1921 - 1922	Anna M. Tarr ("Acting Director" while Wheeler on leave of absence) Also "Acting Director" June - September 1926
1926 - 1944	Clarence W. Sumner
1944 - 1964	James C. Foutts ("Acting Director" 1944-1945) Named librarian Nov. 17, 1945
1965 - 1979	David W. Griffith
1979 - 1989	Robert H. Donahugh
1989 - 1997	Theresa A. Trucksis
1997 - 2012	Carlton A. Sears
2012 - 2017	Heidi M. Daniel
2017 - Present	Aimee Fifarek

## HISTORY OF MAHONING COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

*(THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS, Oct./Nov. 1980 edition of BIBLIO-FILES. Edited 2004.)*

### MAIN LIBRARY

*305 Wick Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44503*

- 1870 - 168 books from the Ohio School Library, stored and circulated—Old Wood Street School.
- 1878 - Board of Education, First National Bank Building.
- 1880 - YOUNGSTOWN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION formed on October 27, 1880
- 1891 - 129 West Federal Street (2nd floor, Reel and Moyer block).
- 1898 - Name changed to REUBEN MCMILLAN FREE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, March 5, 1898.
- 1899 - Move to Richard Brown remodeled residence, Front and Market Streets. Dedicated February 16, 1899.
- 1903 - First Youngstown separate children's room library established.
- 1910 - NEW BUILDING, 305 Wick Ave., dedicated December 3, 1910.
- 1954 - Remodeled. (50,000 square feet)
- 1996 - Renovation and Expansion Dedication on September 28  
Square Footage: 45,000 Historic building; 23,000 New East Wing

### AUSTINTOWN

*600 S. Raccoon Road, Youngstown, Ohio 44515*

- February 21, 1965 – 5650 Mahoning Ave. location dedicated. (6,400 square feet)
- May 24, 2001 – Groundbreaking for new building at 600 S. Raccoon Rd.
- Sept. 28, 2002 – Austintown Branch at 5650 Mahoning Ave. closes permanently. Replaced by new building at 600 S. Raccoon Rd.
- Oct. 11, 2002 – New Austintown Branch Library opens. (19,940 square feet). Dedicated Oct. 27, 2002.

### BOARDMAN

*7680 Glenwood Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44512*

- September 27, 1939 - St. James Parish, 7379 Market Street.
- Feb. 28, 1965 – 7227 Glenwood Ave. location dedicated. (6,400 square feet)
- Sept. 27, 1992 – New building, 7680 Glenwood Ave., dedicated. (20,500 square feet)

### BOOKMOBILE OFFICE

*2815 Mahoning Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44509*

- 1949 - Bookmobile I
- 1956 - Bookmobile II
- 1971 - Phased out, replaced with "Stations." Stations subsequently became Popular Reading Centers.

### BROWNLEE WOODS

*4010 Sheridan Road, Youngstown, Ohio 44514*

- 1921 - Opened in July in the Brownlee Woods Fire Station.
- 1922 - Sub station - Walkers Confectionary Store.
- 1925 - Moved to fire station - Midlothian and Sheridan.
- 1927 - Building at Sheridan Road and Everett opened in December, dedicated December 16, 1927.
- 1968 - New building dedicated October 13, 1968. (5,040 square feet)

### CAMPBELL

*374 Sanderson Avenue, Campbell, Ohio 44405*

- November 30, 1937 - 403 Tenney Avenue
- 1951 - Remodeled.
- April 17, 1966 – New building, 374 Sanderson Ave., dedicated. (4,900 square feet)

## **CANFIELD**

*43 W. Main Street, Canfield, Ohio 44406*

October 18, 1937 - Part of first floor of what was formerly a "Theatre Auditorium." Community Building. Named BOUGHTON MEMORIAL BRANCH.

February 1960 - Expanded to entire first floor of Community Building.

June 1, 1969 – New building dedicated. Renamed CANFIELD BRANCH. (5,104 square feet)

**2016 - New Canfield Library on same site, 43 W. Main St., Canfield OH 44406:**

Closed for Construction: September 20, 2014

Groundbreaking Ceremony: October 3, 2014

Open to the Public: Monday, January 25, 2016

Grand Opening/Dedication: January 30, 2016

Size: 18,514 square feet

Architect: Ronald Cornell Faniro of Faniro Architects, Inc., of Youngstown

Contractor: Hudson Construction, Inc., of Hermitage, PA

## **CORNSBURG**

*Meridian/Canfield Road, Youngstown, Ohio 44511*

October 30, 1971 - Office Building, 3848 Tippecanoe Road.

September 13, 1982 - Moved to location. (689 square feet)

August 31, 1992 – Closed.

## **EAST**

*6 N. Jackson Street, Youngstown, Ohio 44506*

January 15, 1900 - Haselton Avenue, established by area residents.

1916 - Taken over by Library Board.

1919 - Temporarily closed.

1923 - Reopened in room in unused Haselton Police Station.

May 18, 1928 - Corner Himrod and Loveless.

Feb. 14, 1930 - New building,, 6 N. Jackson St., dedicated as BREADEN FAMILY BRANCH.  
(Outgrowth of the old Haselton and Pearl Street Mission branches)

1968 - Renamed EAST BRANCH. (2,784 square feet)

2008 – Construction began on a new East Branch at the corner of East High Avenue and Early Road. When complete, the current library at 6 N. Jackson St. closed permanently.

2009 -- The East Branch opened at 430 Early Rd., Youngstown, OH 44505, on Saturday, January 24, 2009, and was dedicated Monday, February 16, 2009. The new library was designed by The 4M Company, Architects and Planners. General Contractor was Brock Builders, Inc., of Boardman.

## **ELLSWORTH ("TOWN HALL LIBRARY")**

*11125 Akron-Canfield Road, Ellsworth, Ohio 44416*

November 8, 1979 - Dedicated.

Actual building erected in 1883 (used as a general "town hall").

Became a "fire station" in 1951. Restored and renovated as a library by Ellsworth trustees with revenue sharing monies and community gifts and efforts. (1,330 square feet)

1993 – Closed.

## **FOSTERVILLE**

*2909 Glenwood Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44511*

February 12, 1971 - Storefront, 2636 Glenwood Avenue.

1982 - Moved to 2909 Glenwood Ave. (863 square feet)

1996 – Closed.

## **GREENFORD**

*7441 W. South Range Road, Greenford, Ohio 44422*

August 5, 1972 - "retired" Bookmobile. Route 165, adjacent t to South Range School.

May 29, 1978 – New building, 7441 W. South Range Rd., dedicated. "Grass roots" operation built by community with funds raised by community. (1,200 square feet)

### **LAKE MILTON/CRAIG BEACH**

*1320 Grandview Ave., Lake Milton, Ohio 44429*

October 15, 1972 - 17622 Mahoning Ave. Opened.

1985 - Closed.

1989 - New Building Committee organized. Another "grass roots" operation.

July 14, 1990 – New building, 1320 Grandview Ave., dedicated.

2013 – The Lake Milton/Craig Beach Branch was replaced by the Tri-Lakes Branch and closed permanently on Friday, June 28, 2013.

### **LOWELLVILLE**

*151 Second Street, Lowellville, Ohio 44436*

November 15, 1937 - City Hall.

October 26, 1969 - NEW BUILDING, 151 Second St., dedicated. (3,000 square feet)

April 28, 2004 – Closed.

### **McGUFFEY**

*743 N. Garland Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44506*

October 1968 - Room in McGuffey Center, 1649 Jacobs Road. (Closed 1971)

May 20, 1972 - First "mall" library dedicated. (2,210 square feet)

December 30, 1986 - Closed.

### **MICHAEL KUSALABA LIBRARY (FORMERLY WEST LIBRARY)**

*2815 Mahoning Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44509*

Oct. 1920 - Old home on Mahoning Avenue.

1925 - Mahoning Avenue ME Church.

June 15, 1928 - NEW BUILDING, 2815 Mahoning Ave., dedicated.

Feb. 22, 1965 - Remodeled, rededicated. (Also houses SOS) (8,900 square feet)

Nov. 10, 2016 – Groundbreaking for Michael Kusalaba Branch. Funded in large part by \$1.68 million donation from the Michael Kusalaba Fund of the Youngstown Foundation.

Feb. 14, 2018 – Michael Kusalaba Branch opens

Feb. 24, 2018 – Michael Kusalaba Branch dedicated

Michael Kusalaba Library architect – Ron Faniro Architects. General Contractor – Brock Builders

### **MILL CREEK (COMMUNITY CENTER LIBRARY)**

*496 Glenwood Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44502*

March 1977 - Dedicated. Located in Mill Creek Community Center.

November 1, 1978 - Closed. (State, city funded)

### **NEWPORT**

*Market Street and Midlothian Boulevard*

November 20, 2007 –Construction began on a new branch at the corner of Market Street and Midlothian Boulevard.

Branch was named Newport due to the history of the area in which the site is located and the designation of Newport Neighborhood in the Youngstown 2010 Land-Use Plan. The Newport area extends back to 1929. The Newport Branch replaces the South Branch, located at 3730 Market Street, Youngstown, OH, 44507. South Library closed for the move to the Newport Library on Tuesday, December 30, 2008.

2009 - The Newport Library opened Saturday, February 7, 2009, and was dedicated on Friday, February 20, 2009. The Newport Branch was designed by Ronald Cornell Faniro Architects, Inc., and Meehan Architects. General Contractor was The Murphy Contracting Company.

### **NEW MIDDLETOWN**

*10719 Main Street, New Middletown, Ohio 44442*

October 25, 1971 - 242 Main Street.

July 22, 1974 - Moved to present location in town hall. (1,000 square feet)  
June 2004 – Library purchased property at 10418 Main St.  
Dec. 29, 2005 – Branch in Town Hall closed permanently, replaced by Springfield Branch.  
Jan. 19, 2006 – Springfield Library opens at 10418 Main St., New Middletown 44442  
Feb. 5, 2006 – Springfield Library dedicated.

## **NORTH**

*1344 Fifth Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44504*

1911 - Brier Hill Branch in Jefferson School Building.

1926 - 315 Jefferson Street. Named JEFFERSON BRANCH.

1930 - 1578 Griffith Street.

Dec. 13, 1950 - 1520 Belmont Avenue, renamed BELMONT BRANCH.

Oct. 10, 1965 – New building, 1344 Fifth Ave., dedicated, renamed NORTH BRANCH. (6,400 square feet)

May 14, 2005 – North Branch Library closed.

## **NORTH JACKSON**

*10775 Mahoning Avenue Extension, North Jackson, Ohio 44451*

October 25, 1971 - 35 S. Salem-Warren Road

May 1, 1986 - "New" building dedicated: remodeled, redesigned, rebuilt by North Jackson Friends of the Library. Richard and Virginia Lehotsky led campaign to renovate "town hall."

June 22, 2013 – Closed permanently - North Jackson Branch was replaced by the Tri-Lakes Branch, which merged North Jackson and Lake Milton/Craig Beach.

## **NORTH LIMA**

*11822 South Avenue Extension, North Lima, Ohio 44452*

April 26, 1938 - Named Beaver Township Branch. (The little library building is now at the Canfield Fairgrounds).

April 16, 1967 - NEW BUILDING dedicated. Renamed NORTH LIMA. (3,838 square feet)

April 29, 2004 – Closed

## **POLAND**

*311 S. Main Street, Poland, Ohio 44514*

April 1935 - Town Hall (small room ground floor).

1941 - Town Hall (second floor, larger quarters).

1962 - Kennedy House (ground floor).

Nov. 14, 1965 – A new building at 311 S. Main St. is dedicated. (4,584 square feet)

June 7, 2000 – Groundbreaking for new Poland Branch Library, same location.

Nov. 14, 2001 – Pre-opening reception for donors at new building, same location.

Nov. 25, 2001 – Sneak preview and open house for community. Ohio Gov. Robert Taft attended. Building lauded for environmental architecture, use of recycled/reclaimable materials.

Dec. 3, 2001 – New building opens. (30,619 square feet). Architect 4M Company. General Contractor: Frontier Woodworking.

## **SEBRING**

*195 Ohio Avenue, Sebring, Ohio 44672*

February 1956 - Storefront at Fifteenth Street.

August 15, 1965 – New building dedicated. (3,750 square feet)

2007 – Interior remodeling

September 2008 – Off street parking added.

## **SOUTH**

*1771 Market Street, Youngstown, Ohio 44507*

1912 - 1915 - Located in South High School.

1915 - 1708 Market Street.

1922 - South Side Bank building.

1927 - 1710 Market Street.

July 30, 1929 – New building dedication.

1971 - Remodeled.

January 30, 1972 - Rededicated as SOUTH SIDE Library. (12,900 square feet)

2007 –Construction began on a new branch at the corner of Market Street and Midlothian Boulevard. Branch renamed Newport Library. South Library closed for the move to the Newport Library on Tuesday, December 30, 2008.

### **SPECIAL DELIVERY**

*Housed in West Library for many years at 2815 Mahoning Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44509*

*Moved to Main Library, 305 Wick Ave., Youngstown, Ohio 44503, by 2012*

July 1, 1971 - 1976 - Project Outreach (YO-MAH-CO-CO).

1977 – Project Outreach renamed "Special Outgoing Services" (SOS).

September 2007 – SOS renamed "Special Delivery." Services expanded.

### **SPRINGFIELD**

*10418 Main St., New Middletown, Ohio 44442*

June 2004 – Library Trustees purchase property at 10418 Main St. and begin renovation on the building for a new branch to replace the New Middletown branch located inside the town hall. The Springfield Branch replaced the New Middletown Branch.

2006 – Springfield Library opened Thursday, January 19, 2006, and was dedicated Sunday, February 5, 2006. Architects: The 4M Company of Boardman. General Contractor: Brock Builders, Inc. of Youngstown.

### **SQUARE (aka PUBLIC SQUARE BRANCH, CENTRAL SQUARE BRANCH)**

1916 - 1917 - Books housed in Hippodrome Arcade.

1919 - 1922 - "Waiting Room" on the Square.

October 25, 1923 – New building dedicated.

March 1, 1953 - Closed.

### **STRUTHERS**

*95 Poland Avenue, Struthers, Ohio 44471*

May 8, 1933 - First steps taken for "school district" library.

Aug. 3, 1937 - Rented from Knights of Pythias, 247 Bridge Street by Struthers Library Board.

Sept. 7, 1957 – New building dedicated.

1967 - Became "Thomas Struthers Memorial Branch" of the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association. (6,700 square feet)

### **TRI-LAKES (SEE ALSO NORTH JACKSON BRANCH IN THIS DOCUMENT)**

*13820 Mahoning Ave., North Jackson, OH 44451*

2012 – Ground was broken for the new Tri-Lakes Branch on Monday, July 30, 2012. This branch replaces the North Jackson and Lake Milton/Craig Beach branches.

2013 – The North Jackson Branch was replaced by the Tri-Lakes Branch and closed permanently on Saturday, June 22, 2013.

2013 – The Lake Milton/Craig Beach Branch was consolidated with the Tri-Lakes Branch and closed permanently on Friday, June 28, 2013.

July 33, 2013 – The Tri-Lakes Branch Opening Day at 13820 Mahoning Ave., North Jackson

August 13, 2013 - Tri-Lakes Branch dedication at 13820 Mahoning Ave., North Jackson

Project architect: Ronald Cornell Faniro. General Contractor: DSV Builders, Inc.

### **WESTERN RESERVE**

Oct. 18, 1971 - "Out-of-service" Bookmobile. Opened as a "Station" library near Route 224.

June 16, 1972 - Closed.

### **POP-UP LIBRARY SERVICE**

Pop-Up Library service began in 2014 with bringing library materials and some services, plus library-card sign-ups to schools and community events. In its beginnings, the Pop-Up Library used just tables, chairs and occasionally a tent, to go out into the community. But this changed in August of 2016, when the Library put into service a new Pop-Up Library vehicle, thanks in large part to a matching grant. The Board of the State Library of Ohio awarded PLYMC a \$50,000

grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the IMLS Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). When the Michael Kusalaba Branch opened on Mahoning Avenue in Youngstown in February of 2018, the Pop-Up Library van and services were headquartered in that location.

## HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY'S NAME

10-27-1880 - The first legal steps to provide public library service for the city of Youngstown were taken on October 27, 1880, when the Superintendent of Schools [Reuben McMillan], two of his teachers and two physicians signed the Articles of Incorporation establishing the Youngstown Library Association.

03-05-1898 - The name of the association was changed from the Youngstown Library Association to the Reuben McMillan Free Library Association on March 5, 1898.

01-01-1985 – The name “The Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County” was first registered with the Ohio Secretary of State on January 1, 1985. This name had been used informally since at least 1944.

## HISTORY OF LIBRARY LEVIES

*Submitted May 2018 by Janet S. Loew, Communications, Public Relations and Marketing Director*

The Mahoning Valley truly values reading and education and loves its libraries. Nothing stands as evidence to this as much as the strong support the library's real estate levies have received, beginning in 1920. Throughout the years, voters have turned out in support of their library, with only one exception, which righted itself five months later when the same levy passed. Over the years, local news outlets have been very supportive.

Election	Date	Levy Amount	For	Against
1920	Nov. 2, 1920	First Library Levy – Youngstown 0.2 mills, new State legislature allows real estate levy for library purposes. The library placed a 0.2-mill (two-tenths of a mill) levy on the ballot in Youngstown and voters approved.	15,487	12,656
1925	Nov. 2, 1925	0.3 mills, additional. Youngstown voters.	11,035	10,017
1961	Nov. 7, 1961	The first county-wide library levy. 0.5 mills, additional, 5 years	50,320	26,263
1966	May 3, 1966	0.46* renewal, 5 years	20,671	14,445
1971	Nov. 2, 1971	0.46* renewal, 5 years	49,540	43,054
1976	June 8, 1976	0.6 mills (0.39 renewal*, 0.21 increase), 5 years First increase since 1961. <b>Only unsuccessful levy.</b>	29,500	30,812
1976	Nov. 2, 1976	0.6 mills (0.39 renewal*, 0.21 increase), 5 years	71,985	39,176
1981	Nov. 3, 1981	0.6 mills, renewal, 5 years	56,074	29,716
1986	May 5, 1986	0.6 mills, renewal, 5 years	40,907	17,756
1991	Nov. 5, 1991	0.6 mills, renewal, 5 years	48,052	22,805
1995	Nov. 7, 1995	0.6 mills, renewal, 5 years	48,603	22,108

2000	Nov. 7, 2000	0.6 mills, renewal, 5 years	72,046	34,668
2005	Nov. 8, 2005	5 years, 1-mill levy. Replacement and Increase (on ballot). First increase since 1976. Replacement of current 0.6 mills, plus additional 0.4 mills. Takes effect in year passed, 2005.	47,857	30,609
2009	Nov. 3, 2009	1-mill renewal, 5 years	50,961	20,717
2010	Nov. 2, 2010	1.8-mill additional. 5 years. Takes effect in year passed, 2010 – and collections began in 2011.	58,982	26,207
2014	Nov. 2, 2014	2.4-mills, 5 years, effectively combines and reduces. Levy combines two levies - 1.8-mill and 1-mill, but reduces total millage to 2.4 mills (instead of 2.8 mills). Ballot language required by state said "renewal and increase" even though the net effect was a decrease. The renewal of the 1.8-mill portion allowed homeowners to retain rollback credit. Instead of renewing the 1-mill levy, the library chose to reduce the total issue by 0.4 mills, which meant a DECREASE of 11% on library levy taxes to the homeowner. Issue 3 cost taxpayers about \$7 per month on \$100,000 valuation. Passed with 59.31% for and 40.69% against.	39,072	26,803

\* Reductions due to property re-evaluation