

History of the Westfield Washington Public Library

The Westfield Public Library had its beginning after the turn of the 20th century - in 1901. A few interested people met and formed the Westfield Public Library Association. Funds were raised from membership fees, donations rummage sales and various entertainments.

The first library opened to the public a year later in 1902, in a storeroom on North Union Street. Approximately 700 volumes comprised the library's first collection. The first library board consisted of Mrs. Julia Conklin, president; Mrs. Alma



Bray, secretary; Mrs. Edith Hinshaw, Rebecca Roberts, W.C. McAvoy, Dr. Z.H.Fodrea and R. A. Funderburgh.



Later the library board purchased property on South Union Street and operated in that building until 1910 when a donation from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation was received.

The Carnegie Library was built on Main Street where Cave Printing is now housed. The building was dedicated in 1911 and was the first Carnegie Library



in Hamilton County. In 1917, another donation was obtained and an addition was built to extend the building to the north. In 1964, the Children's Department was opened in the basement of the Carnegie Library. By 1977, the collection had grown to 17,757. It included not only books but magazines, newspapers, almanacs,

atlases, directories, and encyclopedias. The circulation of those materials had grown to 33,752.

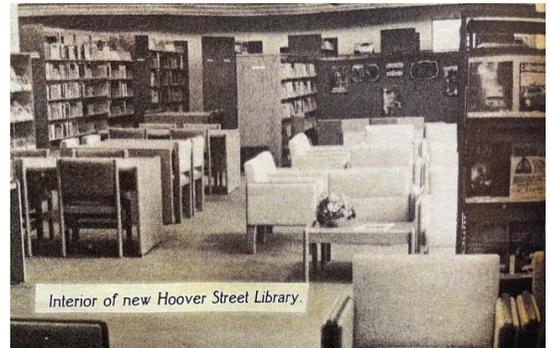


In 1983, the library board decided to move from the Carnegie Library to the library's present site on 333 W. Hoover Street. The new library was 11,680 sq. ft. The collection had grown to 23,940 and circulation was up to 50,015.

In 1995, the library board decided that in order to meet the growing service needs of Washington Township, it was time to expand the Hoover Street facility. The collection had

grown to 62,093 and circulation had soared to

234,169. The library expanded to 24,601 sq. ft.



the library would need to be expanded in order to meet the present and growing population and service needs of the community. This planning process continued through 2012 culminating with the expansion to the current size of 32,101 sq. ft.

In 2004, the library board decided to update the library's long term plan. During this planning process, it became apparent that

In 2021, the library is once again looking to the future as it prepares to build a new library for all of Westfield. As the population in Westfield and Washington Township has grown, so has the need for new and innovative resources for the patrons the library serves.

Through the years, the library has become a cornerstone of the community and belongs to the people of Westfield and Washington Township. The library board and staff invite everyone in our community to visit, use and enjoy this ever-changing resource.

