Library History Chronology

Early History

1816	The Assembly passed An Act for the Incorporation of Public Libraries.
1820	First library established in Bloomington.
1826	Library moved to free-standing brick building in Courthouse Square.
1912	Library re-started in the Courthouse.

Carnegie Library

1913	Library established contact with Carnegie Corporation for new building. Children's collection added; library's total collection was 2,165 books.
1915	Library reorganized to serve the City, Bloomington Township, and Perry Township. Carnegie Corporation contributed $31,000 to the library building fund.
1918	Carnegie Library opened at 6th Street and Washington; the building now houses the Monroe County History Center.
1929	"Book Truck" service inaugurated to county towns and 72 schools--third bookmobile in the state and the longest running.

Monroe County Public Library

1965	The Bloomington Public Library merged with the Monroe County Public Library system. The Monroe County Public Library Foundation formed.
1968	Storefront branch opened in Ellettsville on Sale Street. Construction on new Main Library in Bloomington begun.

New Main Library

1970	New Main Library opened at corner of Kirkwood Ave. and Lincoln; it featured a Randtriever, a series of shelves accessed by robotic arms.
1973	Library added service to homebound patrons.
1974	Community Access Television started service with one public access channel (Channel 7 - later Channel 3).
1977	Adult literacy program (VITAL), one of the first, if not the first such program in the state, began tutoring services.
1981	Main Library renovation and automation system funded by $500,000 bond.
1982	First online automation system put in place.
1987	Second channel (Channel 12) for government access added by Community Access Television.
1987	Randtriever removed and space renovated for VITAL, Children's, and Audiovisual Services.
1987	Pilot project created library in Monroe County Jail in partnership with County.
1988	Current Young Adult Services program for teens started: for teens, by teens, on behalf of teens, and in partnership with the community.

New Ellettsville Branch

1990	New Ellettsville Branch (10,000 sq. ft.) opened at Sale and Temperance St. to meet growing demand for library services.
1992	Circulation reached over 1 million.
1994	Groundbreaking held for renovation and expansion of Main Library.
1996	Library connected to the Internet.
1997	Current bookmobile purchased.

Main Library Renovated and Expanded

1997	New Main Library facility?a full city block (137,000 sq. ft.) dedicated.
1997	Library moved to new automation system.
1998	Bookmobile added to automation system through cellular technology.
1999	Community Access Television Services was first in U.S. to offer both live and archived video coverage of public meetings on the Internet.
2003	Community Access Television added third channel (Channel 14) for international news broadcasts from over 70 countries.
2003	Revised Mission Statement and Strategic Plan approved by Board of Trustees; both emphasized library as community gathering place.
2004	Wireless Internet access added. Library achieved a circulation of 2 million. Community Access Television Services (CATS) celebrated 30 years of service, 19 national awards, and an archive of 20,000 hometown movies documenting the community's cultural history.

Ellettsville Branch Remodeled

2005	Remodeling of Ellettsville Branch completed. Library began offering online meeting room and program reservation option to the public. Outreach Services expanded to include library van service to nursing homes and daycare centers.
2005	*Kids Alive!*, Community Access Television's educational program by kids and for kids and the longest running cable-only children's program on television, celebrated its 30th anniversary. The Friends of the Library and the library partnered in creating a Friends Bookstore at the Main Library to expand the weekly Tuesday booksale. At year's end, 75% of the local population had library cards.

Top Ten American Library Ranking

2005	Library selected as a Top Ten American Library; Hennen's American Public Library Ratings (HAPLR) ranked Monroe County Public Library **fifth** among 329 libraries from across the nation serving a population of 100,000 to 249,999.

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Updated March 30, 2012

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- [3]

Monroe County Public Library | 303 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington, IN 47408 | (812) 349-3050

Links:
[1] http://mcpl.info/print/printpdf/geninfo/library-history-chronology
[2] http://mcpl.info/printmail/printpdf/geninfo/library-history-chronology
[3] http://mcpl.info/printpdf/printpdf/geninfo/library-history-chronology