

Library History 1990-2002

MCPL



In the early 1990s, long-range planning was discussed focusing on the lack of space for materials, staff, and programs. Discussion addressed two possible resolutions: one was to renovate and expand the existing library; the other was to relocate the building. According to Robert Trinkle, the latter proposal was rejected because the citizens of Monroe County liked the library in its present location. (Herald Times, 4/23/90)

Renovated and Expanded Main Library

After long-range planning was approved, the library began construction for its expansion in 1994. The newly renovated Monroe County Public Library building opened in May 1997. Before the renovation the library had



37,000 square feet, but now has 137,000 square feet. While many services were expanded or improved, like the Audio-Visual Department, the Children's Department, education services, and many others, some services were added for the very first time. A 24 hour book drop as well as a AV drop were built on two sides of the building. On the Grant Street side of the building a pick-up window was added with a drive-through. A public computing center, a bookmobile garage, and a silent reading room added other needed services to the library. Also in 1997, the library purchased the current Bookmobile (the 6th purchased since 1929), and switched its automation system to Innovative Interfaces Inc. In 1998, the online automation of the Bookmobile services enabled the Bookmobile to communicate directly with the library through cellular technology. The next year, Community Access Television Services (CATS) became the first in the nation to offer both live and archived video coverage of public meetings on the Internet.

In 2000, MCPL circulated nearly one and a half million items, the highest total in its history. A community survey and focus groups were carried out in 2002 as part of a strategic planning process. Four-out-of-five respondents to MCPL's 2002 Community Survey rated the library's services as "excellent." That same year MCPL achieved record-breaking numbers in circulation and visits, and, in the HAPLR national comparison of libraries, MCPL moved into the top 15 public libraries in its population category.

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