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## Orange County Public Library (OCPL)

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# Florida Library History Project

## Orange County Public Library (OCPL)

Florida Library History Project Orange County Public Library System In the early 1900's the Sorosis' members in Orlando supported a private circulating library. Citizens were interested in a tax -supported free public library for Orlando and a lot was secured on the corner of Central Blvd. and Rosalind Avenue for construction. In 1920 Charles Albertson offered his genealogy collection to the city on the condition the city would furnish a suitable building to house the collection. The Citizens passed a bond issue for a new building of 11,000 sq. ft. In 1923 Olive Brumbaugh was employed as head librarian (director) of the Albertson Public Library. There were 21,000 books in the collection.



**Mrs. Ann Van  
Ness Brown,  
Miss Olive  
Brumbaugh,  
and Miss  
Frances Gates**



**Olive  
Brumbaugh**



**Clara E. Wendel**



**Albertson  
Public Library  
Orlando, Florida**

In 1929 the Library was designated as the State Depository for the Florida Chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution.



In 1943 Clara Wendel succeeded Olive Brumbaugh as director of the Albertson Public Library.

The Friends of the Library was organized in 1949. This organization has raised

funds through used book sales which have provided money for equipment, support for staff development, and programs for the public.

In 1949 Orange County was the first county in Florida to provide county-wide service through bookmobiles. This service was discontinued in 1979.



In 1962 construction of a new building was approved by Orlando freeholders in a bond issue election. Architect John M. Johansen of New Canaan, Connecticut was selected to design the building. The contractor was H. L. Coble Construction Co. The library, renamed the Orlando Public Library, was opened in 1966.

Clara Wendel retired in 1970 and Glenn Miller became the library's third director. In 1973 the library celebrated its 50th anniversary. Books by Mail began in December, 1973, and it is one of the most popular services offered to the public.



On September 9, 1980 voters approved the creation of the Orange County Library District for Orange County with the exception of Winter Park and Maitland. The voters also approved a \$22,000,000 bond issue for the expansion of the Orlando Public Library. Schweizer Associates, Inc., was selected as the architect and Great Southwest Corporation was awarded the contract for the construction of expansion and renovation of the Main Library. On April 6, 1985, the expanded and renovated Main Library was open to the public. The library now houses the Law Collection which was moved from the Court House in 1986.

Telephone reference was established in 1994 and last year Quest line answered an average of 10,000 questions a month. In 1995 Glenn Miller retired and Dorothy Field became the fourth Director of the System.



In 1996 public access computers with Internet and card catalog were installed in reference departments at Main and all branches. The next year a contract was signed with DRA for an Automated Integrated Circulation System. Patrons can access their account through the Internet, from home or library, check on status of books and renew books checked out on their account. Phone renewal is available

to patrons. Patrons borrowed over 4.6 million items and the MAYL (Materials Access from Your Library) delivered over 311,500 items to patrons' homes.



Three new branch libraries will be constructed in the next four years, either as replacements for leased facilities or to serve the growing area. Other facilities are planned which will bring the total branches to 13. There are currently 11 branches. At the same time the Children's room of the Main Library will be moved to a prominent place on the first floor and will be redecorated.

The Library will be celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and will continue to focus on quality Library services that bring traditionally reliable and technically advanced resources to all of our patrons.

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**Letter from Melvil Dewey [1851-1931] (American librarian who devised the Dewey Decimal Classification system for library cataloging) to Olive Brumbaugh on 29 March 1928.**

[Click Here](#) to view image of original letter.

**29 Mr 28**

**Miss Olive Brumbaugh  
Albertson Public Library  
Orlando, Fla**

**Dear Miss Brumbaugh**

**Curiously I was just writing to invite yu to  
come down for a week-end as my gest at Club Loj.  
Can't yu combine that with yur April 4 & 5 meeting  
stopping on yur way. I wil meet yu at Sebring any  
time that yu can come and wud greatly enjoy knowing  
yu betr.**

**I wil come if I can but it looks impossibl  
for I hav men coming from Seattle and the Adirondaks  
for a very important meeting which I expect wil  
ty me up on those days but I wil come if I can.**

**Melvil Dewey**