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Mary Esther Public Library

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Florida Library History Project

Mary Esther Public Library

A Public Library for Mary Esther was proposed to Mayor Tom Pryor and the Town Council on February 4, 1974 by a small group of volunteers and by donated books.

The proposal was for an opening date of June 1, 1974. The annual cost for membership in the library was \$1.00 per person and \$5.00 per family.

Fees were applicable to residents and non-residents. At this point the facility was not tax-supported.

The first square footage was approximately 585 square feet, then later expanded to 810 square feet.

In October 1976 Mary Esther Community Library was renamed, and became the "Mary Esther Public Library."

The "Friends of the Library" group was formed May 29, 1977.

Officers of that group were elected June 13, 1977. Chairman: Jay Edwards; Secretary: Janet Sulzbach; Treasurer: Joan Nolan Publicity; Chairman: Fred Sulzbach.

Also in 1977 a County-wide Library System was proposed.

On August 28, 1977 the Library added the new reference room. Employees consisted of the Librarian and two full time Library Aides plus volunteer workers.

November 29, 1988 The Friends of the Library presented the City Council with a petition signed by voters going to and returning from the polls stating that they wanted a new and bigger library.

On February 6, 1989 the Council decided on the new library, site and size.

June 18, 1989 again the Okaloosa County Library System issue arose, and again it failed.

June 5, 1990 the news was carried that the State Legislature had agreed to give the City of Mary Esther \$ 175,000.00 in matching funds to build a new library.

February 28, 1991 at 1:30 p.m. the Ground Breaking for the Library took place at Hollywood Boulevard and Christobal Road.

March 9, 1992 the new Library opened to the Public.