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## Charlotte-Glades Library System

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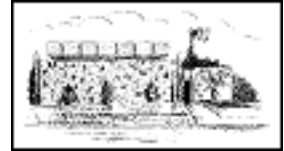
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# Florida Library History Project

## Charlotte-Glades Library System

1905 -- The first library was housed in the Episcopal Church in Punta Gorda.



1914 -- The Library moved to the Masonic Temple on Sullivan Street.

1926 -- The roof blew off the library during a severe storm, necessitating another move. The library relocated at the Woman's Club, also on Sullivan Street.

1958 -- The town of Punta Gorda decided that it wanted to have an actual library building. Several craftsmen and contractors donated a building at 260 West Reta Esplanade. The land was also donated.

1963 -- The Punta Gorda Public Library joined the Port Charlotte and Englewood Libraries to form a county library system.

1970 -- Jean Obermayer became librarian and remained so until her retirement in 1981.

1973 -- Funds were raised for a new and larger building to house the library. The city donated the land in exchange for the old library facility.

1974 -- The new building at 424 West Henry Street opened to the public in July.

1983 -- Mary Ann Walton became head librarian and has since retired. Jay Carter now holds that position.

1996 -- The, library, along with other libraries in the countywide system, went online with a new mated circulation system.

1998 -- Plans have begun to expand the library and the first phase will be

completed by September 1998.

## **Port Charlotte Public Library**

1961 - A small store-front library was started on Easy Street as part of the newly established Port Charlotte University's operations. A retired librarian, Hortense Wright, volunteered to organize the library. Local citizens donated books and magazines.



1962 - PCU moved its base of operations to a building at fire station on the west access road by Easy Street. This added space to the library as well.

1963 - The Port Charlotte Library joined the Punta Gorda and Englewood Public Libraries to form a Charlotte County System.

1965 -- PCU and the library again moved...this time across the street to Sunny. Dell Plaza. At this time the county named a library board to supervise operations. Mrs. Margaret Rippere was appointed librarian. A Friends of the Port Charlotte organization was formed to promote the library and its services. Myrtle Burnett became its first president.

1968 - A new library facility, located on the corner of Gertrude and Aaron Streets opened in January. A small room adjacent to the library and the PCU classrooms was set aside for a used book and coffee shop run by the Friends organization. Mr. and Mrs. William Payne were the first managers of the shop.

1996 - The library was renovated with new carpeting on both floors and the rearrangement of book stacks and other furnishings occurred. The library also went online with a new automated circulation system. with the other libraries in the county-wide system. Steve Toepper was named librarian for the facility.

## **Englewood Charlotte Public Library**

Early 1960s - Josephine Cortes headed a grass-roots effort to start library services in the Charlotte County area of Englewood. These efforts bore fruit on May 25, 1962 when a new library first opened. The first person to run the library was Harriet Ives.

1963 - Leolyn Mercer was appointed librarian. The library housed a collection of 3,869 books. Also in this year, the library moved to a new location at 1560 McCall Road.

1970 -- A new facility, located at 1520 Placida Road, opened to the public.

1971 -- The first full-time librarian, Elizabeth Childs, was hired. Mrs. Mercer retired at that time.

1989 -- An entirely new 8,000 square foot library building was opened to the public. The new facility was located at 3450 McCall Road - and this is still the location today.

1996 -- The Englewood Charlotte Library, along with other libraries in the library system, went online with a new automated circulation system.

### **Murdock Public Library**

1985 -- The new Murdock Public Library and accompanying library system administrative/technical processing facility: opened at 18400 Murdock Circle. The library opened its doors with a small core collection of 200 books. Mary Ellen Fuller, the Director of the Library System, acted as Head Librarian for the Murdock branch. The Library became part of the county-wide system.



1995 -- Approximately 9,000 square feet was added to the library, including a public-use meeting room and a children's department. The expanded facility was opened to the public on January 4, 1995. Nancy Razvoza was appointed the first librarian of the Murdock Public Library.

1996 -- The Murdock Library, along with the Englewood Charlotte, Port Charlotte, and Punta Gorda Public Libraries, went online with a new automated circulation system.

*Note: The Glades Public Library is also a part of this system, but its history is not available.*