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Brevard County Libraries

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Florida Library History Project

Brevard County Libraries

As is true of many of the libraries in the United States, most of the libraries in Brevard County were originally initiated by a club or an interested group of citizens banding together to organize and start a library program in their area or city. The first five public libraries in the county Cocoa, Cocoa Beach, Eau Gallie, Melbourne, and North Brevard in Titusville - were all started in this fashion.

In 1959, the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners and the cities started to implement Florida Statute 150, which gave county funding support to the five municipal libraries. In return the five libraries agreed to serve all county residents. The formula used for this support was a minimum of one-third from the cities and a maximum of two-thirds from the County to pay all operating expenses, and the city was required to furnish the building to house the library collection. This plan worked successfully for a number of years. During the sixties Brevard's population boomed as a result of the Aerospace Program and demands for library services began to come from many of the fast growing areas of the county. Merritt Island and Satellite Beach were added to the county's libraries and then Cape Canaveral followed by Meadowlane in 1970. From 1960 to 1970, a period of ten years, the number of libraries grew from five to nine.

Funding became a very real problem with monies being spread thinner and thinner. Book prices doubled during this time and new buildings provided by local governing agencies require more operating expenses and longer hours with more staffing.

The Brevard County Federated Library System was established in 1971 to give the best possible service to all county residents. At the same time as the System was organized, Florida Statute 150 was rescinded and Brevard County Ordinance 72-1 became the legal authority for countywide library operations in Brevard. Under the Federated library system the public libraries succeeded in expanding resources of each of the nine libraries to include the rich information sources of all. A borrower's card from any member library is accepted at all other libraries in the System, and the library materials borrowed from any one member library may be

returned to any other member library. On November 7, 1972, Brevard citizens voted for a tax referendum that established a countywide Library Tax District that funds the total operating costs of the Brevard public libraries up to one mil.

With the establishment of the countywide Library Tax District, the nine libraries of the system contracted with the Board of County Commissioners for provision of countywide library services. In 1972, a County Library Board was established to "advise in the establishment, operation, and maintenance of a free public library service within the County." A County Library Services Director directed the administrative and professional services of the Brevard County Library system.

The Stone Community Library in Melbourne was added in October, 1980 as a cooperative effort between the Brevard County School Board, the City of Melbourne and Brevard County.

In September 1983 the Palm Bay Public Library joined the system. The original library was funded by the City of Palm Bay and was housed in a modular structure. They moved to a newly built 8,500 square foot facility which was totally funded by the Friends of the Palm Bay Public Library and then donated to the City of Palm Bay in June 1984.

In November 1987 the Bookmobile was discontinued when the South Mainland Library ... Micco was opened. This was the first building constructed by the Board of County Commissioners who had voted in August 1985 to assume total responsibility for the operation of the Library System based on a study prepared by Mr. Richard Waters. The building was a modular building of 6,000 square feet and built on land donated to the County by Mr. and Mrs. Ron Abbott.

Port St. John Public Library was built next and opened in October, 1988. The 9,000 square foot facility was built using the same basic floor plan approved by the City of Cape Canaveral for the new Cape Canaveral Library. The residents of the City of Cape Canaveral passed a referendum to construct a library building in November 1985. This referendum provided for a .5 mil funding source. The new Cape Canaveral Public Library moved from a 4,800 square foot facility in a strip shopping center to an approximately 9,000 square foot facility in February, 1989.

A \$10.5 million bond issue was obtained in 1987 to construct the new Melbourne

Public Library and to renovate the old Florida Today building in Cocoa for the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center. The New Melbourne Public Library is a 25,000 square foot facility located on the site of the old Melbourne Public Library in Wells Park. It was opened to the public in July 1989 with the Grand Opening in September 1989.

The Administrative offices of the Library Services Director are located in the River House at the east of the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center complex. Their offices moved from rental quarters in September 1989.

The Central Brevard Library and Reference Center is a 97,000 square foot facility that serves as the public library for the Cocoa-Rockledge area as well as the Reference Library for the System.

It also houses the Film Library, Library Connection (service to the homebound patron), Central Processing Department, Talking Books Library, Literacy Program, the Records Management Center for the County, the Library System Computer and the Administrative Offices for the two Assistant Library Services Directors for Library Operations and Library Support Services. It was opened to the public in January 1990 with the Grand Opening in February 1990.

The Meadowlane Community Library was relocated to the Metro-West Shopping Center at the corner of Wickham Road and 192 in West Melbourne on March 2, 1991. The rental facility is 7,900 square feet.

In 1991 a new 19,000 square foot facility was completed for the Satellite Beach Public Library at the site of the old Indian Harbor Beach Sewer Treatment Plant property. The land was purchased by the County at a cost of \$75,000 and increased the size of the library from 6,500 square feet to 19,000 square feet.

The F. T. DeGroodt Public Library was completed in June 1992 and is a 22,300 square foot facility which was built in the western area west of 1-95 in Palm Bay. The original Palm Bay Public Library was then renovated and remained open to serve the residents in the northeast area of Palm Bay. With the addition of this second library in Palm Bay the total number of libraries rose to fourteen (14) in the Brevard County Library System.

On November 2, 1993 the Board of County Commissioners approved eight construction projects which included the expansion of the North Brevard Public Library, the Cape Canaveral Public Library, the Merritt Island Public Library and the South Mainland Library ... Micco and new facilities for the Cocoa Beach Public Library, the Eau Gallie Public Library, the West Melbourne (Meadowlane) Public Library and the Stone Community Library. A total of \$9,900,000 was allocated for all of the construction projects.

When the County Commissioners approved the construction of the eight projects, they also approved the hiring of a Library Construction Coordinator. Mr. Frank Harris was selected to oversee the projects and to apply for grants and other sources of revenue for the projects.

In December 1994, an Accountant was added to the Administrative Staff to prepare all budget and financial reports based on the needs of the libraries and the System as a whole. The Accountant assists in writing financial procedures and monitors the financial condition of the System.

Construction Grants were submitted to the Florida State Library for five of the eight projects: North Brevard Public Library, Merritt Island Public Library, Cocoa Beach Public Library, Eau Gallie Public Library and West Melbourne Public Library. Our requests for North Brevard Public Library and the Merritt Island Public Library were disqualified; however, the remaining three construction grants were approved by the Governor and Legislators in June 1996. Each library will receive \$400,000 to assist with their construction projects. In addition to the previous Bookmobile, State and Federal Grants have provided funds for: developing programs for adults working with children to teach techniques which will encourage children to read, increasing the libraries' activities for children, developing a central film library of 16mm film, purchasing large print book collections, films for older adults and for programs at nursing and convalescent homes, Adult Literacy, Talking Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and Audio Books.

In anticipation of continued growth in the population and greater use of existing library facilities, an automated card catalog is now linking the libraries together to provide the most efficient, economic utilization of the resources of the Brevard County Library System for Brevard County residents. Access to the Internet has also been added to the libraries and to dial- in-patrons.

In 1996 the second floor of the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center was renovated to house the Government Document section of the Library. The area will provide Federal, State, County and local documents for easier access by the public.

HISTORY OF THE CAPE CANAVERAL LIBRARY

In early 1966, soon after the opening of the Cape Canaveral City Hall Building a group of citizens began to think about the development, of a library for Cape Canaveral. Mayor Richard Thurm. appointed Deanna Collins and Anne Ross to conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of the library.

The committee members submitted their findings at a City Council Workshop. Council members were told that nearly half of the city's population of 6,500 residents held library cards from the Cocoa Beach Library. A tentative budget was established at \$14,765 with \$9,843 to come from County funds. A site had been chosen at 110 Polk Ave. in the "Propper" building across from City Hall and in the same building as the Cape Canaveral Chamber of Commerce.

The City Council passed Resolution 66-21 "Encouraging the formation of a Cape Canaveral City Library." On May 10, an ordinance was passed establishing a Library and appointing the first Library Board.

The Library opened at 110 Polk Ave. in April, 1967. A library director, Irene Sanders, was hired and continued in the position until her retirement in early 1987.

In 1970 the library was moved to the Palm Plaza to a store building owned by Shuford Mills. As the number of books increased more space was needed and after incorporating additional store areas, the library was moved to Palms East on Caroline Street in 1978.

In 1971 the Cape Canaveral Library became a part of the Brevard County Library System. From 1966 to the present time, the library continued to grow from only the few hundred donated books in 1966 to over 35,000 items in 1990.

A tax referendum was approved to construct a library building in November 1985.

This referendum provided for .5 mill funding source.

The grand opening of the new facility located on 7400 Poinsetta Ave. was on March 11, 1989. The cost of the construction was \$370,167. The library now enjoys a spacious 9,000 square foot building divided into four main areas; an adult reading room, children's reading room, reference area, and meeting room. This facility has greatly enhanced library usage and provided for expanded services to the Cape Canaveral Community.

HISTORY OF THE CENTRAL BREVARD LIBRARY AND REFERENCE CENTER

The Central Brevard Library's history as the public library in Cocoa dates back to 1895. A group calling itself AVILAH (a village improvement, Library, Art, History) was formed to work toward cultural programs for the community. Eventually, the library was the recipient of the group's efforts. A room was rented for \$5/month for a library, but there were no books nor furniture. Citizens donated books, chairs, and tables and until 1942 they paid \$1/year to use this little library. The ladies of the community took turns acting as librarian in charge.

At the end of five years, the library had to move when the building was sold. Various moves ensued and library supporters even moved an existing building to a new lot although the bottom of the building gave way with all the books landing on the road. This put a new drive and zeal into the group, which announced its desire for a new building. With \$500 earned from bazaars and suppers, the group started to build a building which was to cost \$2,500. This building would be the second concrete building in Cocoa and would be paid for at its completion.

In 1942, 5,000-6,000 books were held by the library and it was deeded to the City of Cocoa. At that time, the City maintained the library through its annual budget.

In June 1954 the City signed a contract with the County to provide free service, with the City giving one-third of the funds needed and the County, two-thirds.

In 1955 the first professional librarian was hired.

In 1965 a new building program was initiated. This resulted in the former Cocoa

Library at 430 Delannoy Ave., a 14,000 square foot building with a capacity for 88,000 books, with all the modern library services provided. Cost of the project was \$250,000 and was completed that year. That library served the citizens of Cocoa and Rockledge as well as part of the Brevard County Library System until the concept of a central library for Brevard was embraced by the County Commission in 1985.

In January 1990, a 97,000 square foot facility with more than 108,000 volumes, the former FLORIDA TODAY building, was dedicated as the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center -- a long way from that first building in 1895, but still dedicated to serving the citizens of our community.

Continually expanding the services provided, the Board of County Commissioners approved renovations to the second floor in June of 1995 to give the library space for the newly designated Federal Documents Depository.

The Library Advisory Board is made up of five citizens from County Commission Districts 11 and IV and its members currently are Loretta Wilson, Chairman; Carolyn Kenaston, Vice Chairman/Treasurer; Betty Armistead; and Janet Williams. The office of Secretary is vacant and there is one vacancy on the Board. The members are appointed by the County Commission and serve one year terms. They meet monthly and act as citizen advisors to the Library Director in matters of policy and procedure.

HISTORY OF COCOA BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Cocoa Beach Public Library began as a project of the first Women's Club of Cocoa Beach. on its opening day in December of 1954, four people checked out six books from a stock of 400 books borrowed from the State Library.

On May 21, 1955, the library officially opened in one room adjacent to the old City Hall. In the first six months, 110 books were circulated. On February 15, 1959, the library moved to larger quarters at 41 N. Orlando Avenue. Circulation in 1960 rose to 28, 849.

With the aid of the Cocoa Beach branch of AAUW, A Friends of the Library group was organized in 1961, and the group was instrumental in passing the

\$60,000 bond issue for the original 5,200 square foot building on the present site, 55 S. Brevard Avenue. The site itself was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Gus Edwards, early developers of Cocoa Beach. The building was dedicated on March 10, 1963.

In March of 1967, Cocoa Beach residents again voted in favor of a Library Bond issue, this time for the sum of \$200,000 to nearly triple the size of the building, to 15,400 square feet. The expanded library opened to the public on March 30, 1969.

Anticipating correctly that the community and demands for library services would continue to grow, the addition was built to accommodate a second story, which would add about 10,000 square feet to the existing facility. In 1980 this expansion was included in the Cocoa Beach Library Board's long range plan and, in 1988, was included in the County Library System's ten year building plan.

Today (1990) the library serves nearly 20,000 users each month and circulates more than 180,000 books per year from a collection totaling 85,000 volumes.

The Cocoa Beach Library Board consists of seven members appointed for three year terms by the City Commission.

HISTORY OF THE EAU GALLIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

A library for the Eau Gallie Woman's Club members began informally with an exchange of books and periodicals among their own group during the 1920's and 1930's. In those days, especially in sparsely-settled Brevard County, the federated women's clubs served also as the conscience of each community -- forerunner of the later activities of garden clubs, PTA groups, homemakers, and leaders of social and cultural concerns.

In 1939, the Eau Gallie Woman's Club officially sponsored a circulating library, which began with 22 books and some shelves in a member's office on Ninth Street, now Eau Gallie Boulevard.

Some 125 books later, a niche was found in the corner of a public dining room, also owned by a member. Subsequently, a library was opened in the Woman's Club building on Montreal Avenue.

In 1940, a room in the old City Hall building on Highland Avenue was offered the Woman's Club Library by the city fathers. Mrs. Ellsworth Morgan was appointed by the Woman's Club to serve as librarian, in which capacity she served as a dedicated volunteer for many years.

Woman's Club members organized bake sales, dinners, card parties and other social activities to raise funds for books and materials, and supplied volunteer workers to keep the library open some 10 hours a week.

In 1954, the Eau Gallie Woman's Club entered into an agreement with the Brevard County Commissioners whereby they made the Woman's Club Library a free public library and thus became eligible for substantial support from the county. It became possible to classify the books under the dewey decimal system and to begin expanded library service.

A year later, when enlarged quarters were offered the Woman's Club Library in the Eau Gallie Civic Center, following the opening of the new bridge and Eau Gallie Causeway, the Woman's Club executive committee met with Eau Gallie councilmen and decided to transfer their library to the city.

The rapid growth of the area necessitated opening the library for longer hours, and necessary fire insurance on almost 41000 volumes was prohibitive for the Woman's Club.

It was mutually agreed between the Eau Gallie Woman's Club and the City of Eau Gallie that a library board be appointed by the city to administer the library and that the library be called "The Eau Gallie Municipal Library". By ordinance enacted July 25, 1955, the City of Eau Gallie set up a free municipal library and the Woman's Club Library by such name ceased to exist.

It was a great day on October 1, 1962 when the townsfolk gathered under the historic banyan tree in Riverfront Park for a short ceremony, a simple prayer of dedication and an open house in the new, charming, functional library, with refreshments served on the delightful screened patio overlooking the Indian River.

The new library building opened with 15, 000 volumes to take care of the needs of 4, 000 patrons, who had been re-registered the previous December.

One of the first community activities in the new library opening week was a "Countdown" when 130 young, eager members of the Summer Reading Club received certificates and enjoyed a party in their own enchanting room.

The Eau Gallie Public Library opened in 1962 with 3500 square feet, since that day the library has been expanded twice. The first expansion in 1967 provided an additional 3200 square feet providing a total of 6700 square feet. In 1974 the library was expanded again providing a total 10,600 square feet of library space. In October, 1990 the Eau Gallie Public Library had a collection of 67,023 volumes and over 25,000 registered borrowers, a testament to the faith of the founders of the Eau Gallie Woman's Club.

HISTORY OF THE FRANKLIN T. DEGROODT MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Brevard County Board of Commissioners opened the Franklin T. DeGroodt Memorial Library on June 8, 1992. The new library was named after a past mayor for the City of Palm Bay, who was instrumental in initiating library service in the city during the early 1970's. .

The library is 22,500 square feet and architecturally designed to resemble a Florida Cracker House, complete with a front porch. The library is located in a multi-purpose complex including the Palm Bay City Hall and police and fire departments. Five elementary schools and a junior high surround the facility.

The library has been well utilized since opening. The average monthly circulation is 28,000 and approximately 600 new borrower cards are issued each month.

The Franklin T. DeGroodt Library is supported by an active Friends group and Advisory Board that also serves the Palm Bay Library. The Board consists of five members appointed by the Palm Bay City Council. They meet monthly and act as a citizen advisory group to the Library Director.

HISTORY OF THE MEADOWLANE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Meadowlane community Library was developed by the residents of West Melbourne, Melbourne Village, and nearby unincorporated areas of Brevard County. First proposed in 1968, the library opened its doors on October 1, 1970.

Meadowlane Community Library was the first combined school and public library in Brevard County. Both libraries were under the direction of one librarian. Its collection included 2,000 adult and 12,000 children's books donated by the community.

After one year of operation, the Meadowlane Community Library had approximately 1,300 registered patrons and a monthly circulation of 1,900 items.

In 1976, the school and public libraries became separate entities, but were still housed in the same facility. operation of the school library became the responsibility of the Brevard County School Board. The public library was operated by the Brevard County Library System.

The Meadowlane Community Library Association, a non-profit corporation, served as advisors and fundraisers for the library. Its board of directors served as the Meadowlane Community Library Advisory Board. The Association sponsored skating parties and book sales and published a newsletter highlighting library activities and soliciting donations.

The Friends of the Meadowlane Community Library, a volunteer organization, was founded in 1970 to offer volunteer manpower and financial assistance to the library.

In March 1991, the library vacated the Meadowlane Elementary School and moved to a rental facility in Metro West shopping center, West Melbourne. The Meadowlane Community Library Association dissolved in June 1992 to make way for an advisory board appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

As of June 1992, Meadowlane Community Library had 6,965 registered borrowers and a collection of over 30,200 books and 1,700 A-V materials. The monthly circulation was 9,294. Storytime, Toddlertime and PJ Storytime are held regularly for children. A Summer Library Program, VITA Tax Assistance, Master Gardener sessions and other special events are also offered to the community.

HISTORY OF MELBOURNE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Melbourne Public Library was founded in 1918 by a group of volunteers calling themselves the Library Association of Melbourne. The group, headed by Mrs. Stanford Wells, operated the library until 1954, when it became city-owned.

The first permanent home for the Library was built in 1924 with funds raised by the Library Association. Library operations were funded by membership fees and contributions from the City and from local organizations.

In 1954 a new building was provided for the Library by the Civic Improvement Board, which turned it over to the City. The Library was then operated under a series of agreements between the City and the County under which all county residents were served.

In 1956 a support group, the Friends of the Melbourne Library, was formed. It has since lived up to its name by providing strong advocacy for the Library. With continuing growth of demand and deterioration of the Library facility, the need for a new building finally became evident.

In 1986 the Library moved to a temporary rental facility while a new 25,000 square foot building was planned and constructed. The new Library opened to the public in August of 1989.

It has a five-member advisory Library Board appointed by the City for five year terms.

HISTORY OF THE MERRITT ISLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Merritt Island Library was begun in 1965 by a group of concerned residents. They formed a "Friends of the Library" group to stimulate the interests of the residents of Merritt Island in supporting the creation and eventual building of a library. The first library was in a trailer in the parking lot of what is now the First Florida Bank. The books were donated through a community book drive. In order to raise money to operate a library, the legislature was asked to create a tax district. A referendum was held and the citizens of Merritt Island agreed to tax themselves up to .5 mill for a library. The legislature then established the Merritt Island Library Tax District. The first tax district board was appointed December 30, 1965 by Gov. Hayden Burns.

On March 26, 1966 the Merritt Island Library moved to the Civil Defense Building at the corner of Courtenay and Myrtice. In 1969, with a federal grant of \$200,000 the present building was built with 17,500 sq. ft. and expandable with a second story.

In 1972 the library was incorporated into the County Library System. The first contract was signed in 1976. It provided for the county to take over salaries of the personnel, to pay the utilities and maintain the air conditioning and other parts of the inside of the building. The tax district would still own the building and take care of and maintain the grounds. At present the library circulates over 200,000 items per year, has a collection approaching 80,000 items and provides meeting rooms for over 700 meetings per year.

The board of the Merritt Island Public Library consists of fifteen members that are appointed by the governor. The board oversees a budget of over \$100,000 per year. The budget is used to care for the exterior of the building and to supplement the county budget. Recent projects of the board included extensive interior renovations of the building. The board recently redid the surface of the parking areas and is presently looking into adding additional handicapped restrooms for the library.

HISTORY OF THE NORTH BREVARD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The North Brevard Public Library can trace its beginnings to June 5, 1900 when the first library was formed in Titusville by the Progressive Culture Club. This was the former name of the Woman's Club of Titusville. The Titusville Library Association was formed later and the library really started in 1902 with 200 volumes. In August 1922 a building at the corner of Washington and Palmetto Streets became the new Club building and the library was located on the 2nd floor. It was open two afternoons a week. By 1948 when that building was sold the library had grown to 2,500 volumes. It moved into temporary headquarters above the Fire Department. From there in 1954 the Woman's Club acquired a building which had been formerly used during World War I as a canning plant. According to a newspaper article the library's annual circulation as of October 1, 1956 was 12,073 and the book collection was 5,120. The library was open 44 hours/week and had 643 active borrowers. The next Titusville library facility was designed by Frans Larson and constructed near DRAA Field (a local ball field) in 1922. The

library was renamed the Mildred Bruner Memorial Library.

The new Indian River City Public Library was dedicated on November 13, 1958. Principle speakers at the ceremony included Commissioner Bernard Parrish, Colonel W. H. Boshoff, Chairman of the Fund Raising Drive, and Charles Lee Graham. The building was built by public subscription and took three weeks for the contractor to build. It was located on the corner of Coquina and Magnolia Aves. and measured 241 by 501. In 1963 the Indian River City Library was made a branch of the Mildred Bruner Memorial Library.

The Woman's Club Library Board was active until 1964 when a City Library Board was formed. In 1969 the North Brevard Library District Board was established through Chapter 69-869 Laws of Florida.

A referendum for a 1 mill one year tax to finance construction of a new library facility passed on November 4, 1969. A land deed was transferred from the School Board to the Library Board for the specific purpose of a new library facility. A grant was received through the State Library toward this construction. On April 25, 1971 groundbreaking ceremonies were held. The building was completed in June 1972. On July 15th the Indian River City Branch closed and on July 23rd the Mildred Bruner Library permanently closed. On July 31st the North Brevard Public Library was open to the public in its current location on South Hopkins Avenue.

Through the support of the City of Titusville, and the generosity of the Jacob Hannamann family an addition was completed in 1979. It provided meeting room space and more stack area. In FY 1989/90 the library was open 64 hours/week and circulated 297,457 items with a collection of 68,345 books.

HISTORY OF THE PALM BAY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The city of Palm Bay opened a 2,100 square foot temporary library in April 1980 with a collection of 3,149 books. At the time the population of Palm Bay was approximately 18,000. The city unsuccessfully attempted twice to pass a referendum that would provide funds for a new, larger permanent facility.

In 1983 the building contractors in the community offered to assist in building a

new facility. They agreed with the Friends of the Library to build the facility at less than cost if the Friends could raise \$125,000 in four months. The City was willing to commit the property and funds necessary for furnishing the facility.

This same year the Palm Bay Library Board requested admission of the Palm Bay Library into the Brevard County Library System and in October 1983, the request was granted.

Construction of the new facility began in early 1984 and the library opened on June 16, 1984. The facility was 8,500 square feet. The population of the City was approximately 32,000.

The new library was a success. By 1988 the population at Palm Bay was 56,000 and the library was showing a growth of 36% annually. Library parking was at a minimum and interior space for any collection growth no longer existed.

The Palm Bay Library Advisory Board established an expansion committee in 1987. The Committee was made up of members of the advisory board, friends group, city and engineering staff, and community members. A survey identified a desire by community members to see the current facility expanded and a second site established in the southeast section of the City.

In 1988 the Palm Bay Library Advisory Board asked the County Library Advisory Board to place the Palm Bay Library on their priorities for expansion. Expansion plans were begun but came to a halt when it was deemed impossible to expand the present facility and keep it operating at the same time. The City of Palm Bay offered another site for building in close proximity to the present site. It was later determined that gopher turtles inhabited this new site and they could not be easily relocated.

The City of Palm Bay then offered five acres in the southwest section of the City adjacent to their new city hall. This site originally was designated for a second smaller Palm Bay Library. The Advisory Board, Friends members and County Staff accepted this site and preparation for a new 22,500 square foot building began. The new facility, Franklin T. DeGroodt Memorial Library, was opened on June 8, 1992.

The existing building remained open with limited services, fewer operating hours and a smaller book collection. The City of Palm Bay has pledged financial support for this site until 1995. The Palm Bay Library is supported by an active Friends Group and Advisory Board that also serves the Franklin T. DeGroodt Library. The Board consists of five members appointed by the Palm Bay City Council. They meet monthly and act as citizen advisory group to the Library Director.

HISTORY OF PORT ST. JOHN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Port St. John is an unincorporated area located midway between Cocoa and Titusville. The Brevard County Board of County Commissioners, based upon the population in the community, determined that an additional public library was needed to serve the residents. The estimated population at the time of approval for the library construction was 8,500 people.

Dedication of the 9,000 square foot library was on October 8, 1988. Community support was apparent from the beginning when volunteers offered to assist the staff, to help with the library dedication, and to promote the organization of a Friends of the Port St. John Library.

The first organizational meeting of the Friends of the Port St. John Library was held November 17, 1988. On April 14, 1989 the articles of Incorporation for the Friends of the Port St. John Library, Inc. were filed with the Florida Department of State. This group remains a supportive nucleus for this library and the community it serves.

On March 6, 1990 the Board of County Commissioners of Brevard County approved a resolution to create the Port St. John Public Library Advisory Board. The first meeting was held August 16, 1990.

Since its inception, this facility has been utilized as a polling place for voters, literacy tutoring and workshops, and a meeting center for various organizations and study groups in Port St. John. Due to a surge in population to 1112,000 plus", a second elementary school was built in 1990. The most burgeoning services in this library have been for reference and youth services.

HISTORY OF SATELLITE BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 1965, members of the Satellite Beach Woman's Club and the Satellite Beach Lion's Club saw the need for a public library in Satellite Beach. They approached Mayor Hedgecock and the City council expressing the need. All agreed a library should be build in this community.

Investigating committees for construction, finance and library operations were formed. A community book drive was held and books were collected and housed at the Southeast Bank building. A site was selected by the City of Satellite Beach on Cassia Boulevard. Buildings were constructed for a Library and a Civic Center complex. The Board of County Commissioners accepted the library concept and provided two-thirds of the operating expenses. The City of Satellite Beach contributed the other third. A head librarian was hired to operate the facility with a volunteer staff. The first budget was \$50,000.

On April 17, 1966, the Satellite Beach Public Library was dedicated and opened the next day for business.

Within two years the library outgrew its one room and occupied the rest of the building.

In 1972 by virtue of a tax referendum, provision was made for the establishment of a library system. In 1976, the first contracts were signed between the municipalities and the County. Library employees became County Employees. The responsibility for facility maintenance was shared. In 1985, a contract was signed giving Brevard County and Brevard County Library System full responsibility and financial authority over library staff and facilities.

At present, there are 18,266 registered borrowers with a monthly circulation averaging 22,000. There are approximately 63,891 volumes in the book collection of fiction, non-fiction, and reference. There are 2,200 recordings and cassettes and 1269 video tapes. A collection of compact discs has been added.

September 21, 1991, a new 19,000 sq. ft. facility was dedicated and opened on September 23, 1991 at 751 Jamaica Boulevard, Satellite Beach.

The new facility offers a Community Meeting Room, children's area and young adult section, study rooms, and public typewriter.

HISTORY OF THE SOUTH MAINLAND ... MICCO

Library service for the residents of the South Mainland area began with the Bookmobile in 1975. The Bookmobile served those areas of Brevard County whose population did not have easy access to a traditional library. It provided service to each area at least once every two weeks.

Adjustments were made in the Bookmobile schedule when the energy shortage of the late 1970s inflated the cost of operation. In 1984, the Bookmobile was relocated to the Palm Bay Library and its outreach function was replaced with the Books-By-Mail Service. With these changes, the Bookmobile was primarily used in serving senior citizen areas and was providing weekly service to Micco.

In the Bookmobile's tenth year, the people of the Micco area were indicating dissatisfaction with the weekly service. The volume of circulation justified adjusting the schedule to provide service three times weekly to the Micco area.

Brevard County hired HBW Consultants in 1985 to conduct a study of the library system. They recommended the county assume responsibility for the construction and maintenance of library facilities, and recommended a facility be built in the Micco area within ten years.

Residents, however, could not wait that long and an active Friends group was formed in 1986. The group began raising funds to build a permanent facility. Additional funds became available when the Florida State Legislature removed the cap on library millage.

The Board of County Commissioners selected the Micco area as the site of the first county-built library. Land was donated by Mr. & Mrs. Ron Abbott and construction began in 1987.

The new library opened in November 1987 under the direction of the Palm Bay Library Director, was staffed by two paraprofessionals and many volunteers. A full-time director was added to the staff in November 1989.

The Friends of the Library of South Brevard, Inc. continue to play an active role in

supporting the library with donations of materials and equipment and many active volunteers.

HISTORY OF THE STONE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

A group of concerned South Melbourne residents approached members of the Brevard County School Board and the Melbourne City Council to establish a Community Library with the Stone Middle School Library for use of the residents in the South Melbourne area and the city as a whole.

The library was built jointly with funds from the Brevard County School Board and the City of Melbourne in 1973.

The Friends of the Stone Community Library along with other concerned citizens requested admittance to the Brevard County Library System. This request was granted and Stone Community Library was admitted in October 1980 as a part of the Brevard County Library System. A joint use agreement was signed by the Chairman of the Brevard County School Board, the City of Melbourne and the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners. This use agreement provided for the school library facility to be opened to the community for library programming, library collection development and as a focal point for community organizations and activities.

Library Support Services

ADULT LITERACY

The Adult Literacy Program for Brevard County was initiated on February 17, 1986, with the hiring of a Project Coordinator. In the beginning months, time was spent identifying the literacy skills that were needed, wanted, and by whom. Following this needs assessment, a publicity campaign was carried out.

Public Service announcements were aired on local television and radio stations. Brochures were produced and placed in the public libraries and Social Services offices, and were distributed to civic organizations as well as to private industry. A newsletter was developed containing news for and about literacy providers in the County.

The purpose of this literacy program is to enable citizens of Brevard County to acquire necessary basic skills in reading and writing, so that they may participate more fully in society. our program also addresses the needs of those for whom English is not their native language. Training is given to tutors in an E.S.L.

(English for Speakers of other Languages) workshop and special materials are bought to use in working with the non-English speaking student. Assistance is given in acquisition of U.S. citizenship as requested by the student. Laubach tutoring materials were purchased and distributed through the Library System. This material is made available free of charge to every tutor working with the Library System program and serves as a basis for the tutoring program.

Workshops in the Laubach Way To Reading are given on a continuous basis. Approximately one thousand volunteers have been trained as tutors at these workshops. To date approximately one thousand students have gone through the program.

On September of 1992, an outreach center was opened in Titusville. Classroom space was leased from the Facilities Management Division at the cost of one dollar per year. The facility provides a central location for people needing help with reading and writing skills. Manned by volunteers, the Learning Place is open six days a week.

Another center is being readied for opening by September of 1993. Located in Melbourne, this center also utilizes donated space and will be fully staffed by volunteers.

As the program grows, so does cooperation between the literacy groups in the County. This cooperation leads to improved quality of help given the literacy student and furthers his chance of success.

BOOKS BY MAIL

The Books by Mail program of the Brevard County Library System started in November of 1983. Initiated with grant funding from the Library Services and Construction Act, the program received grant funding for its first four years of operation and was fully County funded in October of 1987. With the Bookmobile

being phased out of operation, the System needed an avenue for getting materials to those residents who were unable to visit a library for various reasons, and Books by Mail filled that need. The program mails library materials to patrons in their homes; the only materials not available through the service are audiovisual materials, records and reference books. To return the materials, patrons can either return them or have them returned for them to any public library in Brevard County or they can return them through the mail by affixing the same amount of postage on the package that it took to get the materials to them. The address labels used by the program also serve as book order cards, and there is a return address label on every mailer. A newsletter, THE BROWN-BAGGER, also affects the strive for personalization of the program.

Reserve-by-mail service was added to the program in January of 1985. After a careful cost effectiveness study, it was apparent the response to patrons, requests would be not only more cost effective using the Books by Mail program but the centralization it would afford would also address the reserves more efficiently. This in turn freed the staff members of the libraries to serving other patron needs. With the advent of the on-line catalog in early 1990, the reserves service shows a dramatic increase in patron requests. As more residents become familiar with the new system, the reserve portion of Books by Mail will continue to escalate.

Initially, the program could not mail cassette tapes although many requests for tapes through the mail were received. To meet this need, a proposal was written, and in October of 1988, the Library System received a LSCA grant to set up Audio Books as a part of the Books by Mail program. This project has received grant funding for the ensuing years, and word has been received it will be funded in its fourth year also. The project is developing an extensive library of books-on-cassette, from juvenile read-alongs to adult non-fiction, and providing them to residents in their homes. Unlike Talking Books which is only for the blind and physically handicapped, Audio Books serves all residents of the County. A catalog is produced each year, and new titles are listed in the Books by Mail newsletter to assist borrowers in making their reading selections. As is done for books, the tapes are mailed to patrons at their homes, and they have the same options for returning them back to the library. The books-on-cassette format of library media is gaining popularity, and this will only translate into higher demands for the Audio Books program.

Books by Mail has enjoyed phenomenal success in meeting the library needs of

the residents of Brevard County. The first books were mailed in February of 1984-- a total of 177 books, Today, the program mails over 5,000 a month, and the figure keeps growing. The Books by Mail program of the Brevard County Library System is second in the State of Florida with only Orange County besting them. The program has also attained national recognition with many requests for assistance in setting up such a program having been received over the years.

CENTRALIZED TECHNICAL PROCESSING

Centralized technical processing for the public libraries in Brevard County was begun in the spring of 1981. This department serves all 14 libraries as well as county Reserves and Adult Literacy.

The Technical Processing Center receives all new book acquisitions for the Library System. Materials are verified according to invoice, condition and then approved for payment. Each of the libraries order whatever books they wish for their collections and the books are sent from the vendors to Central Processing for check in. All items are cataloged using the OCLC database and holdings are entered in the CLSI online catalog via an interface with the main computer. After cataloging the books are stamped and covered and made shelf-ready for the owning libraries. Books are packed and sent to the libraries throughout the week. Non book media is cataloged, but not received or processed in the Technical Processing Center.

Two staff members (1 full time, 1 part time) handle interlibrary loan from computer terminals located in the Processing Department. By using dedicated line access to the OCLC database staff members are able to locate titles needed to fill patron requests. These titles are requested from OCLS member libraries throughout Florida and the United States. There is no cost to the patron for borrowing these books and this program allows access to innumerable title not available within the county system.

COMPUTER ROOM

The Library System Computer Room staff is responsible for the operation of the CLSI Computer Center. This computer system interfaces with all the libraries through digital phone lines and micoms to provide the circulation control, online

catalog and other computerized daily activities of the library system.

The computer room staff provides all circulation reports for the library system, assists in the maintenance of the programs, and performs hardware and peripheral equipment maintenance as required.

The dial access computer catalog is also maintained through the computer room.

The computer room staff is responsible for the day to day operation of the CLSI computer system, for scheduling maintenance, for performing repair programs on the database and for the replacement of hardware as needed. They interact with the CLSI CRC (computer response center) in Newtonville, Ma. to resolve problems and to schedule maintenance.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The Records Management Center was established in 1989 and is a part of the Library System housed in the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center. Records are stored on the third floor of the north wing of the building and maintained in a manner consistent with the Florida Administrative Code and Florida Statutes. The purpose of the Records Center is to provide an off-site storage area for semi-active, inactive and archival records of the county.

The Records Centers, as a service facility, is merely an extension of the department's office's filing system. The title and right of access to the records shall remain with the department which created and uses the records.

Access to records is provided by Records Management staff in coordination with individual departments according to Florida Statutes (Chapter 119.07 (1)). Requests by members of the public for records must include all necessary information required for retrieval by Records Management staff. This may require direct contact with the originating department. Records Management staff will then coordinate record retrieval and make them available in accordance with Florida Statutes.

The Records Center provides space for records at a considerably lower cost than would be otherwise possible (typically, the cost of maintaining records in a

records center is 1/10th the cost of office storage.) Benefits are realized through:

1. Savings in costly space by removing from the office those records not required in the daily operation;
2. Savings in money by releasing filing equipment for reuse;
3. Savings in time by being able to find active records more easily once inactive records are removed. The Records Center provides a facility where a systematic and proper method of disposing of obsolete records may be conducted. It also provides the ready means by which archival records may be identified and retained.

SUBREGIONAL TALKING BOOKS LIBRARY

The Talking Books Library of the Brevard County Library System was initiated in August, 1988, as the ninth Sub-regional library in the Florida network serving the blind and physically handicapped. Begun under the auspices of a Library Services and Construction Act grant, the program was funded by the County the following year and has become an integral part of the overall service provided by the System. In cooperation with the National Library Service of the Library of Congress and the Regional Library located in Daytona Beach, the service provides books and magazines on cassette tapes and records as well as the equipment needed to play them. Braille, while not housed in the Brevard County Talking Books Library, is available to readers from the Regional Library. The Talking Books service was originally established by an act of Congress in 1931.

The program is available to anyone who is unable to see conventional print clearly and comfortably for a reasonable length of time or who cannot hold a book, turn pages, or focus because of muscle or nerve deterioration or paralysis. The physical condition qualifying a person for this service may also be temporary, as in recuperation from eye surgery or from an accident.

Equipment (record and cassette tape players, etc.) and books are mailed to and from the user's home postage free, and there is no time limit. Mailing cards and containers come with each item for easy patron return. Catalogs in large print and on cassette are periodically mailed to patrons of the program. Borrowers may choose from best sellers, Westerns, mysteries, romances, classic novels, juvenile books, and biographies and other non-fiction titles. There are also over one hundred (100) magazines available as well as music scores. In addition to

publications from the Regional Library, patrons also receive a local newsletter composed of items of interest and/or of service.

In October of 1990, the program received a Library Services and Construction Act grant to purchase assistive reading devices. Each library in the System houses a collection of fifty-one (51) devices which circulate for a period of three (3) weeks. The premise behind this grant was to make the various devices available for use in the individuals' homes to assure practicality and appropriateness before purchases were made. Therefore, each collection also includes catalogs of suppliers of the devices for patrons.