

**HISTORY OF THE WEST LINN PUBLIC
LIBRARIES, MARCH 1, 1939 TO
MARCH 1, 2013. 74 YEARS**

ALAN LEWIS

WEST LINN, OREGON CENTENNIAL

PROLOGUE

1938

OREGON CITY

A Library for the City and County

XX

In July, 1938 the Clackamas Country Court authorized the creation of the "Clackamas County Free Library" and a board with five members from different parts of the county. The plan established a central library in the Oregon City Library* from which books were distributed in the county libraries and to new libraries to be established in the county schools. After meetings between the Oregon City Library Board, an agreement was approved in December 1938. This agreement was to continue from the first day of January 1939 until the last day of December 1939.

The Oregon City Library is a Carnegie Library that opened in June of 1913. This year is it's 100th anniversary. It is the only Carnegie Library in Clackamas Country. (There are 31 Carnegie public libraries in Oregon).

We know very little about what was going on with the library for the first few years. Here are four early Board Meeting Minutes.

February 12, 1940

It was decided to purchase a new glass exhibit case if possible, out of the fine money. Miss Warren suggested the need of a new dictionary and Mrs. Gary said that she would inquire of Mr. Gary to see if it were possible to get one from a book concern as a premium. Miss Warren reported that the following magazines had been subscribed for a year: Vogue, Children's Activity, Time, Popular Mechanics.

April 8, 1940

An unabridged Webster's dictionary was purchased.

April 28, 1941

Gentleman:

In the budget for the library there is now \$45.00 above the salary and incidentals, and due to the fact that we need several things badly we submit this list in the order that the object is most needed, and we hope that you allow us to have as many of these items as the \$45.00 will buy.

Yours truly

May 17, 1943

Miss. Cis Pratt was appointed Librarian, February 25th 1943, succeeding Mrs. Christina Fitzgerald, whose death occurred the first part of February, Mrs. Fitzgerald was very well liked by the subscribers to the Library and her death was much regretted.

A budget was prepared, to be presented to the West Linn Council at their meeting May 19.

The Budget as follows;

Librarian salary, \$682.00 per year	
New books	120.00 "
Magazines	55.00
Incidentals	<u>143.00</u>
	\$,1000.00

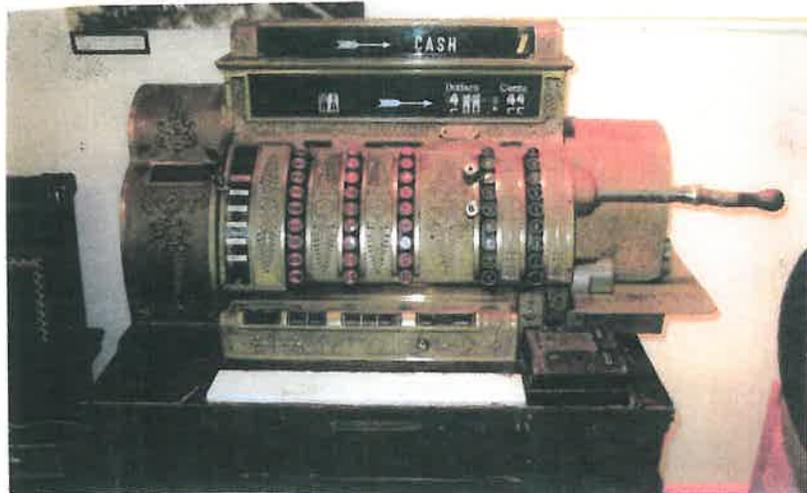
WEST LINN CITY HALL - Built in 1936

Upstairs were the City offices, Council Chambers, and the Library. There also was a Dentist Office and a Claco Credit Union Office. Downstairs was the Police Department, the Post Office and a Grocery Store. Les DeJarden, to this day a man well remembered and respected, bought the Grocery Store in 1946. In 1954 he built a large Super Market a few blocks away. When the Central Village was built in 2005, that Super Market was enlarged, and is today's "Market of Choice".



THIS WAS THE NATIONAL CASH REGISTER THAT LES DeJARDEN USED IN HIS STORE

When he left the City Hall, his new store was using new "scanning" technology. The register was left at the City Hall for the Water Department to use.



CHAPTER 2

1965

A Plan for a New Library

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There were 4,380 people living in West Linn in 1965
and 5,000 books in the library

Since the opening of its two rooms on the second floor of the West Linn City Hall in 1939, the only enlargement of the library occurred in 1943 when the library was given some space at the rear of the Council Chamber*. (NOTE: The Dentist Office, the Claco Credit Union Office, the Post Office and the Grocery Store had all left the building by this time).

In 1964, librarian Elaine Moles and the West Linn Library Board began the process of planning for a *West Linn Library Building*.

On January 2, 1965, West Linn City Council members set March 30 as a date for an election on an \$85,000 general obligation bond which would be the city's share in providing funds for the project. Of this amount, \$5,000 would be used to buy books, magazines and equipment. The balance of the money, \$40,000, would come through a federal grant issued through the State Library Board.

The 7,000 square foot building would be built on city property at West A Street and Willamette Drive. (West A St. was "different" then.) Phillip Balsiger of Wilsonville was retained as architect.

In March the proposal was defeated, 152/108
In May, the same proposal was defeated, 447/434

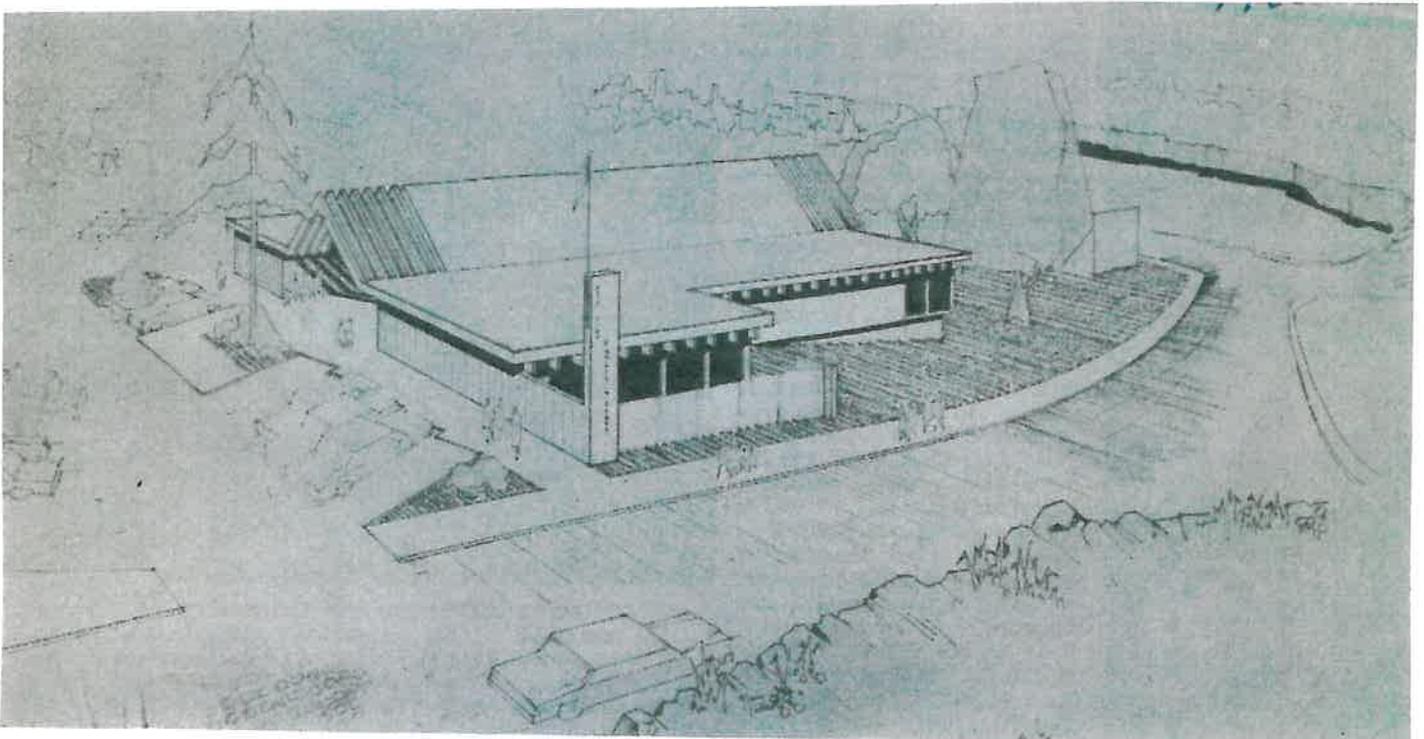
*When the City Council, the Planning Commission, the Municipal Court or any other group was meeting there, the library fiction section was "CLOSED".

"SMALL BUT CHARMING"

Librarian Elaine Moles in the City Hall library in 1965



PROPOSED LIBRARY LOCATED AT W. A St. AND WILLAMETTE DR.
(W. A ST. WAS 'DIFFERENT' THEN).



CHAPTER 3

1978

The Library and the City Hall Both Needed More Room

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There were 7,091 people living in West Linn in 1978
and 14,000 books in the library.

After 39 years of the West Linn Library operating from rooms on the second floor of City Hall, it had 14,000 books, circulated 17,000 items a year and had 900 card holders. The library was open 20 hours a week and had 1 employee.

Early that year the city announced that the library would be moved, for two very good reasons. 1. The library needed more room for books and other holdings, and 2. The City Hall needed more office space for city employees. In addition, the library had need for adequate parking, and it needed a building that did not require that the customers have to climb 23 steps to get to the book shelves!

The city was looking for either a nearby building that would be large enough so that it would accommodate the library's special needs for 10 years, or a building that would house the library for the 5 years that was estimated it would take to appoint a building committee to determine costs, select an architect, design and build the building.

The city found two possibilities. The First National Bank building at the corner of Burns and 43 was available. It had a central location, an easy access, and was easy to find. However, the city felt that that it "might be a little more than we are willing to pay". The only other choice was the Bolton Fire Hall Annex on 6050 Failing St. It was 1,500 Square Feet, and capable of holding 25,000 books. The annex was used by the West Linn Volunteer Fire Department for meeting space, and received income by leasing it to various groups. The City Council voted to pay the Volunteer Firemen \$1,000 annually for five years as a "just compensation" for the loss of the Fire Hall. **(YEARS LATER, IT WAS FOUND OUT THAT NO COMPENSATION WAS EVER DONE!)**

The floor at the Bolton Fire Hall Annex would have to be strengthened to withstand the weight of the books. In addition, some doors and windows had to be replaced. Also additional lighting would have to be installed to improved reading conditions. These requirements would be financed with funds from the county's reimbursement from the Clackamas County Library.

The City Council unanimously voted to use the Bolton Fire Hall Annex building on Failing St. at Highway 43, as the city's West Linn Library.

In July 1978, after 17 years, Elaine Moles retired as librarian, and the city hired Pam Barnes to replace her. Not only was she to be the first librarian not from West Linn, she was the first to have had a master's degree in library science. She had worked as a public librarian in Evanston, Ill, Santa Clara CA., and in San Jose CA. In addition, she was the first "Director" * of the library.

On Saturday morning of October 28, twenty-five volunteers went to the City Hall and packed 14,000 books for the move to the new library. Cartons were color-coded for placement to the other end of the move. On Monday the movers arrived and brought the boxes down (23 steps) to their van below. More volunteers were at the new library to help get the boxes into the building and on the new shelves. The library was reopened on Monday November 6, 1978.

*The Friends of the West Linn Library was founded on April 19, 1978.
The date of incorporation was September 19, 1979. The first President was Mimi Urbigkeit. The second President was Vicki Oldenstadt Greenwood.*

*A "Librarian is a person trained in library science and engaged in library service. A "Director" is a Librarian who also is responsible for running the library.

BOLTON FIRE HALL AND ANNEX. THE ANNEX BECAME THE LIBRARY.
The two children standing on the steps of the library are Paul and Sara Mauvais.
They lived at 2684 Rainier Pl. West Linn.



1986 CHAPTER 4

The Bolton Library Operated for 9 Years and they were Busting at the Seams!

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There were 13,130 people living in West Linn in 1986

The library had over 25,000 books, circulated 8,000 periodicals and tapes, and had over 5,000 cardholders. The library was open 48 hours a week and had 7 employees. In addition it conducted 150 children's programs a year (done in the fire station bays).

Back in 1984, the Bolton library staff and the Library Board (with help from the Friends group) started gathering information, facts and figures regarding the need for a new library. (The idea of a second library in the city was not considered). Using guide lines and statistics supplied by the Oregon State Library, it was determined that by 1986 we would require a library of 10,000 square feet, and our library should have 36,000 volumes.

In 1986 the findings were presented to the City Council with a recommendation that a Library Building Task Force be appointed to develop and recommend a plan to finance and build a new library facility.

An architect was hired, and selection commenced. Library Director Pam Williams (Barnes) suggested site criteria, and 18 sites were identified and studied in detail. Three "Town Meetings" were held and the information was presented. Results from the meetings showed that the preferred location would be near to the City Hall. The 18 sites were narrowed to Burns St.

In 1987 the citizens of West Linn approved a bond issue of \$1.2 million that passed 65% to 35%.

There were three houses on the Burns property. One was used by the Fire Department for training, the other two were sold and moved to West A St. Ground was broken on December 1988, and the new West Linn Library opened its doors in November 1991.

NEW WEST LINN LIBRARY ON BURNS ST.

Just to the left of the picture is a 100 year time capsule.
It's still there.



PICTURE OF THE REAR OF BOLTON GRADE SCHOOL.
Perrin St. in the foreground.



SECOND WEST LINN LIBRARY ON BURNS ST.



CHAPTER 6

2000 TO 2013

THIS TIME IT IS A 13 YEAR PROJECT

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When the Burns St. library opened in December 1989, there were 35 parking places in the parking lot. This number was determined by the Community Development Code (CDC), which takes into account the square footage of the building, and many more things.

In the year 2000 when the enlarged library was being designed, the CDC required that there be 53 parking places. The city worked hard to find more spaces for the additional 18 but to no avail. The city allowed the building to go forward, with the understanding that they would still be looking for a solution to the variance.

At this point the DeJardin family, who owned the property across Burns St. from the library, offered to let the city build a parking lot for 16 cars on the corner of Hood and Burns. They asked only for \$100 a year plus Property Taxes.

The city thanked the DeJardins, and built the parking lot. That brought it up to 51 places, still 2 short,--- It was accepted.

The 'NEW' Burns St. West Linn Library opened the doors in May of 2001.

Three years later the DeJardins sold there property to Graymor Development Co., who then built the *CENTRAL VILLAGE*. The parking places went back to 35.

In October of 2011, the city bought 5750 Hood Street for an additional library parking lot which will connect the lower elevation of the library to the same elevation of the a parking lot. This will add 12 more spaces for parking.

The city accepted the missing 4 spaces.

The city plans to have this completed before the end of this year.

WEST LINN PUBLIC LIBRARY

	<u>1978</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2013</u>
AREA (SQ. Ft.)	1,400	1,500	13,000	27,000	28,000
TOTAL HOLDINGS	11,000	25,000	45,000	102,000	168,133
CIRCULATION	17,000	80,000	200,000	500,000	710,203
CARD HOLDERS	900	5,000	9,000	16,000	17,976
COMPUTERS	===	===	===	21	20
HOURS PER WEEK	20	48	54	58	53
TOTAL EMPLOYEES 1	7	12	31	20	

LIBRARIANS AND DIRECTORS

1939-1942	Lucille Warren
1942-1943	Christina Fitzpatrick
1943-1953	Barkle Platt
1953-1959	Liz Borden
1989-1961	Elizabeth DiCenzo
1961-1978	Elaine Moles
1978-2003	Pam Williams
2003-2006	Julia Corkett
2006-2007	Linda Malone, Sarah McIntyre, Ellen Credle
2007-2009	Christine Siegle
2009-2010	Linda Malone
2010-2012	Diane Satchwell
2012-2013	Patrick Duke
2013	Holly Mercer

Oregon City Enterprise

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Oregon City, Oregon, under the act of March 3, 1879.

OREGON CITY, OREGON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 1930.

Printed at Oregon Newsprint

WEST LINN LIBRARY OPENING SET TODAY

The West Linn library department will open in the city hall for the first time today, with an initial stock of 300 books to supply the reading public of the community.

In charge will be Miss Lucille Warren and Miss Neva Tenney, whose services are supplied by the WPA project. The library room has been equipped with funds supplied by the city council and with WPA labor.

At present, the library will be open from 3 to 7 p. m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

The books available for immediate circulation include both fiction and non-fiction, as well as children's books and periodicals selected from the county library by Mrs. Gertrude Brumbaugh, Oregon City and county librarian.

The library committee, Mrs. Clarence Schoer, Mrs. John L. Gury and Mrs. Walter Buse, are desirous of supplying whatever type of service and reading material desired by West Linn residents. Requests for special books may be made to the attendants, and preferences as to days and hours may be recorded there. Donations of books and periodicals will be appreciated.

The committee expressed appreciation to those who cooperated in making the project possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks for all the help!!

Vicki Greenwood---Born in the Willamette area of West Linn.

Catherine Davidson---Also born in Willamette area and just celebrated
her 90th birthday.

Sally McLarty---Born in the Bolton area of West Linn.

John Borden*---Also born in West Linn. (He also did the printing for this project.)

Alma Coston---Arrived in West Linn in 1962.

Ken Worcester---If you want to know anything regarding the city in the last thirty
years, call Ken.

Sarah McIntire---Keeper of the "Library History" box.

Roger Shepherd---Heading the West Linn **CENTENNIAL** project.

Windy Zimmer---Volunteer West Linn Fireman , circa 1978.

Carol DeJardin**---Her family's spokesperson.

Maureen Cole--- Oregon City Library Director.

Doris Grojbert--- Clackamas Country Library Director.

Elsie Lewis---When I needed just the right word, she came up with it.

*Son of Liz Borden, Librarian from 1953 to 1959.

**Daughter of Les DeJardin.