

THE HISTORIC YOLO BRANCH LIBRARY

Honoring Our History

The Yolo Branch Library was established on December 27, 1910, as a reading room located next to Borach's Store. This action was the result of an application to the County Librarian dated December 4, 1910 and signed by B. Borach, W.D. Hadley, E. Voisard and J.E. Scarlett. Miss Emma Voisard was named the librarian.

On September 14, 1917, James Bertram, Secretary of the Carnegie Corporation, notified Miss Eleanor Hitt, County Librarian, that the Carnegie Corporation would award \$3,000 to Yolo County to construct a branch library building in the town of Yolo. Yolo was selected because of the dilapidated state of the reading room and the large rural community it served. The \$3,000 was intended to cover construction of the building plus "indispensable permanent furniture, fixtures and architect's fee".

In accepting the \$3,000, the Board of Supervisors resolved to maintain the new building at a cost of not less than \$300 a year and to provide a site donated by the community. Proposed building plans needed the approval of the Carnegie Corporation and the funds needed to be expended within two years.

Yolo residents raised \$300 to buy the lot for the new branch library. A deed of land signed by W.L. Morris dated November 12, 1917, transferred the lot to Yolo County for construction and maintenance of a County Free Library. Earlier in 1917 the lot had been purchased by W.L. Morris from Roy Woodard.

Noted Carnegie architect W.H. Weeks was selected to design the new library and W.H. Campbell from Sacramento was selected to construct the new library. The total building cost was \$3,400, with an additional \$1,034 provided by Yolo County for furnishings. The Yolo Branch was one of only four California Carnegie Libraries constructed of wood and in the craftsman style.

The Yolo Branch Library opened in December 1, 1918, and was dedicated in January 1919 in ceremonies planned by the Yolo Farm Bureau Center members. (In 1990 the Yolo Library building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.) It continued to serve the Yolo community for nearly 100 years before it was declared unsafe in 2018 due to structural issues. As a temporary measure, a portable library has been placed on the site, pending construction of a new and larger branch library.

On October 10, 2017, the County Board of Supervisors authorized purchase of real property adjacent on the north to the existing library site from Pedro C. Juarez and Oralia G. Juarez. Cost was \$200,000. Funds came from the County's Accumulated Capital Outlay Fund.

Plans are in development to demolish the existing branch library building and construct a new 3,900 square foot branch library on the recently expanded .62-acre lot. Planned opening of the new building is fall 2021.

For more information contact: Friends of the Yolo Branch Library
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THE CAMPAIGN FOR A
NEW YOLO BRANCH
LIBRARY