

Lowell Public Library

PRESERVING THE PAST- One of the distinguishing achievements of civilization is the effort it makes to keep a record of its past. The library has traditionally been a warehouse for documents that relate the history of the area and the society. The existence of a library says that a community cares about itself and its past. The Lowell community has been committed to library service since the beginning of the last century.

Library History

In 1904, the Lowell area had a small subscription library of 500 books. Members paid dues and borrowed books free of charge.

The Lowell Library was organized in 1917 and consisted of two small rooms housed on the second floor of Lizzie Davis' hat shop.

The Lowell "Public" Library (one that is supported in whole or in part by local taxation) became a reality in 1920 through the hard work of local residents and a large donation from the Carnegie Corporation. The new (one and one-half story) library was typical of Carnegie construction.

Located on the "Town Square," it contained 4,000 square feet and by the late 1960's had become severely overcrowded.

August 12, 1968, marked the date for the groundbreaking of the new 9,600 square foot library on the corner of Fremont and Main Streets. The site was designed for twenty-eight parking spaces. Opening on December 8, 1969, the building served the community well for almost twenty-five years.

As the area grew and circulation of materials increased, work-space for library staff began to take up more and more of the public reading room area. Comfortable seating areas for library patrons and room for a growing

library collection were no longer possible. Surveys of the community determined a need for more materials, programs, and services than the library could handle at this facility.

In 1987 a Long-Range Planning Committee (made up of members of the library board, staff, community business persons, and area residents) was formed to plot the course for the library's future.

Studies were done to determine the costs of expansion of the existing building. Over the next three years it was decided that the library still lacked the space it needed, and planning for the new library location began.

Draft Horses Used to Clear Land

The property for the library's current location was purchased in 1990. A team of Belgian horses, capable of pulling more than a four ton load, were part of the conservation efforts of the library board to protect the handsome

trees that shade the building site. On the recommendation of a consulting forester, some fifty trees were tagged for sale. After they were cut, the problem of removing them without harming other trees in the woods was solved by bringing in the horses. They could weave in and out of the difficult areas without harming the

rest of the landscape. The event was captured on video and placed in the library's historical collection.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 5, 1992, and construction began. The present library building was completed on November 7, 1993.

Lowell Public Library
1505 E. Commercial Ave
Lowell, IN 46356
Phone (219) 696-7704
Fax (219) 696-5280

Schneider Branch
24002 Parrish Ave.
Schneider, IN 46376
(219) 552-1000

Shelby Branch
23323 Shelby Rd
Shelby, IN 46377
(219) 552-0809

PROVIDING FOR THE PRESENT– The library users of today demand far more than just books. They want magazines, compact discs, DVDs, meeting room space, and programs for all ages. The library was designed to meet those demands and to remain adaptable when needs change.

“Library users demand more than just books”



“The library district serves over 20,000 people”



High-Efficiency Lighting

The Library

The library is nestled among mature native Indiana hardwood trees. The building is intended to be a gathering place for the community, transcending the traditional concept of a library. The 24,000-square-foot building is over twice the size of the former library.

The exterior is clad in materials of rich earth tones. A grand arched window of Palladian proportions graces the front of the library.

More than one hundred spaces provide ample room for parking at our main entrance. Special bricks on either side of the entrance walls bear the names of many donors to the library’s furnishing fund. Inside, the lobby includes a quarry tile floor, while vaulted ceilings focus attention on the main circulation desk.

Meeting rooms flank the lobby, space for use by non-profit organizations and for library programs. Each meeting room has a cozy kitchen area. A twenty-five-foot high clerestory area rises through the center of the library permitting natural

light to fill the building’s interior. The circulation desk rests under a trellised canopy in the center of the main room. The staff workroom surrounds the circulation desk, allowing library staff to be available to patrons in all areas of the building.

Fanning out from the circulation desk are the children’s department, young adult area, audio/visual, adult fiction, magazines and newspapers, adult non-fiction, Indiana and reference sections.

Designed To Meet Community Needs

The library is designed for accessibility for persons with disabilities with automatic doors, wide aisles between rows of shelving, and carrels at special heights for wheel chairs. A separate restroom, located in the foyer, is designated for people with disabilities, or for family use.

Energy conservation was given high priority in the planning of the library. Windows are double glazed thermal break with operating sections for natural ventilation when desired. The facility is insulated with six-inch side wall insulation and twelve-

inch attic insulation. Natural gas furnaces provide controlled zoning to the various sections of the library. Lighting is high-efficiency in design and controls. Modular carpet squares were chosen for the flooring to allow easy access for future wiring needs.

The library district serves over 20,000 people and offers programs and services for all age groups. The service area includes the towns of Lowell, Shelby, and Schneider, the community of Lake Dalecarlia, and the townships of Eagle Creek, Cedar Creek,

West Creek.

Throughout the year a variety of programs, workshops, classes, and craft-making sessions are scheduled at the Lowell Public Library for patrons of all ages.

The library is a drop-off site of donations for various non-profit organizations in our community.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the library continued to provide services to patrons, pivoting from in-person programming to virtual programs. In addition, curbside pick-up of materials was implemented.

Reference

The reference area is located at the south end of the library. A reference desk is located in that area as well as seven study rooms, two of which as smaller computer rooms. Two large windows on the west side provide an excellent setting for leisure reading and a view of the splendid woods.

Card catalog computers are conveniently located in three areas of the library: children's, young adult, and the new book

area. Is there something you need that we don't have? Using the Evergreen Indiana catalog online or the mobile app, patrons can request materials and have them sent to the Lowell Public Library. In addition, items may be available through the state library borrowing systems SRCS or Indiana Share.

A microfilm reader is available in order to view past issues of The Lowell Tribune. An index of births, deaths, and marriages

from the newspaper (1920-2008) is on our website, making it easier to find exactly what you want.

Lowell history on our website is maintained by reference staff. Newspaper articles, photos, biographies, a yearbook name/photo index (1915-2007), and Halsted House Museum documents and photos are just a few of the things you can find on the site.



**Do you have a question?
Can't find what you need?
Ask at the reference desk!**

The Children's Room

The large children's room provides an inviting atmosphere to promote reading and encourage creativity.

Youngsters can "hitch a ride" on the library tractor and wagons. They are made of wood with padded seats and are finished in bright, vibrant colors.

The Arts are represented by six small chairs painted by Indiana

artist Carole Boller. Each chair's unique design symbolizes one of the arts. Three walls of hand painted murals (by artist Dennis Orłowski) represent an ocean, the jungle, and locally, the various wildlife in Evergreen Park.

Scheduled programs such as Family Movie Night, Story Time and Craft Corner for children birth age through the fifth grade

are held during the fall, winter, and spring months.

Summer Reading Club, an eight-week summer program for children, is filled with special activities and events.

Our annual Santa's Story Time is another example of programming designed for children to foster their life-long love of reading.

**"an inviting
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Young Adult Area

The young adult area is filled with books of popular appeal for young teens, in addition to Books on CD, specific to the age group, sixth to twelfth grade.

A large study table is flanked with wood chairs. A pub-style table provides extra seating.

Tall bookshelves aptly named "The In-Bee-Tweens" line the edge of the Young Adult area and

hold age-appropriate books specifically for fifth graders headed to middle school.

Young adults engage in many different activities during the year. Young adults are encouraged to join in on Summer Reading activities- from reading contests to volunteering at the library.

The remaining months of the

year, young adults can attend many programs such as crafts, book discussions, bean bag games, cooking classes and BBQs, game nights, video game tournaments, movie nights, CPR/First Aid classes, babysitting classes, and more.

Virtual programs for Young Adults (grades 6-12) are available to watch on our library YouTube channel.

**"Young adults engage in
many different activities
during the year"**

Adult Programming

The Lowell Public Library provides programs throughout the year which appeal to a wide range and variety of needs and interests.

Knit and crochet, sewing, adult coloring and poetry groups, as well Friends of the Lowell Library meet at the library.

Have fun reading and share your thoughts at monthly Book Discussions.

A senior social is held once a month (except during the summer). Enjoy an ice cream social, movie day, bingo, musical entertainment, or a craft.

During tax seasons, AARP volunteers provide free tax preparation for seniors and low income residents.

Virtual programs are available on our YouTube channel.

Gardening programs, are held at various times throughout the year and are co-hosted with the Lowell Garden Club.

Attend seasonal themed programs such as The Indiana Ghost Trackers, or make an Evergreen wreath for the holidays.

Whatever you are interested in, the Lowell Public Library continues to bring fascinating and informative programs to you all year long.



Library Lines Newsletter

Get all the information on programs and happenings at the library each month, sent right to your inbox!

Sign up at the circulation desk to get on our email list.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

Visit us at <http://www.lowellpl.lib.in.us> for information on:

Latest announcements and special programming notes

Library locations and hours

Library policies

Access to the card catalog — place holds and renew your books from home!

Lowell history

Downloadable music, magazines and audio books

Databases and information including Ancestry, HeritageQuest, Inspire Virtual Library, federal and state tax forms, and Learning databases (Chilton's car repair and maintenance; World Book, biographies, authors, Mango Languages and more!)

Lowell Library Lines monthly newsletter/newsletter archives

Links to our library Facebook page and our YouTube channel

Branch Libraries

The Shelby Branch of the Lowell Public Library, next door to the post office, opened its doors on April 1, 1996. The library was previously located at St. Theresa's Church in Shelby since July 1988.

The Schneider Branch officially opened on February 1, 1988, and is located in the Schneider Community Center.

Both branches provide their communities with access to books and magazines, movies, and internet computers, as well as year-round programming for children, young adults, and adults.

A fax machine and copier are available for public use at each location as well.

FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE— No one knows what the future will bring. The role of assessing and predicting demand is a challenging one for libraries in an age when communications and information technology are constantly changing. One of the goals of the Lowell Public Library is to prepare for tomorrow while remaining adaptable as changes occur.