

A Guide to the Purcellville Library and Bookmobile, 1887-1991

Purcellville Library and Bookmobile 1887-1991

1887-1991

A Collection in the Thomas Balch Library SC 0081

Thomas Balch Library

2006

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History

Processed by: Emily Hershman

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A Guide to the Purcellville Library and Bookmobile, 1887-1991

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

SC 0081

Language

English

Abstract

The Purcellville Library and Bookmobile Collection consists of newspaper clippings, photographs, letters between members of the Library's Board of Trustees, and memorabilia from the original dedication of the Purcellville Library. Local histories of the Library and the Bookmobile are also included.

Creator

Unknown

Repository

Thomas Balch Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open for research.

Use Restrictions

No physical characteristics affect use of this material.

Acquisition Information

Unknown

Processing Information

Emily Hershman, 8 June 2011

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None

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Blue Ridge Library Records (SC 0073), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Bibliography

Ancestry Library Edition, Social Security Death Index, www.ancestrylibrary.com (Accessed 10 June 2011).
Purcellville Library and Bookmobile (SC 0081), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Other Finding Aid

None

Technical Requirements

None

Historical Information

The origins of the Purcellville Public Library can be traced to 1887, when Janney's jewelry store obtained four shelves of library books and rented them to customers. Until the turn of the century, the library was housed in various locations including dental offices and the general store. By 1923, the local library collection consisted of nearly 2,000 titles and offered activities such as a children's story hour, which was held at the Purcellville National Bank. The library had to close down due to the Depression, but a grant from the Public Works Administration provided endowment funds for a new library building in 1936. By 1943, the first accredited librarian had been hired and its annual budget was over 5,000 dollars. Samuel Murray (1915-1998) filed a law suit against the library in 1956 after his request to check out a book was denied on the basis of race; by the next year, the library board voted to serve all citizens of Loudoun County regardless of race or color. By 1974, the Purcellville Library lost its independent status to become part of the Loudoun County Public Library system under the control of the Board of Supervisors. Major additions and renovations

to the original building were made in 1991, and the Purcellville Library currently remains active in the County library system.

The Loudoun County Bookmobile began in 1943 when the Purcellville Library obtained a panel truck from the Works Progress Administration to carry 300 books to schools, communities and individuals in rural regions of the county. By 1957, the Bookmobile included stops to black schools in conjunction with the integration of the library that same year. By 1960, the Bookmobile had an annual circulation of over 55,000 books. As many of the County's public schools obtained their own libraries, more stops were made to meet the needs of senior citizens. In 1980, the Bookmobile's collection grew to include cassette tapes and magazines. The Bookmobile largely ceased operation when the Board of Supervisors rejected its requests for the 1994 fiscal year.

Scope and Content

The Purcellville Library and Bookmobile Collection consists of newspaper clippings, photographs, letters between members of the Library's Board of Trustees, and memorabilia from the original dedication of the Purcellville Library. Local histories of the Library and the Bookmobile are also included.

Contents List

Folder 1: Short Histories of Purcellville Library

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Folder 3: Bookmobile: Histories and Newspaper Clippings

Folder 4: Bookmobile: Correspondence