

# History Of Public Library Services In Mesquite



## A Chronology

### June 1939

WPA Free Library is opened in a room of the Mesquite City Hall under the sponsorship of the Mesquite Woman's Club.

### 1940

WPA Free Library is moved to the Mesquite Junior School Library.

### 1943

Mesquite Library is designated a branch of the Dallas County Public Library.

### May 1949

Mesquite Branch of the Dallas County Public Library is moved to the Mesquite High School Library.

### October 1961

\$15,000,000 capital improvements program for Mesquite is presented to the City Council by municipal consultants, Robert W. Hollin and Homer A. Hunter. Construction of a public library is included in the program.

### December 1961

\$12,000,000 bond election is held. Proposition number six on the ballot, \$165,000 for a library building and books, is approved with 287 votes in favor and 165 votes against.

### February 1962

Mesquite Branch of the Dallas County Public Library is closed after Dallas County cuts funding.

### August 1962

Ten-member Mesquite Library Planning Advisory Committee is appointed by the City Council: Bess Ann Motley, Chair, Walter Floyd, vice-Chair, Perry Frank, Dr. Clay Henry, Dr. Joey Pirrung, Mrs. B. W. Cruse, Sr., Robert J. Cupito, Jim White, Louise Hunt, and C. B. Green.

### September 1962

Location directly behind the Dallas County Sub-Courthouse, is chosen by the Library Planning Advisory Committee as the site for the new library.

### October 1962

Recommended library site is approved by the City Council.

### November 1962

Preliminary plans for the new library, prepared by George Dahl & Associates Architects, are approved by the Library Planning Advisory Committee and by the City Council.

### December 1962

Formation of the Friends of the Mesquite Public Library, under the sponsorship of the Texas Mesquiter, proposed for early 1963.

### March 1963

Friends of the Mesquite Public Library is organized. Board of Directors: B. J. Smith, President, John Powers, Vice President, Bess Ann Motley, Secretary, Harold Ensey, Treasurer, W. H. Bradfield, Jr., Charles D. Cabaniss, Robert Cupito, Kathleen Dean, Walter B. Hailey, Jr., Maurice Harrell, Robert Lawson, Loncy Leake, James Rosscup, and Howard Sobel. \$165,000 in bonds for construction of the new library are sold. Final architectural plans are approved, and authorization is given to advertise for bids.

### April 1963

Construction contract for the Mesquite Public Library is awarded to the Marvin Connell Construction Company.

### September 1963

Library's first budget, \$48,506, is approved by the City Council. Search for library personnel is begun.

### November 1963

Construction of the 6,300 square foot library is completed, and furniture is received. Nelleen Womack is appointed Mesquite City Librarian.

### February 1964

Open house for the Mesquite Public Library is held on Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, with J. Frank Dobie, noted Texas folklorist, as a special guest. Library is opened for business on Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.

### April 1965

Organizational meeting of the Mesquite Historical and Genealogical Society is conducted under the direction of Mrs. J. E. Huddleston. The society is organized in cooperation with the Mesquite Public Library.

### August 1966

Mesquite Historical and Genealogical Society is granted a Certificate of Incorporation by the State of Texas. Board of Directors: Mrs. J. D. Huddleston, Jack Braden, Mrs. Shelby E. Riggs, Exa Thomas, and Nelleen Womack.

### June 1969

\$10,000,000 bond election is held. Proposition number four on the ballot, \$500,000 in Library Expansion and Construction Bonds, is approved with 215 votes in favor and 121 against.

#### February 1972

Plans submitted by Harper & Kemp Architects for the addition of 6,500 square feet to the library are approved and authorization is given to advertise for bids.

#### March 1972

Patt H. Delk construction Company is awarded the construction contract for the addition to the library.

#### May 1973

Dedication ceremony is held on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> for the expanded and remodeled Mesquite Public Library.

#### January 1975

\$5,950 is allocated from surplus funds to renovate a bookmobile purchased at a City of Dallas auction.

#### April 1975

\$30,655 Library Services and Construction Act grant is awarded to the Mesquite Public Library for the purchase of books, magazines, and newspapers for the bookmobile.

#### June 1975

Dedication ceremony is held on June 9<sup>th</sup> for the newly refurbished bookmobile. Bookmobile service begins on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### October 1976

\$30,000,000 bond election is held. Proposition number four on the ballot, \$3,500,000 in Library Improvement Bonds, is approved with 965 votes in favor and 941 votes against.

#### November 1977

Seven-member Mesquite Municipal Library Advisory Board is created by passage of City of Mesquite Ordinance 1394.

#### December 1977

City Council appoints members to the newly created Mesquite Municipal Library Advisory Board: Barbara Mann, Mary Jane Patterson, Jerry Sharp, Linda Murdock, Kenneth Price, Joe Fry, Harvey McFadden, regular members; Rosa Toldan and Billie Culver, alternate members.

#### March 1979

Nancy P. Smith is appointed Director of Library Services.

#### November 1979

Plans for a branch library in north Mesquite, submitted by Fisher and Spillman Architects, are approved by the City Council.

#### March 1980

Construction contract for the branch library is awarded to U. S. Lend Lease, Inc.

#### December 1980

Bookmobile services are discontinued.

#### January 1981

Mesquite North Branch Library is opened for business on Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

#### February 1981

Formal dedication ceremony for the 10,000 square foot Mesquite North Branch Library is held on Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### October 1985

Plans submitted by Frank L. Meier Architects are approved for the renovation and expansion of the Main Library.

#### March 1986

Construction contract for the renovation and expansion of the Main Library is awarded to Marcon Construction, Inc.

#### October 1987

Dedication ceremony is held on Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup> for the newly renovated and expanded, 26,000 square foot Main Library.

#### September 1990

Mesquite Adult Literacy Center is established by the Mesquite Public Library utilizing a grant from the Mesquite Service League.

#### April 1991

John E. Williams is appointed Director of Library Services.

#### February 1994

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mesquite Public Library is celebrated with a week of special events.

#### July 1997

Library website is created.

#### November 1998

Public access Internet is added.

#### 2000

Gates Foundation grant awarded.  
Sirsi Integrated Automation System purchased.

#### January 2001

Opened Gates Lab.  
SIRSI Online catalog is available from remote location.

#### September 2002

DVDs added to the collection.

#### October 2002

TexShare Databases linked to library website.

#### April 2006

Downloadable audiobooks available to patrons.

#### March 2007

Wi-Fi access for laptop users became available in both facilities.

#### September 2008

Mesquite Adult Literacy Center is discontinued.

#### August 2009

Jeannie Johnson is appointed Director of Library Services.

#### June 2011

Downloadable eBooks are available to patrons.

#### September 2013

Downloadable magazines are available to patrons.

#### February 2014

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mesquite Public Library System is celebrated.

#### April 2015

Virginia Mundt is appointed Director of Library Services.

#### October 2017

Adopted a fine-free policy for overdue items.

#### September 2021

Name of board changed to Library Advisory Board.

#### September 2021

Converted to Radio Frequency Identification system.

