



HOW IS THIS CONSTRUCTION BEING FUNDED?

Marshall District Library received a generous donation from Laura R. (Withee) Bliss, who passed away in 2023. We are grateful that she provided the funding through the Laura R. Bliss Trust for the development & enhancement of an MDL History Center which will be enjoyed for generations to come. The Laura R. Bliss Trust will also provide funding for future local history projects such as digitization of rural newspapers.

WHO IS LAURA R. (WITHEE) BLISS?

According to Laura's family, Laura's love of reading and libraries started early due to the encouragement from her mother, Eleanor M. (Rushford) Withee, a former Marshall Public Library employee in the 1930s, & her father, Alton B. Withee. She was a faithful supporter & patron of Marshall District Library all her life. Upon retirement as a purchasing manager at Denso in Battle Creek, Laura devoted much of her free time to her lifelong passion: conducting genealogical research on behalf of her family and friends.

For more information about this project or any services at Marshall District Library, please contact Angela Semifero, Library Director.

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Coming Soon MARSHALL DISTRICT LIBRARY HISTORY CENTER

MARSHALL
DISTRICT LIBRARY

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124 W. GREEN STREET · MARSHALL, MI 49068

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MISSION

The mission of Marshall District Library is to be a leader in our community, fostering collaborative partnerships, providing educational, recreational, & technological services in a safe & welcoming environment.

CONSTRUCTION FAQ

WHY IS THE LIBRARY BUILDING A HISTORY CENTER?

Marshall District Library currently houses local history materials such as City Directories, Plat Maps, Yearbooks, & other items along the east side of the Adult Non-Fiction area & in a storage closet. For the last 15 years, MDL has worked on developing its local history & genealogy research services, including increasing our print & photo collections, digitizing local newspapers & yearbooks, & providing one-on-one assistance with a local history librarian. It has been a long-time dream to build a space that could be utilized by our library visitors for research, writing family histories, & digitizing their own family history materials.

WHERE WILL THE HISTORY CENTER BE BUILT?

The MDL History Center will wall off a small portion of the Adult-Non-Fiction area & renovate a current storage closet in order to create a public space that is approximately 750 square feet. On the diagram to the right, this storage area is labeled “Book Binding & Digitization Stations.” Current shelving will be reused & compact shelving will be added to another storage area.

WHAT WILL THE HISTORY CENTER INCLUDE?

- Shelving & cabinets for printed historical materials
- Digital microfilm reader
- Book binding station
- Family history computer station
- Media conversion station with the ability to digitize VHS, cassettes, slides, & photos
- Overhead book scanner to create high quality scans of printed materials
- High quality photocopier/scanner
- Seating & tables for research
- Compact shelving & map case in local history storage area

WHO IS THE LIBRARY WORKING WITH?

Construction of the MDL History Center will be done by Schweitzer Inc. of Battle Creek. Library furnishings will be provided by Library Design Associates of Canton, MI.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THIS PROJECT?

The Library expects construction to begin in mid-January. The construction process should take 8 weeks. The MDL History Center will be opened in March 2025.

WHAT ARE THE LIBRARY'S FUTURE PLANS FOR LOCAL HISTORY SERVICES?

In addition to helping individuals research their own family history, Marshall District Library hopes to encourage residents & local organizations to use our digitization equipment to increase access to local historical materials. We hope to work with organizations & individuals to make these items accessible through the library's website with permission from the owners. We are also working to digitize local newspapers of other rural areas in Calhoun County that have ties to the Marshall area.

